

CWA & Verizon Implement Additional Back-Up Care Options

During these unprecedented times, CWA and Verizon have been working to support you with balancing the needs of work with your personal life. To that extent, the next phase of the backup care program took effect May 16, 2020.

Verizon is continuing the emergency in-home reimbursement arrangement (up to \$100 per work day) that was set up as part of the COVID-19 response with some administrative changes noted below that will allow for inclusion of the reimbursement in your paycheck. You will continue to be able to use your own personal network/caregiver of choice and request reimbursement directly through Verizon. There will be no caps on the amount of hours you can use, subject to the terms below.

In geographies where Bright Horizons support is able to open, you will have additional access to care in the way it operated before the COVID-19 outbreak. Bright Horizon's centers and in-network providers will be available for emergency backup care and the pre-outbreak copays and annual hour limitations will apply after June 30, 2020.

Backup care should only be used in situations where it is required to complete your work responsibilities. Many employees working from home will experience a certain amount of disruption and interruptions during the day but will still be able to perform their work responsibilities. The backup care benefit is not intended to solve these types of minor disruptions. Instead it is meant to cover longer periods of time where direct supervision is needed to care for loved ones who would otherwise inhibit an employee from completing their work responsibilities.

All reimbursement requests for emergency in-home backup care benefits are subject to the following requirements:

- Verizon will reimburse employees \$15 per hour of care, up to \$100 per day.
- The maximum reimbursement is \$100 per day per household, regardless of the number of recipients.
- There is no limit on the number of days for which employees can seek reimbursement, provided that the hours reimbursed are for hours the employee is working for Verizon each date. You may select adult caregivers of your choice to provide in-home care through your personal connections, including friends, neighbors, and family members who themselves are not working full time.
- The caregiver should not be a family member who is ordinarily expected to provide for the wellbeing of the dependent (for example, a non-working spouse who has parental responsibilities for the dependent).
- Caregivers must be physically present in the residence where the care is being provided.
- Care recipients may be young children, elder family members, adults with special needs, or other dependent family members who are unable to care for themselves.
- For households with two working adults and eligible dependents, you should make every attempt to coordinate work schedules so that backup care support is not needed. If both adults are able to

work modified schedules, you are not eligible for reimbursement.

Any exceptions to the rules above must be approved in advance by Human Resources prior to seeking reimbursement. If you have questions about the program rules for backup care or wish to request an exception, please send an email to vz.backup.care.administration@verizon.com. Access backup care reimbursement form.

CWA Endorses Joe Biden for President

On May 22, 2020 the CWA Executive Board voted to endorse Joe Biden for President of the United States.

In a letter to the union's Executive Board recommending the endorsement, CWA President Chris Shelton said that Biden is "someone who will walk the walk when it comes to fighting for workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively."

"Joe understands labor's mantra: 'Which side are you on'," wrote Shelton. "He knows who built America and who built the middle class. When we need him, Joe and his White House will be there for us, ready to help. It's about time the President of the United States was an ally and promoter of organized labor, not an enemy."

As part of its endorsement process, CWA sent candidates a comprehensive questionnaire about issues important to working people and asked them to submit

a short video explaining what they will do in the first 100 days as President to pass the PRO Act, Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act and expand workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively. Biden's answers and video are online at cwapolitical.org/biden2020.

Donald Trump's campaign did not respond, but his actions in office have disqualified him from our endorsement. At every turn Trump and his appointees have made increasing the power of corporations over working people their top priority. The list of the damage Trump has done is long - from making it easier for corporations to offshore jobs to stacking the courts and the National Labor Relations Board with anti-union appointees to paving the way for pharmaceutical companies to jack up prices. If you need a refresher, we've posted a partial list at cwapolitical.org/trumps-anti-worker-record.

Shelton cited Biden's support for the PRO Act, the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act, and the fact that his broadband plan includes language requiring companies receiving funds to remain neutral on workers' organizing efforts as evidence of Biden's commitment to workers' rights.

CWA is planning an extensive member education and voter turnout effort in Presidential battleground states, and CWA activists began engaging members in key Senate states earlier this year. CWA is encouraging all members to get involved in order to elect candidates up and down the ballot who will be there for working people.



As you all know, Verizon made the decision for technicians to again work inside customers' homes and businesses as of Monday, June 1st. CWA discussed postponing this move with them but Verizon refused to do so, claiming they had a sufficient supply of PPE on hand to keep all technicians safe. The company advised that they had a plentiful supply of KN95 masks, gloves, booties, hand sanitizer and wipes on hand to properly safeguard all technicians, and that they had the ability to replenish the stock so that they didn't exhaust it in the future.



While researching KN95 masks, your Local 2108 officers found that they are considered basically equivalent to N95 masks as they both filter out 95% of particulates, so we believed Verizon was going to provide our members with a greater level of protection than the face coverings provided while techs only worked outside of homes and businesses. When the KN95 masks began being distributed to our members on Friday, we were shocked at what Verizon was providing. While the fabric part of the masks may be rated "95" because they filter out 95% of particulates, they have no metal nose strip and **provide absolutely no seal**. They also have four holes in the masks to string the elastic through to make the ear loops, again preventing a proper seal. The masks merely lay on our members' faces. **Minus a proper seal, the masks provided are no more than a face covering, like those provided to technicians while they were only working outside of customers' premises.**



Verizon's own CBT about proper mask wear speaks to how to properly fit the metal nose strip and create a proper seal, and how to test to ensure you have one.

