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August 3, 2021

Over the last year and a half, UFCW Local 152 members have worked and continue to work on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic which includes workers at ShopRite Supermarkets across New Jersey and Pennsylvania. These essential workers were initially provided pandemic pay in recognition of the grave risk to their health and wellbeing. As the pandemic appeared to subside, the pandemic premium pay was eliminated.

The Delta Variant of the COVID-19 is currently creating a massive uptick in the spread of this deadly disease. The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) recently updated mask guidelines in response to the Delta Variant as some people infected with the highly transmissible Delta Variant can spread the virus to others even after being vaccinated. The CDC now recommends that both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals wear a mask indoors in public if an area is of substantial or high transmission. Currently, all counties in New Jersey, except Warren County, fall under the substantial or high transmission rate for purposes of the CDC’s indoor mask recommendations. Philadelphia County and the surrounding counties also all fall under the substantial or high transmission rate.

We were informed that ShopRite Supermarkets is now partially complying with the CDC (and NJ DOH) guidance by requiring all employees and vendors to wear a mask indoors regardless of vaccination status. Customers, however, are not required to wear a mask and may shop without a mask even where such individuals are not vaccinated. The failure of ShopRite Supermarkets to conform to CDC mask recommendations unnecessarily exposes our members and their families to the Delta Variant and is completely unacceptable.

The health and safety of our members has been UFCW Local 152’s top priority throughout the pandemic. To that end, we demand that ShopRite Supermarkets immediately reinstate pandemic pay and conform to CDC mask recommendations by requiring all customers wear masks. Please contact me to discuss these important issues further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Brian String'.

Brian String  
President