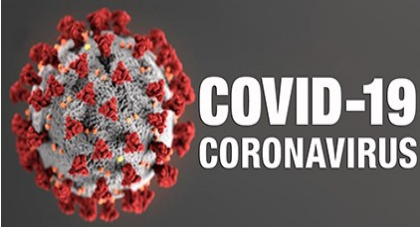


Verizon Implements Covid-19 Protocol Changes - CWA Urges Vaccinations

As the Covid-19 pandemic continues to grip our region, protocols involving exposures and confirmed cases continue to evolve. Last month Verizon notified CWA of the following policy changes in accordance with CDC Guidelines.

The following are the most recent changes:



**COVID-19
CORONAVIRUS**

If an **unvaccinated** employee is exposed to COVID but remains asymptomatic, **quarantine will be unpaid** (except to the extent the employee qualifies for a medical/religious accommodation or uses available paid time

off such as vacation, excused work days, and available illness absence days or any time available under any applicable state or local law regarding quarantines). Regardless of pay treatment, this time will **not** be chargeable under the absence control plan. **In order to allow time for currently unvaccinated employees to get vaccinated, Verizon is announcing this change with an effective date of November 1, 2021.**

Effective immediately, for on-site employees with COVID symptoms, Verizon has updated the time frame to get tested and provide test results from 5 days to 3 days.

However, vaccinated persons with an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 are not required to quarantine if they meet all of the following criteria:

- Are fully vaccinated (i.e., >2 weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or 2 weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine.
- Are within 3 months following receipt of the last dose in the series.
- Have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure.

Persons who do not meet **all** 3 of the above criteria should continue to follow current quarantine guidance after exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

Additionally, anyone who has had close contact with someone with COVID-19 and who meets the following criteria does **NOT** need to stay home:

- Someone who has been fully vaccinated within the last three months and shows no symptoms of COVID-19

Or:

- Someone who has had the COVID-19 illness within the previous 3 months **and**
- Has recovered **and**

- Remains without COVID-19 symptoms (for example, cough, shortness of breath)

CWA and Verizon are continuing to review the recent guidance from the White House regarding OSHA vaccination requirements for employers generally and the Executive Order that will specifically apply to federal contractors. Further guidance on both is expected. Local 2108 will closely monitor that and keep you updated on any future changes to COVID protocols.

2022 Union Plus Scholarship Program

Since 1991, the Union Plus Scholarship Program has awarded more than \$5 million to students of working families who want to begin or continue their post-secondary education. Over 3,500 families have benefited from our commitment to higher education.



Eligibility

Current and retired members of participating unions, their spouses and their dependent children (as defined by IRS regulations). At least one year of continuous union membership by the applicant, applicant's spouse or parent (if applicant is a dependent). The one year membership minimum must be satisfied by May 31, 2022.

Application Timeline:

Applications are available starting in mid-June, and a complete application must be received on or before 12:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) on **January 31, 2022**. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered.

Scholarship Award Amounts:

Amounts range from \$500 to \$4,000. These one-time cash awards are for study beginning in the Fall of 2022. Students may re-apply each year.

Award date:

The Scholarship Committee will determine recipients of scholarship awards by May 31st each year.

To apply, go to:

<https://www.unionplus.org/benefits/money/union-plus-scholarships>

CWA & Verizon Extend Covid-19 Agreement

COVID-19 Work at Home Agreement: This agreement has been extended through February 5, 2022 for all eligible employees working from home. In addition, an associate may withdraw from work-at-home. If an associate does so, he/she will only be eligible to subsequently re-elect work-from-home at the Company's discretion. The Company will honor an associate's notice to withdraw from work at-home as soon as practical (generally within 14 days but no more than 30 days). The Union and the company also agreed to specify that in the event that "face to face" feedback is required, such feedback will take place electronically.

CWA Local 2108 is urging all members to take advantage of readily available vaccinations to help ensure everyone's safety as you care for your day-to-day needs in preparation of returning to the office when the Work at Home agreement expires

**To receive CWA action alerts via text message,
Text CWAAction to 69866**

Today is the day I have dreaded for the past eighteen months. Today I am writing about the first active member of CWA Local 2108 to pass away from COVID-19.



