



April 23, 2020

To ESC Medical Professionals:

Once again, we thank all of our members for their work during the pandemic. We write today with these updates.

1. **Next steps in health care.** Our area's success in flattening the curve means that our employers are now moving away from immediate crisis response and surge planning and are starting to consider the resumption of operations. This will mean more discussions about how our members can be safe in the workplace.

**IMPORTANT:** *Members are reminded to contact their union representatives immediately if they are encountering situations at work that they believe are unsafe.*

We also are seeing situations where local managers are moving ahead with initiatives that require Regional-level discussion prior to implementation -- for example, video visits for optometry. Any major change to how work is performed needs to be discussed with the union. Please let us know if you are encountering this type of situation.

In addition, even in this emergency, our contracts are in place. Please let your union representative know if management is attempting to implement any changes to your regular working conditions, for example, changes to hours, shifts, vacation procedures, etc.

We are finding that immediate intervention at a local level is frequently the best way to deal with such issues. Please reach out to your union rep if you have questions.

2. **Laboratory work and COVID-19 testing.** ESC Local 20 is the union for lab professionals. As more testing becomes more available, our people in our facilities are doing this work. To ensure safe work in labs, our members, stewards and staff have been involved in safety matters such as checking on functionality of hoods, the availability of required PPE, determining if labs have an appropriate physical layout, and the adequacy of training.

The Union is forming a committee of our lab professionals across all of our employers to provide a forum for the discussion of common issues. This will be a way to identify and elevate best practices, and a venue for the discussion of policy proposals. We are seeking to designate one representative from every lab facility that we represent, and will be reaching out to our stewards early next week to begin this process.

We also note that this is Medical Laboratory Professionals Week, the annual recognition of the laboratory professionals and pathologists who play a vital role in health care and patient advocacy. The COVID-19 crisis highlights the critical work of our laboratory professionals, who in the past have often been referred to as the "hidden heroes" of healthcare. It has never

been more plain that the expertise and dedication of our lab scientists is critical to everyone's health and well-being.

The Union thanks and celebrates our lab professionals!

In solidarity,

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