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# **OSBCU Picket Captain Manual**

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## **OSBCU Central Strike Plan:**

- The province is divided into Regions
- Each Region has a Regional Lead who sits on the OSBCU Central Strike Committee. Contact information for Regional Leads is included in this Toolkit.
- Each Region has a Regional Picketing Strike Committee
- Each local has a Lead on the Regional Picketing Strike Committee
- Picket lines are regional picket lines

## **Fines**

In the event that someone on your line receives a notice of a fine immediately notify the local President, include the contact information for the member in question and a photo of any documentation. If you can't reach the President notify your Regional Lead immediately. Please advise the member not to pay any fines. We will follow up with them regarding next steps.

## **Regional Picket lines:**

- There are four different categories of picketing including
  - A1** – Non disruptive information pickets at elementary and high schools. At elementary schools the pickets should be across the street from the school.
  - A2** – Disruptive pickets to slow down cars at School Board Administrative Offices
  - B** – Non disruptive information pickets at high visibility locations that are not schools
  - C** – Non disruptive information pickets at Progressive Conservative MPP offices.
- For the most part, pickets are large, mass regional pickets. How large will depend on the picketing category and density of the area and capacity to support large numbers of people and cars. For example, an A1 information picket across the street from an elementary school in a high density area should be smaller than an A1 information picket across the street from an elementary school in a rural or lower density area.
- Regional Picketing Committees (made up of 1 lead from each local) have established picket locations in each of the picketing categories in different parts of each Region
- Regional Leads and Regional Picketing Strike Committees will communicate to picket captains to communicate to picketers when to move from one picketing category to another
- Picket lines are regional and members can picket at the location of their choice. This means that Picket Captains will welcome and sign in members from locals other than their own if they show up to picket to ensure they receive strike pay for their shift. It is important to sign the member in using the strike pay database or in the event of a shift to hard copy forms, on a Form F which clearly indicates the member's local on it so that the Form F can be returned to the appropriate Local Finance Committee for strike pay to be issued.

### **A1, B and C are non disruptive information pickets:**

- Information pickets are across the street from A1 elementary schools
- Use megaphones to make speeches and communicate with picketers at lower density A1 pickets (rural areas, large numbers of picketers across the street from lower density school locations), consider not having megaphones in higher density A1 pickets. Use megaphones at A2, B and C pickets.
- Use sound systems and music to boost morale at all picket lines except A1 picket lines in high density areas.
- Ask picketers to hand out flyers to members of the public passing by and engage in conversations
- Try to have fun activities to engage families (e.g. crafts, bubbles, chalk etc)

### **A2 pickets are disruptive, picketers work together to slow down cars:**

- The goal is to cause a disruption to business as usual
- The exact slow down time will depend on the number of cars entering
- Chanting using megaphones is encouraged
- Music is encouraged to keep spirits high.

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# The role of the Picket Captain

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Together across Ontario, CUPE OSBCU education workers have been building worker power to win gains in negotiations including wage increases, job security and increases to staffing.

As a Picket Captain you play an important role in preparing your co-workers for a strike and organizing the participation of your co-workers during the strike.

You are the link between the Regional Picketing Strike Committee, Central Strike Committee and the members.

The members on your picket line will depend on you to sign them into the picket shift so they receive strike pay and benefits, share information, boost morale, solve problems together with other picket captains and members, support them in the tough moments, and celebrate their solidarity.

## The Picket Captain is:

- The representative of the union on the picket line.
- The leader of the picket line – inspiring picketers, solving problems, listening, answering questions, speaking with visitors.
- The link between the Regional Picketing Strike Committee, Central Strike Committee and the picket line.
- The media liaison (directing reporters to the Regional Communications Strike Committee and Central Bargaining Committee spokesperson)
- The liaison with police (note each Region will also have a Police Liaison).

Picket Captain duties before the strike:	
✓	Build support for the strike among members and encourage participation.
✓	Build support for the possible strike by knowing what the bargaining issues are and what the employer is asking members to give up. Use the Resources on the OSBCU website including the Summary of Bargaining Proposals. Make sure members are signed up for Central Bargaining Committee updates.
✓	Connect with the members who will be on your picket line. Develop and test a contact list/telephone tree for your picket line and picketers.
✓	Explain that members have the option to picket at a location closest to their home.

