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Request for Joint Meeting on Vaccinations, Jul 29, 2021

July 30, 2021

Original letter

Professor Kelly Hannah-Moffat
Vice-President, People Strategy, Equity and Culture
University of Toronto

Dear Kelly,

In the wake of plans to expand in-person work in September, CUPE 3902, USW 1998, and UTFA are receiving a great many questions about the Administration's approach to vaccinations. Faculty, librarians, and other staff are all expressing significant fear and uncertainty. Recent communications from the Administration have created additional questions and contributed to the confusion.

The science is clear – vaccinations are a critical line of defence against COVID-19. Yet vaccination rates in Canada are leveling off; the rate at which people are getting their first shots is currently so low that it is anticipated that less than 75% of the population will have received their first dose by the end of August. Additionally, it is clear that a single dose provides insufficient protection against the Delta variant.

There is no time to waste before the start of fall term. Accordingly, UTFA, USW 1998, and CUPE 3902 are urgently requesting a joint meeting with the Administration to discuss the University's policy and plans related to vaccines, physical distancing, and building and classroom occupancy.

In our view, such a meeting is necessitated both by the precautionary principle and U of T's own Health and Safety Policy. Although we have been having ongoing discussions related to ventilation, filtration, and other measures at our respective Health and Safety tables, there have been no dedicated, or in-depth, conversations about UofT's vaccination strategy. Given the gravity of the issues at stake and our common need to work together to maximize vaccination rates on campus, a joint meeting is critical.

We all want to work together to make our campuses a safer place for all members of the UofT

community.

We look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

Collen Burke, President, USW Local 1998

Amy Conwell, Chair, CUPE 3902

Terezia Zorić, President, UTFA

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