
DATE: April 9, 2020

TO: Depot Network

RE: **COVID-19 Protocols – Lineups and Customer Tensions**

Attention Depot Owners, Operators and Staff,

On April 8, 2021, an incident occurred at a Calgary Depot in which an argument between customers turned violent while they were lined up outside. While there were no injuries and the depot in question acted properly throughout, this incident serves as an educational opportunity for our industry.

With the end of the COVID-19 pandemic in all our sights, the BCMB would like to remind Depot owners and staff to remain vigilant and continue to prioritize the safety of both depot staff and customers. During these tense times, it is crucial that communication regarding COVID-19 protocols is clear to the public in order to avoid confusion and arguments. Please ensure that instructions are clearly written and highly visible to customers as they approach the depot. It may also be necessary to increase staffing to ensure that lineups are short to avoid stressing customers.

Please also ensure that your staff are aware of safety procedures. There are many articles online that can provide you with information on how to best secure the safety of you and your staff. One source offers the following:

Most employees want to do the best they can for their employers. When a potentially violent incident occurs, in the heat of the moment an employee may try to reduce the loss for the business and put themselves at risk. It is critical that employees understand that their safety is the first priority. There is no expectation for employees to be heroes. Money and merchandise can always be replaced; people can't.

Procedural controls including training, safe work procedures and scheduling all have a significant impact on how vulnerable employees are to potential violence. It is recommended that Retail businesses do the following:

- *Provide employees with specific training on workplace violence;*
- *Provide specific written procedures for working alone;*
- *Provide specific written procedures for higher-risk situations such as opening, closing, and cashing out;*





- *Evaluate employee scheduling. Consider how many employees are on shift and who they are.*

Written procedures do not need to be complicated; they should focus on minimizing the risk for employees. Consider consulting your employees — front-line workers often have good ideas about potential problems and how to solve them.

As always, your safety is our top priority.

If you have any questions, please direct them to the BCMB Compliance team, at Compliance@bcmb.ab.ca.