✓	<i>Gather members to make picket signs (signs will be distributed to Regional Strike Headquarters prior to the strike). Make sure messages are positive and consistent with the messages the union as a whole wants to project with the broader public (see the list in this toolkit)</i>
✓	Attend rallies and other mobilization actions. Organize co-workers to participate.
✓	Get to know your picket line location. Map out places to eat, toilet facilities, parking, shelter, local business contacts that might offer good deals to picketers, nearby community and labour support.
✓	Listen to members' concerns and answer members' questions about going on strike and picketing including questions about strike pay and benefits. (Use the Strike Pay and Benefits FAQ in this toolkit).
✓	Have private conversations with members who are saying they will cross the picket line about what is at stake in bargaining. Remind them that it will take the participation of all members in the strike to win the gains that they deserve. Report potential scab activity to the Regional Picketing Strike Committee.
✓	Help with community/parent outreach. Talk with your friends and family and ask them to sign up at <a href="http://39000isnotenough.ca">39000isnotenough.ca</a>

## **TAKING IT OUTSIDE TO SCOPE OUT PICKET LINES BEFORE THE STRIKE:**

Before the strike starts, it can be really helpful for picket captains to experience what it's going to feel like to be on a picket line. Notice the following:

### **Picket line site**

Where will the picket line be, where will it move from and to? Where would you put a rain/weather shelter? Where will you keep your supplies? Are there potential hazards? How can you keep the site safe and clean?

### **Information pickets – for A1, B and C information picket lines**

How many members do you anticipate will be on the non-disruptive information picket line? How many do you want to be handing out flyers? What are the other members doing during the information picket? What activities do you have

### **Traffic flow**

For A2 disruptive picket lines only, how could you delay traffic? Where would vehicles line up? Where would you hold the vehicles? How could you group vehicles? (For example, hold 3 at a time) How would delaying traffic affect the area? Would it interfere with traffic lights? How could you deal with these issues?

### **Hazards**

Would delaying traffic create a hazard for drivers, picketers or passersby? Would delaying traffic block any crosswalks? How could you deal with these issues?

### **Picketers**

Where will they park? Where is the closest washroom? Where can they get coffee, water, food? How many picketers will you need to safely and effectively picket at this site? (assuming they will keep moving.)

<i>Picket Captain duties during the strike:</i>	
✓	Arrive at your picket line 15 minutes early to get information from the Picket Captain you're replacing.
✓	If you have the first or last shift of the day, make sure you know who is responsible for bringing and picking up supplies, forms, etc. Consult your Regional Picketing Strike Committee.
✓	Always wear your picket captain vest/button while on duty.
✓	Greet all picketers and solidarity picketers who arrive on the line.
✓	Pass on any new information from the Central Strike Committee or Central Bargaining Committee
✓	Make sure that every picketer has signed into the picket shift with a picket captain using the strike pay database – every member will need to be signed in on Form F – <i>Picket Captain's Daily Report</i> – in order for strike pay to be paid. When you sign members into the shift you will sign them in for the start time and end time of the 4 hour shift. If they leave early adjust the end time of their shift. Please watch this YouTube video about picket captain responsibilities to sign members into pickets: <a href="https://youtu.be/XDry7qOTG8M">https://youtu.be/XDry7qOTG8M</a>
✓	If you search and cannot find a member's name in the strike pay database then they have not signed Form E Application for Strike Pay. You should help them complete the Form E Application for Strike Pay – this is a requirement in order to be eligible for strike pay in addition to signing into picket shifts. Please watch this YouTube video about picket captain responsibilities to sign members into pickets: <a href="https://youtu.be/XDry7qOTG8M">https://youtu.be/XDry7qOTG8M</a>
✓	Make sure the picket line is safe.
✓	Identify and assign roles for picketers to play (see below).
✓	Identify natural leaders on the picket line, especially those who might be interested in getting more involved.
✓	Confirm the identity of scabs who are crossing the picket line if possible. Give the information to the Regional Picketing Strike Committee.
✓	Let the Regional Communications Strike Committee know about people, other locals, community groups, etc. that have supported the picket line
✓	Problem solve as needed.
✓	Let the Regional Picketing Strike Committee know if you need more or fewer people on your line.
✓	Stay on the line until the next picket captain arrives.



