

FOUNDED IN 1937

WENDELL YOUNG IV
President
MICHELE L. KESSLER
Secretary-Treasurer
ANTHONY M. HELFER
Recorder

April 5, 2020

Dear Governor Wolf:

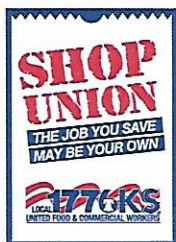
On behalf of the 35,000 members of UFCW Local 1776 Keystone State and the tens of thousands of non-represented workers in food processing, retail pharmacies and retail grocery stores, I am writing to urge you to issue an Executive Order to classify all workers in food processing and retail as essential workers so that they will receive the lifesaving protections that they need and deserve, as well as mandating employers to implement life-saving policies for worker and public safety in their businesses.

This request is part of an ongoing dialogue I spoken with your Administration about at the onset of this crisis. These workers – in food processing, retail grocery stores and pharmacies -- are on the frontlines of the COVID-19 crisis and continue to provide an invaluable service to all Pennsylvanians, all while being placed in immediate danger. They need your help.

As you are well aware, retail workers are exposed to hundreds and hundreds of consumers each day and have been working long hours filling gaps for workers who have either been exposed and are quarantined throughout this crisis. Media reports have also made the risk clear, including a report last week that police are investigating an incident in which a shopper reportedly spit in the face of a Giant Eagle employee at a store in western PA. These retail workers, literally, are keeping the lights on in grocery stores across our state and need your support at this crucial time.

Workers in food processing are helping to feed our families. Pennsylvania has a long and proud history as an agricultural and food producing state. These workers serve as the bridge between the farm and the grocery store and, they, too, continue working in incredibly difficult and potentially unsafe conditions. As you can imagine, some production lines and worksites generally were not designed to accommodate social distancing.

We are asking, specifically, that the Executive Order mandates enforceable guidelines and standards for social distancing, cleaning and personal hygiene, paid benefits and attendance policies as well as specific protocols when an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19. We have attached Draft Proposed Guidelines for each of these sectors and would be pleased to work with you and your team to ensure we provide all protections necessary.



MAIN OFFICE: Walton Campus • 3031A Walton Road, Suite 201 • Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania 19462-2344
Phone: (610) 940-1776 • 1-800-822-3737 • 1-866-329-1776 Fax: (610) 941-9525 www.ufcw1776.org

NORTH CENTRAL PA DIVISION • 2007 Highway 315, Suite 100 • Pittston, PA 18640-6105
(570) 655-6886 or 1-800-635-6994 Fax (570) 655-6864

WESTERN PA and the OHIO VALLEY DIVISION • 345 Southpointe Boulevard, Suite 300, Canonsburg, PA 15317
(724) 514-3228 or 1-800-245-2424 Fax (724) 514-3236

Affiliated with the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union

Further, workers in these industries on the front lines need immediate access to quicker Covid-19 testing, PPE to protect themselves and more available childcare options.

Governor, we want to thank you for your leadership throughout this crisis. But we are at a critical juncture of the Covid-19 crisis where this virus is rapidly progressing and becoming an immediate danger to our members. You have the power to deem businesses essential, which we felt was an appropriate measure. However, if these businesses are not implementing strong policies to limit and reduce the spread of Covid-19, our state, our members and our country will not overcome this terrible virus. If you have the power to open or close certain businesses in Pennsylvania, then you have the power to mandate safe and responsible working condition for those business that remain open. If they are not operating in a safe manner, then you need to shut them down.

We are calling on you to use Executive Action to mandate essential businesses implement strong Cov-19 safety policies and if they fail to comply, shut them down. We are also calling on you to classify food processing, retail pharmacy and retail grocery stores as essential employees during this pandemic.

We are confident that you and your entire administration have made Pennsylvanians safer as the result of the tough decisions you have made. We believe an Executive Order will help save lives and, again, we urge you to act as expeditiously as possible for these workers and their families.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wendell Young IV', written in a cursive style.

Wendell Young IV
President, UFCW Local 1776 Keystone State