



Brothers and Sisters,

I hope you and your families are doing well, staying safe, and following the necessary guidelines to protect yourself and your family.

To say we are living in a crazy, uncertain time is an understatement. We have all experienced great challenges in our lives – the days following 9-11 often come to mind. But today we are facing challenges different than anything we have faced before. The coronavirus pandemic has hit us hard in the country and especially hard in the New York/New Jersey region. Think about it:

- In four short months we have gone from zero deaths in the U.S. to over 50,000, and the numbers increase every day.
- Our region has been the epicenter of this disease and has seen the most cases and deaths in the country.
- New York and New Jersey, alone, have seen more cases than any other country in the world.

These numbers can be overwhelming to comprehend. But they are real and there is much we need to do to help stop the spread. The more we do now, the sooner we will get back to our normal lives and work.

As you know, as of today, much of our work has stopped. Our work is dangerous under normal circumstances, but given today's crisis, it is impossible. For sure, some limited work continues. Emergency work is being handled. But it is nowhere near enough for all of us.

There are certain things your union can do to help you during these tough times.

First and maybe most important we can be a source of true, safe information. During these times rumors are often taken for fact and travel at a record speed. I urge you not to believe everything you hear and read, especially on social media.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the union. We will always be there to provide accurate, factual information. Rumors and gossip can only add to the problems and confusion.

Our trust funds, health and safety, LECET are all working to provide help and support. If you are laid off, there is help available--beyond the standard New York State unemployment insurance.

Hopefully in the next few weeks, we will begin to see an opening up of our economy. That will mean that some of our jobs will open up. But one thing will not change, you have my solemn pledge that our members' health and safety will always be the top priority of this union.

Until then I urge you to stay safe and keep in touch. As always, the officers and staff of Local 78 are here for you.

Thank you and God bless you.

Pawel Gruchacz
Deputy Supervisor