PRT 258177

Senator Chantal Petitclerc

Chair, Standing Senate Committee

on Social Affairs, Science and Technology

c/o Mr. Daniel Charbonneau

Senate of Canada

Ottawa, ON K1A 0A4

Dear Senator Petitclerc:

Please find enclosed, in both official languages, the information requested by the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology following the appearance of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada departmental officials on May 13, 2020.

I trust that the members will find this information useful.

Sincerely,

Sophie Bédard

Director, Parliamentary Relations and Portfolio Coordination

Enclosure

**Question from Senator Rosemary Moodie, Independent Senators Group (Ontario):** …Of these 11,000 [temporary foreign workers] who came in April, how many workers have become sick? What is the status of their disease burden? What supports do they have? Are they having full access to medical care and critical care if needed?

**Response:**

Temporary foreign workers will have access to medical care and critical care if needed. If a worker becomes symptomatic at any time, the employer must immediately arrange for the worker to be fully isolated from others, and contact local public health officials. If the worker becomes ill during the initial quarantine period, the worker is to be paid by the employer. If the worker becomes ill after the initial quarantine period, they may be entitled to either paid or unpaid sick leave, depending on their employment contract and the relevant federal, provincial or territorial employment standards. This could include new provisions in several jurisdictions for job-protected leave because of the COVID-19 pandemic. A worker may also be eligible for Employment Insurance (EI) or the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). In both cases, temporary foreign workers are subject to the same eligibility criteria as Canadians and permanent residents. More details are available on the Canadian Emergency Benefit website.

Based on the Temporary Foreign Workers program guidance, temporary foreign workers should receive coverage equivalent to other residents of Canada. If provincial/territorial health care is not provided from the first day the worker arrives in Canada, equivalent private health insurance must be provided by the employer until the worker becomes eligible for the provincial/territorial plan.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada does not track information on temporary foreign workers and cannot provide answers regarding the number of workers that have become sick or the status of their disease burden.