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# Picket Line Politics

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## **Be prepared, be flexible, be fair.**

Expect the unexpected!

A strike is an intense time. Your leadership style will set the tone for what happens on the line and how members are engaged in the strike/lockout.

Be well prepared, flexible and fair. This kind of approach will help you deal with all the unexpected issues that will happen every day.

Here are some tips:

- Use common sense to solve problems.
- Dress for the weather so you're comfortable on the picket line.
- Talk with the members – listen to their ideas, keep them informed and involved.
- Be empathetic – many members will be stressed about being on strike, being in conflict with the employer, coping without a pay cheque. Different members will be stressed about different things. Be sensitive to how this plays out on the line.
- Encourage trust and solidarity with the bargaining committee. Discourage criticism and questioning of the bargaining committee.
- If unexpected situations arise and decisions need to be made on the picket line, make them together with your fellow picket captains. The best decisions are democratic decisions made together.

## Picket Captain Kit

Item	✓ Have
<i>Picket Captain Manual</i> , additional information.	
A notebook and pens, clipboard and paper, etc.	
Extra copies of Form E – <i>Application for Strike Pay</i>	
Extra copies of Form F – <i>Picket Captain's Daily Report</i>	
Copies of leaflets to be given to members and broader public	
Copies of the latest bargaining bulletin	
Extra copies of <i>Incident Report Forms</i>	
Picket signs	
Traffic cones (to slow traffic crossing the picket line and limit the chances of picketers being hit by a car)	
Contact list/phone tree for members on your line	
Cell phone with numbers for everyone on your picket line/shift, Regional Picketing Strike Committee, Regional Communications Strike Committee, Laura Walton, President of the OSBCU to refer media for interviews about central bargaining.	
Map of the area	
Receipt books	
First Aid Kit	
Flashlight with fresh batteries	
Toilet paper	
Garbage can and garbage bags	
Duct tape	

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# Picket Line FAQ

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## 1. Why picket?

- To put pressure on the employer by slowing their ability to operate – this tactic is limited to A2 picket locations;
- To build public support by letting the public know we're on strike (or locked out), and what the issues are – all picket locations.

## 2. Does the law restrict what we do on the picket line?

You have a legal right as union members to strike and to picket. You have a legal right to be on public property. Police have no authority in a labour dispute unless someone breaks the law. Police will want to minimize traffic disruption and violence. Police should be there to protect everyone including picketers.

## 3. What are the guidelines for picketing?

Everything you need to know is in the *Information Sheet: Picket Line Guidelines*.

## 4. What are the different roles that picketers can play on a picket line?

- creating and leading chants (that are consistent with the union's key messages);
- writing and singing songs (that are consistent with the union's key messages);
- distributing flyers;
- talking to people in cars;
- talking to people passing by;
- taking pictures (of problems as well as positive scenes from the picket line);
- videotaping (of problems as well as positive scenes from the picket line);
- keeping the area safe and clean;
- organizing fun activities for families and kids
- organizing social events.

## 5. What is a Picket line protocol?

There is no picket line protocol for the non disruptive information pickets on the A1, B, or C picket lines. For guidelines about what to do on the information pickets see above. On the A2 picket lines the picket captains together will decide how long to delay people or vehicles so that it is not business as usual at school board administrative offices.

## **6. How do we handle talking to the public?**

Our goal is to gain public support and have the public join us in putting pressure on the employer. It's easier to win public support if we have positive messages on the picket line and on our picket signs.

The Regional Communications Strike Committee will provide flyers to distribute to the public while you are picketing.

If people don't want to talk or take a pamphlet, make sure they still get a smile and a "have a nice day!"

If someone is angry or confrontational, remain calm. Don't escalate the situation.

## **7. What about scabs?**

A scab is a worker who engages in any strike-breaking activity or works for the employer during a legal labour dispute. a picket line shows complete disrespect for co-workers and the democratic decision that the membership has made to go on strike. More importantly, scabs undermine the ability of the union as a whole to win gains for all members.

Ideally, no one will cross your picket line. In some provinces, legislation bans scabs.

But it's important to have a plan for what to do and what to say if there are people who do want to cross – whether they are members who want to keep working, managers, other workers making deliveries, or members of the public.