Alfonso Michael Bell, a Fiber Customer Support Analyst at the Chesapeake Complex passed away from one of the new variants of the Coronavirus on September 19th, eleven days before his forty-seventh birthday. He had worked for Verizon and been a CWA member since May of 1997.

Always very serious about doing the right thing for his customers, Alfonso never hesitated to help his coworkers learn better ways to provide excellent customer service. He was known in the workplace as an avid reader, a huge Ravens fan and an all-around good guy whose greatest joy was his wife and son.

Alfonso was a proud native of Baltimore City where he attended Douglas High School and Coppin State University. He met the love of his life, Erika Alleyne, in 2000 and they married in 2004. They became the proud parents of their son, Alfonso Jeremiah (AJ) Bell seven years ago. Alfonso loved good food, good books and cheering for the Baltimore Ravens and the Liverpool Football Club. His hearty laugh will be remembered by all who knew him. Alfonso, an only child, is also survived by his mother, Sally Edgerton-Bell.

A faithful Jehovah Witness, Alfonso did not receive a COVID vaccination due to his religious beliefs. Because of the pandemic Alfonso's remains were cremated, and the family decided not to host family or friends at this time. Expressions of sympathy can be sent to Erika, AJ and Sally at 3 Quiet Cove Court, Essex MD, 21221. In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to that address also, and will be used to set up a college fund for AJ.



Please join me in keeping Alfonso's loving family in your thoughts and prayers.

If you have not received the COVID vaccine yet, please spend some time researching recommendations from the CDC and FDA and reading the latest statistics. At this point 99% of those who are placed in an Intensive Care Unit and/or die of the virus are unvaccinated. Every action we take – getting vaccinated, social distancing, wearing face coverings and practicing good hygiene – decreases the odds of us getting sick or passing this horrible virus along to others. You can

find a vaccination site at www.vaccines.gov or by calling toll-free 1-800-232-0233.

I feel it is our responsibility to do everything we can to protect those who are not eligible to receive the vaccine (the young, people with certain health conditions such as transplant recipients, those with religious opposition to vaccines, etc.). I'm sure, like me, you've watched some of the multitude of videos made by unvaccinated people who are dying of COVID. They all say they wish they could turn back the hands of time and get vaccinated, and they beg friends, family members, even strangers to take the vaccine before they, too, catch the virus. I've yet to watch a video of someone on their deathbed who was vaccinated and is begging others to **not** get the vaccine.

In solidarity,

Marilyn

Open Enrollment at Verizon - Oct. 5-14

Open enrollment at Verizon will be conducted on October 5-14, 2021. Your current benefits elections will automatically continue for 2022 unless you make a change. This includes your current medical (including prescription drug), dental, vision, life and accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D), disability insurance, tobacco user status and spending account contributions.

However, your Health Assessment credit will not automatically carry over into 2022. In order to receive a wellness credit for 2022, you will need to complete one Wellness Activity by December 31, 2020, which will help reduce your medical premiums by \$100.

We also urge every member to read the Annual Enrollment guide carefully and make sure if you have any dependents who will be considered full time students to correctly add or drop them from coverage accordingly. A dependent child is eligible for medical coverage through the end of the month in which he/she attains age 26 regardless of student status. Coverage may be extended beyond age 26 for a dependent child who meets the conditions of being disabled.

Support the AFL-CIO Community Services Agency Through the United Way Campaign



The mission of the Community Services Agency is to improve the lives of workers and their families by meeting their human and social services needs; by building di-

verse coalitions to promote and protect dignity and justice for workers; and by empowering workers and their unions to make their communities better places to live, work, raise a family and retire. Some of the critical services provided by the Community Services Agency are:

Emergency Assistance Fund

CSA raises and spends approximately \$120,000 annually and assists about 350 families with emergency financial needs- prevention of utility cut-offs and evictions, needed prescriptions, transportation so members can keep working, food, child care and other needs. Eligibility criteria apply.

