NOVA SCOTIA
Health and Wellness

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February 26, 2020

Dear Employer:

Re: request for testing for the novel coronavirus (SARS-Co-V2) and a medical note to return to work

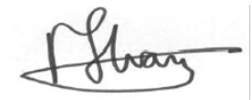
It has been brought to my attention that you have requested that one of your employees who recently returned from a country affected by SARS-Co-V2 be tested in order to provide a medical letter indicating that they are not carrying this virus.

The consensus among Public Health experts is that, based on current knowledge, there is a low risk of SARS-Co-V2 being spread by an infected individual while they remain without symptoms. Travellers returning from affected areas are screened by Canada Border Services agents upon their return to Canada. Those with symptoms are sent directly for medical assessment. Depending on the exact location(s) where they travelled, those who do not have symptoms are given clear instructions to either self-isolate for 14 days since they left the affected area or to closely monitor their health.

Both groups are also instructed to call 811 if they develop symptoms of respiratory illness (e.g. fever, cough or shortness of breath). This same information for returning travellers is also being provided to the Nova Scotia public through media and social media

Therefore, it is inappropriate and unnecessary to test for SARS-Co-V2 in asymptomatic people who have returned from an area affected by SARS-Co-V2 and such tests will not be performed by the Nova Scotia health system. In addition, the practice of requiring medical letters to return to work are not necessary or appropriate except in special circumstances.

Yours sincerely,



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