Here are some tips:

- Give clear directions to the picketers about what to do and what to say if someone wants to cross the picket line.
- Get the name, position, company (if external) and licence plate number of everyone who crosses and to take a picture if possible. Pass this information on to the Regional Picketing Strike Committee.
- Ask picketers to refer problems to you.
- Encourage picketers to stay calm and avoid debating or arguing with people.
- If you know someone who is scabbing or considering scabbing, talk to them in private. Listen to their reasons for crossing the line. Make sure they understand the impact it will have on their co-workers and on their ability to win gains in negotiations that improve their working lives.

## **8. Do I have to obey security guards and the employer's picket line monitors?**

No.

The picket line belongs to the union. Picketers take direction from the Picket Captain and Picket Captains take direction from the Regional Picketing Strike Committees.

Employers often hire security guards to “protect their interests”. They work for management and have no authority over us.

Sometimes security guards try to intimidate picketers by taking pictures or videotaping the line, not respecting protocols, and by escorting management staff or scabs through the picket line without waiting.

Watch out for security guards who try to provoke incidents on the line. They are trained to do so.

Some employers also assign picket line monitors – managers who monitor the picket lines. Some might take a friendly approach and try to talk to picketers they know. Some even wear the same vest as the Picket Captain to try to confuse members. Others might be aggressive and intimidating and try to interfere with picket line activities.

When you come on the line, ask the previous Picket Captain whether there are security guards and picket line monitors and what they're up to. Brief the picket captain who comes after you on the line.

Record incidents and report concerns to the Picket Coordinator.

## **9. Are we allowed to make noise on the picket line?**

Picket lines should be energetic – and that means noise.

On the other hand, our picket line is covered by municipal bylaws. Noise bylaws might restrict noise, for example, in early morning and late-night hours in residential areas. Remember that our goal is to build public support for our cause, not make possible allies angry.

When deciding how much noise to make with megaphones and sound systems, take into consideration the density of the area.

## **10. What if a picketer is under the influence of drugs or alcohol?**

Make it clear that there will be no drugs or alcohol on the picket line, and that picketers should not come if they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

If a picketer is under the influence, speak with them in private and ask them to leave the picket line. If necessary, make travel arrangements for them.

Report problems to the Regional Picketing Strike Committee.

### **11. What are injunctions?**

Employers will often try to intimidate picket captains and picketers by threatening to get an injunction to limit where we can picket, or how long we can delay people or vehicles before they cross the picket line.

To get an injunction, the employer has to make a formal application to either the Labour Relations Board or a Court.

Report any threats of an injunction to Regional Strike Headquarters immediately.

### **12. What is the best way to report incidents?**

Complete an *Incident Report Form* and pass it on to the Regional Picketing Strike Committee whenever the following happen:

- an incident with the police, security guards or picket line monitors;
- medical emergencies;
- encounters with hostile members of the public or vehicles; or
- other incidents that the Strike Committee should know about.

### **13. How long will the strike last?**

The more united and well-organized we are, and the higher the participation, the shorter the strike will be. We only need to withhold our labour one day longer than the employer can function without us. In the event of essential services or back to work legislation, members will make decisions together about how to respond.

### **14. Will I be punished for playing a role during the strike?**

You have a legal right to strike. Management cannot discipline members for supporting their union. CUPE will support you if any action is taken by your employer, security or the police.

### **15. Does a strike actually have any effect on the bargaining process?**

Striking when negotiations break down, is our greatest power as workers. A strong presence on the picket line sends a clear message to the Employer that all members are serious about winning gains. When the employer sees that we are united and strong, they are more likely to concede to our demands at the table.



The picket line belongs to the union. To ensure it is a safe and happy place, here is a list of things you should do as well as things you shouldn't.

### DO ✓

Follow the direction of your Picket Captain.

**Sign in and out at the beginning and end of your picket duty.**

Keep the line moving!

**Stay safe and healthy.**

Follow your Picket Captain's directions for what to do and what to say if someone tries to cross the picket line.

**Stay on message. When approached by the public, remain polite, listen to them, and share on one or two of the union's messages.**

If someone is abusive or violent with you, disengage and report it to your Picket Captain right away.

