

Dear Dave,

I hope you are staying safe during these very challenging times.

I know that OCHU-CUPE held a number of demonstrations outside Ontario hospitals last Thursday, urging the Ford government to provide pandemic pay to all hospital workers now on the front line of COVID-19. I understand that you organized the rally in front of Hamilton Health Sciences, General Hospital site, on that day.

NDP MPP Laura Mae Lindo made a statement today in the Ontario Legislature about these exclusions and the need for the government to show respect to all health care workers by ensuring they receive pandemic pay. Our press release on this issue and the video with Laura Mae's statement are included below for your and your colleagues.

Thanks very much for highlighting this important issue last week on behalf of your members.

Sincerely,
Shelley Martel

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NDP's Lindo urges Ford to give pandemic pay to all health care heroes and essential workers on the frontlines of the fight against COVID-19

QUEEN'S PARK – NDP MPP Laura Mae Lindo (Kitchener Centre) has demanded to know why so many frontline health care workers and essential workers are still being denied pandemic pay by the Ford government.

Lindo was back at Queen's Park today to hold the Ford government to account for their failure to give all frontline workers the pandemic pay they deserve, and to make it retroactive to when the COVID-19 crisis began.

"Why were ambulance attendants not on the list or people who provide MRIs? What about clerical support staff, organizing and prioritizing appointments, or laboratory technicians who do our testing? What about health care workers supporting the unsheltered or those helping people navigate addictions in community? Why are they missing?" said Lindo on Tuesday in the Ontario legislature.

While some roles have been added, many are still excluded from the pandemic pay list. Lindo has heard from workers in the Kitchener-Waterloo region who have been told they don't qualify for pandemic pay despite their heroic efforts on the frontlines of the COVID-19 crisis.

PSWs at long-term care homes qualified for pandemic pay have called Lindo's office asking why the person working alongside them did not, simply because they had stepped in to provide temporary help through private home care companies.

"We know staffing shortages plague the system because of the government's cuts leading up to the pandemic. Now exclusions based on random criteria that were never disclosed to the public have added insult to injury," said Lindo.

"We're frustrated it's taking this government so long to see that frontline workers are part of an intricate web of people who rely on each other to keep us all safe. Real leadership requires well-thought-out plans and complete transparency."

The NDP Official Opposition is calling for all frontline workers to receive pandemic pay and for this wage top-up to be retroactive to the day the State of Emergency was declared, so that people's sacrifice and hard work to keep us all safe is recognized."

Video:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/3jn8oy4ofep90qi/Members%20Statement%20%20-%20Laura%20Mae%20Lindo.mp4?dl=0>

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