As we have explained to you before, you have the right to refuse unsafe work. There is a proper way to do it, though. If you have a reasonable, good-faith fear that performing certain work could cause serious injury or illness,

you should explain that to your supervisor, and give the company the opportunity to rectify the situation. In the case of these shoddy KN95 masks, for example, you could ask for a properly-fitted KN95 or N95 mask which creates a seal before you enter a customer's premise. If none is provided, you should ask for other work to perform which doesn't require you to enter a home or business.

If Verizon refuses to rectify the unsafe situation by providing you with a proper mask which creates a seal or by giving you other work to do which doesn't involve entering a customer's residence or business, please notify your steward, chief steward or the local right away.

I also want to remind all members that the June 10, 2020 membership meeting has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and all board meeting minutes that are traditionally provided at membership meetings will be provided at the first membership meeting we are able to hold.

In Solidarity,

Marilyn

**Protects and Compensates Essential Workers
CWA Pushes for Passage of "The Heroes Act"**

The Heroes Act is an important next step in our country's response to the COVID-19 crisis, providing compensation and critical health and safety protections for workers.

"Speaker Pelosi and her leadership team listened to the concerns of working people, especially those who have been on the front lines of this crisis, and made protecting their health and providing fair compensation a focus of this legislation," said CWA President Chris Shelton. "Donald Trump quickly declared he would veto the bill, alarmed that it closes loopholes that provide tax breaks to the super-rich. He needs to get his priorities straight and stop acting like the best way to recover from this pandemic is to pretend like it doesn't exist."

The bill contains provisions that will support employment for CWA members and allow them to continue to serve their communities, including funding for state and local public services, internet access for schools and families, and access for local news outlets to the Paycheck Protection Program. It provides premium pay for essential workers in a number of key sectors to fairly compensate them for the risks they have been taking by staying on the job during this crisis. The bill improves access to paid leave for millions of workers, includes new payments to individuals to offset lost pay, extends unemployment insurance and helps prevent foreclosures and evictions.

It requires the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to do something that should have been done at the outset of the pandemic if the Trump Administration really cared about workers: establish an Emergency Temporary Standard to protect those who have been on the front lines of this crisis, interacting with the public and risking exposure to the novel coronavirus every day. It also establishes funding and coordination to ensure that they have access to badly-needed personal protective equipment.

It establishes standards and funding to ensure that elections can be held safely, without jeopardizing the health of voters.

CWA members expect their Representatives and Senators to recognize the critical importance of keeping workers employed and protecting their safety and act quickly to pass this legislation.

Union-Made in America Father's Day

Celebrate your dad in solidarity style this Father's Day by getting him a gift that sports the union label. Check out some union-made Father's Day gift ideas:

- Hugo Boss (UNITE HERE)
- Jim Beam® (United Food and Commercial Workers [UFCW])
- Joseph Abboud Clothing (UNITE HERE)
- Klein Tools (Boilermakers [IBB])
- Knob Creek® Whiskey (UFCW)
- Louisville Slugger (UAW)
- Naturalizer Shoes (UFCW)
- Old Spice (UFCW)
- Pierre Cardin Cologne (UFCW)
- Red Wing Shoes (UFCW)
- Spalding Basketball (Machinists [IAM])
- Stella Artois Beer (IAM)
- Timex Watches (IAM)
- The Union Boot Pro (UFCW)



The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was passed on March 27, 2020. This legislation permits 401(k) plan sponsors to allow eligible participants to elect to defer 401(k) loan repayments otherwise due between the date of implementation and December 31, 2020. In order to be eligible for deferment, one or more of the following must apply to the participant:

- The participant is diagnosed with the virus SARS-Co-V-2 or with coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) by a test approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,
- The participant’s spouse or dependent is diagnosed with such virus or disease by such a test.
- The participant experienced adverse financial consequences as a result of being quarantined, being furloughed or laid off or having work hours reduced due to such virus or disease, being unable to work due to lack of child care due to such virus or disease, closing or reducing hours of a business owned or operated by the individual due to such virus or disease, or other factors as determined by the Secretary of the Treasury.

As permitted by the CARES Act, the plan administrator may rely on a participant’s certification that the participant satisfies one or more of the above conditions. Each participant will self-certify as to his or her eligibility. Fidelity will not request or collect any additional information.

Eligible participants may call Fidelity to request deferment. After confirming that the Plan permits delay, the Workplace Service Group Representative will ask the participant to certify his or her eligibility. NetBenefits may be enhanced for participants to request loan deferments. All loan repayments due from the date the participant requests deferment through December 31, 2020 will be deferred.

Participants will be responsible for logging into NetBenefits and stopping their ACH debit loan repayments during the Deferment Period. Fidelity will notify the participants directly of the loan repayment amounts after the Deferment Period and prior to their repayment start date.

