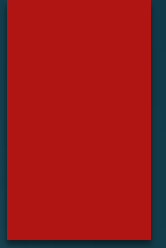


Preparing Yourself for Strike Action!

MAY 2021

EDUCATION REP



What we will cover in this workshop

- What does being on strike mean?
- Preparing yourself for a strike
- The financials of a strike

Why do Unions go on Strike?

- When a trade Union is unable to negotiate a collective agreement, they sometimes choose to strike. A *strike* includes a cessation of work, or a refusal to work by employees for the purpose of compelling their employer to agree to the terms or conditions of employment.

What does a strike mandate mean?

- A strike mandate vote is NOT a vote to strike. Rather, it IS a vote to show the employer that you support your bargaining team and the proposals you've developed together, by giving your bargaining team a mandate to call for a strike, at some point in the future, if necessary to secure a fair contract for all of us. Again, a strike mandate vote is NOT a vote to go on strike.
- In fact, history shows that a high "YES" vote in the strike mandate vote tends to reduce the likelihood that a strike will be necessary, as the employer will become more willing to work with our bargaining team to make the improvements to the contract members have asked for.

Can a strike be avoided?

- The best way to avoid a strike or concessions is to convince your employer that members will walk out, if necessary!
- Don't Bluff!

Before the Strike Vote

- Locals need to keep members informed
- Circulate information within the membership
- Talk about the latest offer from Employer
- Talk about what the Union is proposing
- Hold information sessions

Remember!

- It is the members of a Local that decide if their Local goes on strike or not!

Designated workers

- Designated, or essential workers, is someone whose job is considered **essential** to the functioning of society. **Essential** jobs differ depending on jurisdictions, but typically include jobs in the education, health, emergency, and policing sectors.
- It is important to remember that “jobs or positions” are designated, not the person performing the job.
- Designations are negotiated by your bargaining committee.
- Union executive members will not be designated.

Finances of a strike

- Members who are eligible to strike, are expected to strike!
- To receive any financial support, you need to actively participate in strike duties (administrative, picketing, Union office, etc.)
- If you perform 30+ hours of strike duties, you will receive \$60 a day, up to \$300 a week from CUPE National for the duration of the job action.
- If your Local is affiliated to CUPE NB, you will receive an additional \$60 for the first 4 days of the strike.
- Strike pay is tax free
- Donations from other Unions, CUPE Locals, businesses and citizens are common during a strike, it will be up to your Local on how those monies are distributed and used for striking activities.

What about Health Benefits?

- In some cases, employers pay premiums, and members continue to have benefit coverage.
- If the employer refuses to pay its share of premiums, CUPE National will pay group life insurance and extended health care benefit premiums, starting at the beginning of the strike.
- If the employer refuses to allow CUPE to pay the premiums, The National Strike Fund can cover some emergency dental work and medication.
- It is always a good idea to refill all prescriptions before a possible work stoppage.

Employer Property

- Your employers server (emails, and internal programs) will be disconnected (make sure your Local has your personal contact info).
- Your employer will request that you return any of their property prior to a strike (keys, access cards, cell phones, computers, vehicles, tools, or files).
- Many workers have personal items at their workplaces (clothes, pictures, plants, medication), we suggest you take them home prior to a strike, you will not be allowed back in to pick them up.
- Picking up your personal items also sends a message to your employer that the Union isn't kidding around and is ready to go!

Will I be punished for playing a role during the strike?

- You have a legal right to strike
- Employers can not discipline workers for supporting their Union. CUPE will support you if any action is taken by your employer, security or the police.

Do's and Don'ts

DO ✓	Don't ✗
Take instruction from your Picket Captain	Follow the direction of employer security guards
Sign in and out daily	Assume someone will sign in for you
Keep the line moving	Obstruct the general public from using the sidewalk
Dress for the weather, bring snacks	Damage property
Have fun	Show up drunk or stoned
Follow your Picket Captain's direction if 'scabs' are present	Do not threaten or assault 'scabs'
Stay on message when approached by the public or media. Remain polite.	Speak to the media. If approached, direct them to your Picket Captain.