

**MLPAO**  **APLMO**  
Medical Laboratory Professionals' Association of Ontario  
L'Association des professionnels des laboratoires médicaux de l'Ontario

June 12, 2020

Premier Doug Ford  
Minister Christine Elliott  
Legislative Building, Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

RE: Hazard Pay for Ontario Medical Laboratory Professionals

Dear Premier Ford and Minister Elliott,

As we hit the 1 million mark for lab tests for COVID-19, a reminder that Ontario's Medical Laboratory Technologists and Medical Laboratory Assistant/Technicians have processed and analyzed each one, including your own tests this past week.

We have been working around the clock now for months. **Despite drawing blood and other samples from COVID-19 patients and handling infected tests, we were one of the few front-line groups excluded from Temporary Pandemic Pay.**

77% of labs across our province entered the pandemic short-staffed, and this fight continues to reduce our numbers. **88% of lab staff testing for COVID-19 are exhausted, experiencing burnout from no breaks, no days off, and long hours.** 34% of labs testing for COVID-19 have had a team member test positive; 24% have seen staff take early retirement because of the stress.

Once elective surgeries and new testing is added, 68% of lab managers fear their teams will be unable to meet demands. In a profession where we were already anticipating 44% retiring in the next 4-8 years, many are leaving now, unable to keep up with this pace. The lab has been extensively under-staffed and continuously under-funded. The current conditions lab staff are facing is a direct result of this.

Manitoba, Nova Scotia, and other provinces have provided hazard or "risk payment" to lab professionals who are at increased risk of COVID-19 infection. We demand that the same be considered for lab professionals in Ontario.

Hazard pay is about a recognition of the danger lab professionals are facing every day of this pandemic. It is about the importance of lab professionals in the fight against COVID-19. Even a small boost would ensure chronically under-staffed and under-funded labs will be able to keep the few staff they have left to scale up testing and bring a swift end to the outbreak.



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Chief Executive Officer  
Medical Laboratory Professionals' Association of Ontario