Once repayment of 401(k) loans begins after the deferral timeframe, loan amounts will be the same as the original loan.

Interest will continue to accrue during the Deferment Period. In January 2021, Fidelity will re-amortize the loan, plus accrued interest during the Deferment Period, over the remaining term of the loan plus the length of the Deferment Period. The repayment amount of the re-amortized loan will reflect the remaining outstanding principal balance of the loan and the interest rate on the loan including the interest that accrued during the Deferment Period. At the end of the Deferment Period, Fidelity will also provide the Plan Sponsor with an updated feedback file to reflect the new repayment amount.

Verizon Wage Schedules To Increase on 6/21/20

CWA Local 2108 has received a number of inquiries about when the next scheduled wage increase will take place at Verizon. The next scheduled wage increase will go into effect on June 21, 2020. A 2.5% increase will be applied to all wage steps in all wage tables of the current collective bargaining agreement.

Are you “WEARING RED” on Thursdays?

Personals

We wish to extend sincere sympathy to the family and friends of:

James Todd, a retired member, who passed away on February 16, 2020.

Harold “Morgan” Moran, a retired member, who passed away on April 4, 2020.

Doretha Leftwood, a retired member, who passed away on May 3, 2020.

Congratulations to Recent Retiree:

Mike Arnone



Thinking About Retirement?

Please join us for a retirement benefits webinar presented by **Networth Financial Group** to see if the reality of retirement is on your horizon!!

Dreaming About Retiring?

Tuesday, June 9, 2020 @ 6:00 PM

Thursday, June 25, 2020 @ 6:00 PM



Now, more than ever, we want you to know that we are available for you. Whether you have questions about retirement benefits, retirement income, the market, or any other planning topic please don't hesitate to contact us. We hope to make this easy for you by offering individual calls, virtual seminars and virtual appointments.

Reservations are required and to RSVP you may call Networth at (800)-859-2212, or register online at Networth.net. **Instructions to join will be emailed within 24 hours of the webinar.**

RMC 2108 Retirees Corner

With all that is going on, The RMC Executive Board hopes that all our members are healthy and are following the safety recommendations that have been put in place to keep us safe.

To date, in keeping with social distancing guidelines, the RMC meetings have been canceled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.



RMC 2108

In an effort to keep in touch and disseminate available information for our RMC members, there will be a virtual meeting on June 10, 2020 at 11:00am. The meeting will be open to all RMC members who want to participate. If you plan to join us, please download the **Zoom** App onto your computer device. Please use a computer device with a camera so we will be able to see you. **We will send you a link and meeting number and pass code the day prior to the meeting.**

If you have any questions, please call Janice Crowe on (410) 533-5370.

We hope to see you on our Zoom call June 10th!!

**Calvin C Foster Jr
President- RMC 2108**

CWA Political Action Fund: The Best Investment You'll Ever Make!

There is plenty at stake and you can make a difference!!

It's a simple reality: Everything we win at the bargaining table can be taken away by the state legislature, an act of Congress or the stroke of the President's pen. Wealthy, powerful special interest groups are spending hundreds of millions of dollars trying to do just that and silence the voice of working families in our nation.



That's why we've got to use our voice and demand our seat at the table where political decisions are made that affect our lives.

In politics, money matters. Like it or not, campaign contributions are critical to electing friends of working families. As Union members, we will never have the money to match Corporate America. But we have a resource the wealthy special interest can never match – people.

CWA-PAC is the political action committee of the Communications Workers of America. Your voluntary contribution – as little as \$1.00 a week – combined with the donations of thousands of other CWA members, make us a powerful voice.

Your contribution to CWA-PAC makes a difference by helping us:

- Mobilize CWA Members in support of political candidates who support our issues;
- Make campaign contributions to candidates who support working families;
- Inform you and other CWA members about where the candidates stand on the issues, Ensure that when we speak, our elected officials listen and respond.

Politics is not a spectator sport. If we sit on the sidelines, we lose. But this is no game. The consequences involve everything that matters to us, our jobs, our standard of living, our health insurance, our children's education, our retirement security, and so much more.

Invest in your future. Sign up for CWA-PAC by contacting CWA Local 2108 on 301-595-2108 or talk with the Union Stewards in your workplace today.

Local 2108 Calendar

JUNE 2020

- 3 Chief Stewards Meeting - **Cancelled**
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 5 CWA Presidents Meeting
Washington, DC
- 10 RMC 2108 Meeting - 11:00am - **Via Zoom**
- 10 Membership Meeting - 6:00pm - **Cancelled**
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 21 Father's Day



JULY 2020

- 4 Independence Day



- 8 RMC 2108 Meeting - 11:00am
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 8 Membership Meeting - 6:00pm
Local Office, Beltsville, MD

WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated or have any effect on my personal working conditions, I respectfully request my union representative, officer or steward to be present at this meeting. Without union representation, I choose not to participate in this discussion.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: Membership Meeting - Wednesday, June 10, 2020, 6:00pm - Cancelled
RMC 2108 Meeting - Wednesday, June 10, 2020, 11:00am - Via Zoom



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