Information and Referral Services

CSA annually refers hundreds of metro area residents to community resources for all kinds of social services assistance.

Lay-off and Strike Preparation and Support for workers and their families

CSA provides assistance preparing for interruption in work and income due to layoff, RIF or strike, as well as help accessing available services.

Educational Workshops for Unions and Their Members

CSA provides information and workshops on a variety of topics including budgeting and financial management, retirement planning, preparing for lay-off and job loss, helping co-workers with substance abuse problems, finding care for aging parents, and other topics of interest to workers.

Please support the Community Services Agency using these Designation Numbers: United Way and DC One Fund Campaigns: #8253 * Combined Federal Campaign: #19579 Maryland Charity Campaign: #9320



Buy Union Made Cleaning Products

It may not be spring, but with Americans still dealing with an unprecedented health pandemic, every season is cleaning season. Whether your home is still your work space or whether you're back in an office, the following products will help keep your space clean. These ethical cleaning supplies are made by companies who treat their workers fairly and give them a voice on the job.

Keep it clean, stay safe and let's all help build a stronger America.

- Ajax (IBT, IUE-CWA)
- All Laundry Detergent (IBT)
- Borateam Laundry Detergent (UFCW, IBT, USW)
- Bowl Fresh Toilet Bowl Sanitizer, Deodorizers (IBT, IBB, ICWUC-UFCW)
- Clorox (IBT, ICWUC-UFCW)
- Craftsman (IBEW, IBT)
- Final Touch Fabric Softener (IBT)
- Liquid Plumber (IBT)
- Lysol (IBT)
- Mop & Glo (IBT)
- Purex (IBT, UFCW, USW)
- Renewenz Dishwashing Detergent (IBDW, IBT, USW)
- Rit Dye Laundry Treatment (IUE-CWA)
- Snuggle (ICWUC-UFCW, IBT)
- Soft Scrub (IBT)
- Sunlight Detergent (IBT)



Are you "WEARING RED" on Thursdays?

RMC 2108 Retirees Corner

We retirees have a lot to be thankful for. But after a career of steady employment (a result of years of fighting for respectable collective bargaining agreements) great health care and retirement benefits, we must continue to weather the storm until this health crises has passed and we can get back to normal and enjoy the fruits of our retirement.

For the safety of our members, the RMC 2108 executive board has made a decision to continue our monthly zoom meetings until it is safe to conduct meetings in person.

The October meeting will be on October 13, 2021 at 11:00am . Notifications will be sent by e-mail with access information before the date. If you have any questions with login issues, please call Janice Crowe 410-533-5370 or Jenny Sylvester 301-873-9645.

Stay Safe !

Calvin C Foster Jr
President- RMC 2108



Personals

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

Carter Anthony Cooper, great grandson of retiree **Arnita Pinkard-Ward**, who passed away August 30, 2021.

Alfonso Bell, an active member who passed away on September 19, 2021.

Congratulations to Recent Retirees:

Theresa Hoffmaster	Glenn Melton	Joyce Cooper
Retha Woodberry	Edward Brooks, Jr.	Michael T Anderson
Dallas Bellamy	Geraldine Brown	Joyce Colhouer
Michele Moore	Victor Johnson	F C Jones
Janet Reid	Patricia Evans	Lorrie Simpson
Elizabeth Brown	Paul Devore	Yvette Carter-Davis
JoAnne Herman	Roslyn Robinson-Whalen	Stannley Clinton
Martina Newman		Deborah McCracken
Edward Radley, Jr.	Michael L. Thomas	Everlyn Clark
Delores Griffin	Regina Collins	Gil Armstrong, Jr.
Sharon Greene	Roma Gordon	Rose Coulter
John W Robinson	Kim Barno	Wanda Streeter
Artise McAlister	Carolyn Waddy	Terri Thomas
Lora Edwards	Doug Ball	Ellen Bland
Cordella Holloway	Keisha Edwards-Gold	Ronda Cooper
Frances C Miller	Michelle Lorek	April Johnson
Kecia Ivey	Terry Hayes	Zanaide Moultrie
Shelly Gross		



Thinking About Retirement?

