

## Strike Vote Q&A

On March 18, your Bargaining Team will ask you to support their efforts at the table by giving a strong strike mandate to back your demands, and get concessions off the table. Here are the questions you have been asking about this process.

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### What is Conciliation?

Either the union or the employer can apply for conciliation at any time during contract negotiations. On February 19, the employer did just that. What does this mean? This is usually a signal that one or both sides feel that talks have gone as far as they can go without help from an outside party.

Once an application is made for conciliation, the Ministry of Labour's Office of Mediation appoints a neutral third-party conciliator to assist. The conciliator acts as an intermediary between the parties in order to resolve outstanding issues at the bargaining table.

### Does this mean negotiations are over?

No. The Team is scheduled to meet again with the employer March 23-24. This time, the conciliator will be there to try to resolve the outstanding issues.

### Why are you asking for a strike vote?

We need to send a signal to the employer that we are serious about our demands and let them know we will not accept the takeaways they are proposing. In most bargaining rounds, the employer's offer has

improved after a strong strike mandate from the members. **The Bargaining Team is only as strong as the members who support us**, and a strong strike mandate will show the employer that they aren't just bargaining with the five members of the team—they are bargaining with all 1,500 members in MPAC.

### Does a strike vote mean we will go on strike?

Not necessarily. The strike vote is a way to show the employer we are serious at the bargaining table. In the last year, OPS Corrections, Liquor Board Employees and the Colleges all gave their bargaining teams a strike mandate to back their bargaining teams, and all of these groups settled their contracts without a strike.

### What will the strike vote ballot say?

The ballot will offer a clear choice:

YES – I authorize the Bargaining Team to call a strike if necessary in order to achieve an acceptable collective agreement.

NO – I do not authorize the Bargaining Team to call a strike.

## **After the vote, who decides if we have to go on strike?**

Your Bargaining Team's goal is to get a negotiated settlement. If the Bargaining Team receives a strike mandate, and talks progress, the Team will continue negotiating towards a deal. If the employer refuses to budge on their current position, the Bargaining Team has the authority to ask for a No Board Report, which would begin the countdown towards a strike.

## **What is a No Board Report?**

A No Board Report is a process that is required by law in order for union members to go on strike or for employers to lock out employees. Here's how it works:

Either side can ask for a No Board Report. This happens when conciliation has failed and neither side can agree on a contract. That starts a 17-day clock towards a strike/lockout deadline. At 12:01 a.m. on the 17th day, the union can legally go on strike or the employer can legally lock out employees. Neither a strike or a lockout is legal until then.

## **Do contract talks continue if either side asks for a No Board Report?**

Normally, yes. In fact, many contracts are settled in the last 72 hours prior to a strike deadline.

## **Can the employer lock us out right now?**

If the employer locked out employees prior to a strike/lockout date, it would be illegal.

## **Why should I vote in favour of a strike?**

Right now, the employer has some serious takeaways on the table, such as creating part-time jobs, reducing benefit entitlements and possibly eliminating and downgrading

jobs under the Re-Org. The employer is refusing to bargain any improvements to the hiring process, our drug card, or even discuss a Compressed Work Week Agreement. Lastly, their current wage offer is far below what other public sector wage settlements have been recently.

Right now, the employer will not budge on these positions. We need a strong show of support from the members to prove to the employer we are serious about the issues.

## **Where will voting take place?**

Times and locations for the vote are still being established. We will notify you as soon as they are confirmed.

## **Who can I contact for more information?**

Contact any of the Team members below:

### **Ivan Herrington, Chair:**

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# **On March 18, support your Bargaining Team**

# **Vote yes for the strike mandate**