



**To: All Unifor members, Local Union Presidents, Recording Secretaries and Staff**

March 25, 2022

Dear members,

On Wednesday, the Unifor leadership team provided an update on the National Executive Board's (NEB) review of an independent external investigation regarding a complaint that former National President Jerry Dias violated the union's Constitution.

The findings of the investigation are deeply disappointing and disturbing. We understand the outrage that many of you feel. We share that outrage too.

Jerry Dias stands charged with breaching [Article 4](#), of the Constitution, the union's Code of Ethics and Democratic Practices, after the investigator determined that on the balance of probabilities Dias breached his obligations in an interaction with a third party supplier. The breach did not involve any Unifor funds.

We are now providing a further update on the investigation. It is Unifor's strict practice to maintain the confidentiality of complainants; we see confidentiality as an important component of an effective internal complaints process.

However, expressing a desire to be transparent, we can confirm with his permission that Unifor Assistant to the National President Chris MacDonald filed the Code of Ethics Complaint against Jerry Dias.

The investigator found that upon receipt of the funds Chris MacDonald took immediate steps to report it. He was determined to be a credible witness.

Furthermore, the investigator's mandate also included a review of the conduct of the complainant. The investigator determined that Chris MacDonald did not engage in any

breach of the Unifor Constitution.

The investigator also determined there was interference in the form of contact with the complainant.

As you may be aware, Jerry Dias released a statement that he is entering a residential rehabilitation facility to deal with substance abuse issues. We hope that he is getting the medical treatment that he feels that he needs. We also understand that a news organization has come into possession of a medical document about Jerry Dias. Be assured that Unifor was not the source of any such document. In compliance with our privacy policies, Unifor will not be commenting further on his health or on what inferences may be drawn from the medical documentation released to media.

Recap of the facts that the external, independent investigation determined:

- In December 2021 and January 2022, Dias promoted a supplier's rapid test kits to various Unifor employers, either directly or through Unifor staff under his direction. Several employers of Unifor members purchased tests as a result of Dias' introductions.
- At some point prior to January 20, 2022, Dias accepted the sum of \$50,000 from the supplier.
- On January 20, 2022 Dias gave a Unifor employee what Dias said was half of the funds (\$25,000), telling the employee that it had come from the supplier.
- The employee subsequently lodged a complaint under the Unifor Code of Ethics and delivered the funds that he received from Dias to the National Secretary-Treasurer.

After receiving the complaint on January 26, our union acted immediately. We commissioned an external independent investigator and gave them full power to conduct a thorough inquiry.

Jerry Dias was asked to participate in the investigation but the findings were made without the benefit of his evidence. He has provided medical documentation indicating that he suffers from a number of health issues and went on medical leave on February 6, 2022. On March 11, he notified the NEB of his immediate retirement due to health issues.

The results of the investigation were provided to the National Secretary-Treasurer's office on March 15, 2022. On March 21 and 22, the investigator's findings were reviewed by the NEB.

### **Next Steps:**

As outlined in our Constitution, there will be a hearing before the NEB, where Jerry Dias will have an opportunity to fully present information and arguments concerning the charge.

The NEB has also passed a motion to ask all candidates for national officer positions in the upcoming elections to pause their campaign activities, for the time being, while the union focuses on this situation.

The NEB will meet in the coming weeks to discuss the vacancy of the National President position. The members of your National Executive Board have been outstanding in dealing with this matter so far.

It is our deeply held belief that no Unifor member is above our Constitution or its Code of Ethics.

Accountability and transparency are core principles of our union. We will continue to keep you informed by providing timely updates on future developments. Our work as a union will continue, according to the principles of democracy, solidarity, transparency and accountability on which we have always relied, to move you and all Unifor members forward.

In solidarity,

**Lana Payne, Unifor National Secretary Treasurer**  
**Renaud Gagné, Unifor Québec Director**  
**Gavin McGarrigle, Unifor Western Regional Director**  
**Naureen Rizvi, Unifor Ontario Regional Director**  
**Linda MacNeil, Unifor Atlantic Regional Director**