



***United We Bargain,
Together We Win!***

July 2023

| **Strike Vote FAQ** |

Are we going on strike?

NO! A positive Strike Mandate Vote gives the union the authority to initiate collective job action, up to and including a strike if and when the Bargaining Committee concludes that such a step is necessary to reach a fair agreement.

Are negotiations continuing?

Yes. Both your Union and the Employer are continuing to negotiate throughout August and into early September.

Why does this vote matter?

Management watches closely to see how mobilized union members are during negotiations. If members are apathetic and disconnected, they know that the union doesn't have the ability to organize an effective job action if one becomes necessary. A strong Strike Mandate lets management know that our members care about bargaining, support their committee and are ready to take job action if need be.

Other than a Strike Vote, how can we show our power?

Show your colours! Put your "Proud USW Member" tent card on your desk. Wear your USW polo shirt or make sure your USW cell phone stand is visible in the work place. Download and use our virtual bargaining backgrounds from usw1998.ca/b2w and bring your USW

water bottle or coffee mug to your meetings with management. Don't have any of these things? Come to our August 16, 2023 release time GMM at 3:30pm followed by a café style social at 5:00pm to get some, or contact the union so we can bring things round to your office. Also, please watch your email for more information later in August on more visibility events.

What is the definition of a strike?

Legal strike action is the right of unionized workers to withdraw services collectively with the aim of demonstrating their collective concerns and resolve to achieve fair terms of employment. A partial withdrawal of usual duties is considered a strike if it is collectively coordinated. A strike can take different forms and is not only a "walkout". The Ontario Labour Relations Act states that a strike includes "a cessation of work, a refusal to work or to continue to work by employees in combination or in concert or in accordance with a common understanding, or a slow-down or other concerted activity on the part of employees designed to restrict or limit output." A union must be in a legal strike position to go out on strike.



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. In order to be smart, responsible and focussed, we need to be in the legal position to be able to engage in such activities. And, in order to be in that legal position, you the members must have voted in favour of it through a strike vote.

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.

What is the difference between a Strike Mandate Vote (vote 1) and a Strike Vote (vote 2)?

A Strike Mandate Vote and a Strike Vote are two separate and distinct processes. A Strike Mandate Vote is a tool used by Bargaining Committees to secure a fair agreement with the Employer by reminding them of the strength of the membership and their unwillingness to accept an unfair deal. In a Strike Mandate Vote, the membership votes to give the Bargaining Committee the legal power to call a strike if the Employer is not negotiating with them fairly. After the Bargaining Committee has a successful Strike Mandate, they are in a stronger bargaining position at the table with the Employer. Again, in most cases, a separate vote will take place after the membership receives the final offer from the Employer. The Members will decide if they want to accept or reject the Employer's final offer based on the recommendation of the Bargaining Committee. They will first 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 job action may be necessary.

What do I need to vote?

Please remember to bring along one piece of photo I.D. (eg. driver's license, passport, etc)
OR two pieces of personal I.D., one of which must contain your signature, when you vote.

Should I be worried about a strike? What happens if we go on strike? How much is strike pay?

We are weeks away from a possible strike / lockout deadline, so please don't worry. We will have more updates before then. If or when a strike / lockout deadline approaches, we will ensure that you have all the information you need and all your questions will be answered. For now, please review the attached Job Action & Strike FAQ.