**Dress for the weather. Bring snacks and water.**

Have fun!

**Use social media guidelines provided by the Communications Committee.**

### DON'T ✗

**Follow the direction of security guards or the employer's picket line monitors.**

Assume your Picket Captain will sign on your behalf.

**Obstruct the general public from using the sidewalk or roadway at the picket line.**

Put yourself at risk, especially with hostile drivers.

**Argue, threaten or assault scabs or other people crossing the line. Refer problems to your Picket Captain.**

Speak to the media. If approached, direct them to your Picket Captain – they will know who the Spokespeople are.

**Speak to security guards or picket line monitors. Do not give them any personal information. Tell them to speak to your Picket Captain.**

Damage property, put nails on the road or use picket signs as weapons.

**Show up to picket drunk or stoned. Alcohol and drugs are not permitted on the picket line.**

Post photos or disparaging remarks about your employer on social media.

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## Key messages for Picket Signs

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### General

1. Education workers keep schools running
2. Fund students' future, support education workers!
3. On strike for ALL students and ALL education workers
4. Fighting for better schools and secure jobs

### Services

5. Keep libraries open – fund education workers!
6. Better supports for students with special needs
7. It's time for the province to invest, our students deserve the best
8. Staff our schools so students succeed

### Compensation

9. A fair deal for ALL education workers
10. A loonie, a toonie, and a quarter
11. My second job bought me this sign
12. No cuts! We won't work for peanuts!



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## Dealing with media on the Picket Line

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The Regional Communications Strike Committee will designate official spokespeople for the region who have been trained to speak with the media. All picketers are encouraged and welcome to explain to reporters who inquire why they are on strike. Laura Walton, President of the OSBCU is the spokesperson for the Central Bargaining Committee. Requests for interviews about central bargaining should be directed to Laura.

The press will visit the picket lines.

### **When they do:**

- Introduce yourself as the picket captain;
- Refer them to the Regional Communications Strike Committee Chair or to Jessie Mintz, CUPE Communications Staff Representative.
- Look well-organized, high energy and positive. Encourage chants and singing when the media is there; and
- Make sure the area is clean, safe, and orderly.

Let the Regional Communications Strike Committee know which media outlets came by.

As picket captain, you are a source of possible positive stories from the picket line. These stories can be used for both internal and external communications.

Get to know the picketers on your line and listen to their stories. Identify people with stories that will help build support for the strike. Let the Regional Communications Strike Committee know about the stories you find. Example: a single mom who is able to cope with the strike because friends and family are supporting her. Also pass on positive stories about things that happen on the picket line.

Positive stories will give everyone a morale boost and help build support for the strike.

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# The Police

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We have a legal right to belong to a union and a legal right to strike and picket. The police are there to enforce criminal law (i.e. assault) and provincial law (i.e. traffic/highway laws).

As long as no one breaks the law, the police have no direct authority in the actual labour dispute. They will want to limit picket line violence and have minimal disruption of traffic. But they should play a neutral role, protecting everyone involved, including picketers.

Many police detachments have a person who is a “strike liaison”. The Regional Picketing Strike Committee will establish a regional police liaison and communicate the name and contact information to picket captains in your region.

## Good practices:

- Introduce yourself to duty officers as the picket captain.
- Ask the duty officer to talk to you and only you, especially if they have any concerns.
- Have a witness with you, if possible and feasible.
- Be polite and answer questions.
- Ensure picketers refrain from using abusive language with the police.
- Record all police activity (or lack of activity in protecting picketers).
- Report concerns to the Regional Picketing Strike Committee. Or fill out a *Incident Report Form*.
- If needed, remind police that it’s legal to strike and that their role is to stay neutral and protect everyone involved.

## Problems on the Picket Line

In the case of a medical emergency, **call 9-1-1**.

If a member is assaulted, **call the police**.

For all other problems, talk to the Regional Picketing Strike Committee.

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# Incident Report Form

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\*To be filled out by the Picket Captain.

