COVID-19 Workplace Testing Standard

Date: _____

To: _____*(Name and Position of Manager)*

_____ *(Company Name and Suburb)*

We are writing to say that any workplace testing must be:

- An effective control to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission
- Done fairly and transparently
- Done in consultation with union members, delegates and HSRs

So, we ask that you adopt the following standard:

COVID WORKPLACE TESTING STANDARD

There are circumstances in which mandatory COVID testing in workplaces is reasonable and lawful on safety grounds, just as drug and alcohol testing is reasonable when done fairly and justly. Both COVID testing and D&A testing are significant workplace and public health and safety issues. Every worker should be safe at work.

Introduction of a clear testing policy (process and principles)

Workers and their union must be consulted about the introduction of any testing policy, and the detail of the policy.

The policy should ideally include:

- The purpose, scope and duration of testing
- Risks assessments that have led to the introduction of the policy
- How information about testing is stored and may be shared
- The type and frequency of the testing
- The testing procedure and who will conduct the testing
- That all mandatory testing is done on paid time, and that workers are provided with paid leave until they get the results of testing, and paid leave if required to isolate

- What happens if a worker is unable or unwilling to participate in workplace mandated testing?

The consultation process should be used to agree on a fair process and agreed outcome if a worker does not participate in testing. E.g. "a worker who refuses testing is to be stood down and able to access accrued leave, until such time as testing is no longer mandated in the workplace."
However, members need to know that they should not refuse testing solely due to a lack of consultation.

Testing- Types and Effectiveness

Type	Accuracy	Risk/Effectiveness
Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)	highly accurate, but takes 24-48 hours to get a result	Not effective in controlling the risk of a worker being infectious while at work.
Rapid antigen testing (RAT)	less accurate, but can provide a result in around 10 minutes	This allows for testing at the start of each shift prior to mixing with other workers – so is a more effective risk control and should be the type of testing used.
Public health PCA testing		In a number of states workers are not able to access for the purpose of surveillance testing, and this can change over time.

How testing is done
Testing should be conducted at the workplace, on paid time, prior to commencing usual duties. Interaction with other workers should be minimized until the test result is known.

What happens if a rapid antigen test is "not negative"?
- The person should not be allowed to enter the workplace until they have undertaken a PCR test and returned a negative result.
- If the person is an employee they should be paid for the time it takes to have the PCR test and until their result is known.

Test One Test All
Any mandatory testing must be applied to all persons entering at a workplace, including managers, contractors, etc .

Delegates and HSRs to have paid time to speak with workers
Employers must also provide union delegates and HSRs with adequate paid time to educate workers about mandatory testing and their rights to representation, both before it is introduced and once it has commenced. It is an employer's role to enforce the policy, and

union delegates and HSR's role to ensure it has been fairly and equally applied and can assist with building a safe workplace for all workers.

Name	Signature