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James Hart, President

Metal Trades Department, AFL-CIO • 815 Black Lives Matter Plaza • Washington, DC 20006

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TO: All Metal Trades Council Presidents

FROM: James Hart, President
Metal Trades Department, AFL-CIO

DATE: May 19, 2022

RE: MTC Representation Activities / Updated Covid-19 Regulations

Dear Metal Trades Council President:

COVID 19 regulations have been relaxed in most areas throughout the United States and Canada. However, all Metal Trades Council leaders must remain diligent and aware of the dangers associated with the infection and strive to protect our affiliates and their members from contamination both in the workplace and when conducting organized council activities.

The Department recognizes that most council by-laws mandate delegate meetings are conducted live and under one roof. These assemblies are crucial to keeping affiliates and bargaining unit members informed, especially at a time when council leaders are engaged in collective bargaining and working hard to protect workers from employers and legislators who look to take advantage of them during a time of decreased public access.

There is no doubt that Zoom and multiple other videoconferencing applications are here to stay. Neither their effectiveness nor use should be degraded or minimized by council officers as this platform provides both a time-saving and cost-effective forum that benefits council affiliates and bargaining unit members through heightened representational access. However, live meetings are without a doubt more compelling and exciting. Videoconferencing cannot replace the crucial function of such gatherings.

Accordingly, the Department encourages any local council not doing so to reinstate all in-person council representation activities in an orderly, safe, and productive manner. Should a council choose (without valid reason) not to comply with this request, they may be subject to charges from affiliates and bargaining unit members of violation of Taft Hartley and the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act.

However, in doing so, council officers are urged to consider the implementation of the following guidelines:

1. **Strictly abide by all federal, state, and local COVID 19 rules and regulations governing public assembly.**
 - a. In the absence of government or institutional prohibitions regarding COVID 19, council officers should adopt common-sense safety measures and enforce them. All safety measures need to be adequately communicated to attendees prior to the meeting.

2. Limit the service of refreshments. By eliminating refreshments, council officers eliminate a common gathering spot where germs can be easily spread.
3. Consider hosting meetings in larger spaces to provide for socially distant meetings.
4. Clean thoroughly before and after meetings.
5. Encourage hand washing and sanitizing throughout the assembly.
6. Host hybrid meetings to accommodate those who state that they feel uncomfortable attending in person.

Should you have any questions regarding this important request, please feel free to contact your respective Department General Representative at your convenience.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

cc: MTD KEY Representatives
MTD General Representatives