You may want to check out this important workshop presented by **Nettworth Financial** Group to see if the reality of retirement is on your horizon!!

Retirement Benefits Webinar

Thursday, October 7, 2021 at 6:30 PM - Please join this meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

To join by phone - Dial In: **(267) 831-0333** or **(301) 715-8592**
Webinar ID - 840 5728 6640 Password: 867915

5 Keys to a Happy, Fulfilling Retirement

Tuesday, October 19, 2021 at 6:30 PM - Ruth Chris Steak House, 1777 Reisterstown Rd. Pikesville, MD

Wednesday, October 20, 2021 at 6:30 PM - Ruth Chris Steak House, 4100 Monument Corner Dr. Suite 101, Fairfax, VA

Medicare Basics Webinar

Thursday, October 28, 2021 at 6:30 PM - Please join this meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

To join by phone - Dial In: **(267) 831-0333** or **(301) 715-8592**
Webinar ID - 861 3223 8937 Password: 42429

Reservations are required and to RSVP you may call Nettworth at (800)-859-2212, or register online at Nettworth.net.





CWA Urges the Senate to Pass the "Freedom to Vote" Act

The Freedom to Vote Act was introduced last month and is a critical step forward in protecting voting rights and reforming our democracy. This bill fights back against the systemic attacks by state legislatures designed to restrict voting rights and intimidate voters from participating in this fundamental pillar of our democracy.

The Freedom to Vote Act is a transformative piece of legislation that contains crucial provisions from the For the People Act, which passed the House earlier this year. It will protect the right to vote, end partisan gerrymandering, reduce the influence of big money in politics, strengthen our election infrastructure, and stop partisan election subversion.

CWA applauds the members of the Senate who have worked tirelessly to find common ground to protect this fundamental right and curtail the efforts of Republican led state legislatures to undermine our voting rights. We call on the Senate to pass this legislation without delay and take steps to abolish the archaic, racist, and undemocratic legislative filibuster so that all of us have a say in the decisions that impact our lives and to ensure the foundation of our democracy is preserved.

CWA Supports the "Build Back Better" Act

CWA members across the country will be asked to mobilize to ensure that Congress passes the Build Back Better Act which will create jobs, cut taxes, lower costs for working families, and make it easier for workers to join unions.

The most recent version of the bill includes several key provisions from the PRO Act: real financial penalties for employers who retaliate against workers organizing a union, a ban on mandatory anti-union meetings, personal liability for executives who knowingly break labor law, and a ban on permanently replacing or discriminating against workers who go on strike.

Every single worker deserves to be paid fairly, have safe working conditions, and shouldn't be punished for organizing a union and speaking up for their rights. Take action to urge Congress to pass this critical piece of legislation by signing the petition and participating in upcoming actions. Take action now!! cwa.org/buildbackbetteract



Local 2108 Calendar

OCTOBER 2021

- 6 Chief Stewards Meeting - 9:00am
Via Zoom
- 13 RMC 2108 Meeting - 11:00am - Via Zoom
- 13 Membership Meeting - 6:00pm
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 18-20 78th CWA Bi-Annual Convention Via Zoom
- 31 Halloween



NOVEMBER 2021

- 7 Daylight Savings Time Ends
Set clocks back 1 hour
- 10 RMC 2108 Meeting - 11:00am - Via Zoom
- 10 Membership Meeting - 6:00pm
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 11 Veteran's Day
Local Office Closed
- 25-26 Thanksgiving Holiday
Local Office Closed

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, October 13, 2021 - 6:00pm RMC 2108 Meeting - Wednesday, October 13, 2021 - 11:00am - Via Zoom



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 Tamera Nelson - Vice President
 LaTasha Carpenter - Vice President
 Johnny Brown - Secretary-Treasurer
 Amory Proctor - Executive Vice President
 Marilyn Irwin - President

2108News

Published Monthly
 Printing Done In-House
 Communications Workers of America Local 2108

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
ISSN: 0162-248X

COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA
 LOCAL 2108
 10782 Rhode Island Avenue
 Beltsville, MD 20705-2513

Non-Profit Organization
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