

Sisters and Brothers, I want to make this very clear - I absolutely understand this is one of the most difficult times that many of us have faced in our working careers.

As part of your Local leadership I am trying to be as transparent as possible about the laws surrounding workplace policy implementation and enforcement. My only intention is to give you as much relevant information as I can. I am not here to judge nor make personal statements. I have and will continue to personally field questions about this topic in the hope that the information I convey, be it good or bad, will be of some use to you, the membership.

I find myself holding this office during the most tumultuous and divisive periods in Local 199's storied history. Workplaces across the Local have begun implementing COVID-19 Vaccination Policies; from First Ontario to the City of Welland, to General Motors – and numerous others have indicated that they are in the process of developing their own policies.

The situation we all find ourselves in tears at me on a personal level. Many of the members who have expressed concerns and fears are coworkers, who have always relied on me to provide them with the unvarnished truth. This matter is ugly for some and may be inescapable. I will try and forward you all the options I possibly can and I will continue to represent all my members regardless of their position on the vaccine.

For those who find themselves presented with the challenge to be vaccinated or suffer employment consequences – I hear you and understand. There is no consolation that I can provide other than to tell you that the Local will fight any discipline that you are faced with. I will use all the means available to us within the scope of the law and will continue to provide guidance to those who seek it and answer questions to the best of my ability.

I fully appreciate the difficulties posed by these employer policies, including the high levels of stress and mental health ramifications. After suffering under the weight of COVID-19 for so long, these policies have become the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back for a number of our membership. Truthfully, we are all feeling it as a consequence of the lockdowns and confusion around COVID, regardless of your vaccination status. I ask only that members respect each other's individual choices. Everyone is entitled to take a personal stance on the COVID-19 vaccine and employer policies.

In closing, I would like to thank all the members of Local 199 for their respectful communication, in depth questions, and valid skepticism. I will continue to provide members as much information as I can so that you can make informed decisions going forward, regardless of your position. While we may not be able to fight the policy itself, we will be closely watching the application of the terms of these policies and will use whatever tools are available to us to advocate for your human and economic rights.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to president@unifor199.org with any questions you have, or message me via Facebook messenger.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jordan Lennox', written in a cursive style.

Jordan Lennox, President Local 199