



*United We Bargain,
Together We Win!*

July 2023

| Job Action & Strike FAQ |

What is Job Action?

Job action can take many forms in addition to the traditional strike: a work-to-rule effort; a department by department rotating slowdown; any organized work slowdown designed to restrict output; or other tactics. Job action is any concerted activity designed to give us support and strength in bargaining.

If we vote NO to the tentative agreement, that means we take JOB ACTION. With JOB ACTION we, together as a Union, plan joint actions to convey to the University the importance of our work. During JOB ACTION we continue to bargain.

JOB ACTION can include:

- Campus rallies – showing of support (e.g. speeches, marches, postering, pamphleting etc.)
- Media campaigns – making sure the public is informed of the importance of our issues (press conferences, letters to the editor etc.)
- Informational picketing – being visible and letting other people know how important our issues are.
- Work-to-rule: only working the minimum of the collective agreement, i.e. no overtime, no working lunches, no extended hours – not doing anything that is not required by the collective agreement. If we plan work-to-rule, we can plan morning, lunch-time, and after work events for members to help you stick to the minimum schedule, i.e. rallies, lunches, ‘teach-ins’ and talks, campus events.
- Rolling work slow-downs across campus – not a full strike, but we could plan breaks from work in targeted buildings or departments to convey the message.
- Or a full strike: this is the broadest form of job action. It means we all withdraw our work from the University until they give us a fair deal.

What will Job Action Accomplish?

- We can’t guarantee that we will get a better deal through JOB ACTION. But it will show the University that we want them to do better, and it is in their interest to resolve the collective agreement in a way that members will accept.

- It is also possible that the University could lock us out. That would mean they prevent us from working until we have an agreement.

If we vote to reject the tentative agreement in favour of JOB ACTION, does that mean we will go on strike?

- Not necessarily. We could plan all of the other forms of job action while continuing our work for the University, and then later consider whether to go on full strike.

If we vote to reject the tentative agreement in favour of JOB ACTION, does that mean I won't get paid or receive benefits?

- Unless we all withdraw our work and go on full strike, you should still receive your pay and benefits, even if we are engaging in some other JOB ACTION.

Strike FAQ – How do I qualify for and collect Strike Pay?

In the case of a strike, USW members would withhold their labour from the University and be asked to perform strike duties, such as picket duty or other equivalent work. To be eligible for strike pay members of the unit must:

- be a member in good standing
- perform picket-line duties or alternate equivalent duties
- complete the online forms, which will be made available, and sign in at the picket

Who decides if we go on strike or take job action?

In most cases, the Bargaining Committee will bring the Employer's final offer to the membership with a recommendation to accept or reject the offer. At that point, members will review the document, and then a secret ballot vote will be held. If Members choose to accept the offer, then this will become the new collective agreement and no further action is necessary. If Members choose to reject the offer, then they will be on strike.

How much is Strike Pay?

Strike pay begins the second week of strike action through the STAC Strike Relief Fund and after the initial three week mark, funds from the International start to be paid to members. Weekly strike pay is \$200 minimum per striker, per week. Strike Benefit Pay is paid only to those members who perform

picket line duty or alternate strike-related duties as assigned. Strike pay is non-taxable and USW members do NOT pay dues while on strike. USW Strike Pay is distributed on a per "need basis", meaning some members will qualify for more pay than others dependent upon matters such as the members' financial circumstance, other employment or income, etc.

I am on a paid leave (e.g. maternity, paternity, parental, adoption, sick, or long-term disability); will my benefits be interrupted?

It is USW1998's position that members who are currently on a leave of absence should be considered as not participating in a lockout or strike action and should continue to receive uninterrupted pay and benefits from the Employer. However, this must be negotiated between USW and the Employer. Should the Employer decide to act punitively, the Union would provide strike pay. Members on leave are expected to respect the picket line.

Will I have access to the campus during a lockout or strike?

No, except under limited circumstances where USW1998 has issued a picket line pass (e.g.: to feed lab animals, check time-sensitive experiments, or drop children off at childcare facilities) and the university administration has agreed to allow USW1998 members to enter the university. Even members who receive such passes would still participate in other strike or lockout related activities, such as picket-line duty.

What is Picket-line duty?

Picketing is a peaceful, organized means for members to demonstrate support for their Negotiating Committee. It is also an opportunity for members to affect the bargaining process and communicate directly with faculty, students, other campus workers, and the greater public about the issues driving the job action.