Primary information			
Name:		Phone:	
Date:		Shift:	
Time:		Picket location:	

Details

Witnesses	
Name	Phone Number

:ilr/COPE491

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BARG – Incident Report Form

**Printable version:** [Incident Report Form](#)

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# Financial Relief Letter to Banks and Landlords

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Date:

Name of Bank/Landlord

Address Bank/Landlord Address

Dear [Insert name of Bank Manager or Landlord]

Re: [Insert name of Member and Unit/Local/Lease/Mortgage Number]

[Insert name of member] is an employee at [insert name of school board] and as an employee of the school board is a member of CUPE Local [insert local number]. CUPE is the largest public sector union in Canada representing over 600,000 members across the country. In Ontario the CUPE Ontario School Board Council of Unions represents over 55,000 education workers.

CUPE is currently in negotiations for a renewal Collective Agreement with the Provincial Government and the Public, Catholic, English, and French School Systems and it is possible there is a province wide strike of education workers. It is difficult to predict how long the strike might last. During the duration of the dispute [insert name of member] will have no employment income.

The Union respectfully requests that you agree to defer [insert mortgage/lease/rent] payments for the duration of the labour dispute. Once [insert name of member] returns to work after the labour dispute they undertake to make good on the deferred payments.

Your attention to this matter and assistance will be greatly appreciated by the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Ontario School Board Council of Unions.

Sincerely Yours,

Name of Secretary Treasurer

CUPE Local X



## **CUPE OSBCU Strike Pay and Benefits FAQ**

**(Subject to the CUPE National Strike Fund Regulations which can be found at [National Strike Fund Regulations | Canadian Union of Public Employees \(cupe.ca\)](https://www.cupe.ca/public-employees))**

### **How much is strike pay?**

Strike pay is \$300/week for 20 hours of strike duties. Strike pay is not taxable income.

Normal picket shifts are four (4) hours per day, five (5) days per week, Monday to Friday.

Members are asked to complete one 4-hour shift a day for a total of five shifts a week (20 hours).

Members may perform fewer hours for a pro-rated strike pay based on hours picketed if they are unable to perform 20 hours a week.

For further clarity, members who are unable to perform a minimum of twenty (20) hours per week of picket duty for a reason other than illness are eligible to be paid a pro-rated amount of picket pay, based on hours picketed. Members who provide satisfactory explanation (proof) of illness shall be eligible for payment for the missed shift(s) due to the illness, subject to the approval of the Strikes Benefit Committee.

### **How do I qualify for strike pay?**

To qualify for strike pay you need to complete Form E Application for Strike Pay and participate in strike duties, signing in and out of your daily strike duty shift with your picket captain.

### **Can I perform a double shift of 8 hours/day?**

For the strike to be effective, members need to be on the picket line every day. If you need to request a different schedule, please speak with your local's strike committee who will review and approve on a case-by-case basis.

### **I am not able to participate in picketing, can I be accommodated?**

If your medical restrictions prevent you from participating in 4 hour, picket duty shifts, please contact your local strike committee to request an accommodation. There is a pre-approved list of alternative picket duties for members whose medical restrictions indicate a need for a medical accommodation such as phone banking and other alternative duties.

### **Benefits during a strike**

Your extended health care and dental benefits will continue in the event of a strike if you have benefits prior to the strike.

**Will I continue to pay my employee premiums during a strike? I can't afford that.**

The CUPE strike fund will pay both the employer and employee share of benefits premiums for all members participating in the strike so that benefits prior to the strike are continued during a strike. More information will follow in the coming weeks about benefits in the event of a strike.

**How long will the strike last?**

The more united and well-organized we are, the shorter the strike will be. The most important part of winning a strike is for each, and every member not to report to work, and instead to participate in the strike. We only need to withhold our labour one day longer than the employer can function without us.

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

You have a protected legal right to strike. Management cannot legally discipline members for supporting their union. Your union representatives will support you if any action is taken by your employer.

**Does a strike actually have any effect on the bargaining process?**

Striking when negotiations break down is our greatest power as workers. In New Brunswick, when CUPE members went out on strike across the province, including education workers, they won real wage increases. When the employer sees that we are united and strong, they are more likely to concede to our demands at the table.

**What if I am on vacation when the strike starts?**

If you are on approved vacation prior at the time the strike begins, your employer should honour the remainder of your approved vacation. You are encouraged to cancel your vacation and participate in the strike because the stronger the participation, the more likely you will win your contract demands.

Once on strike you cannot go on vacation.

**What about my maternity leave top-up, will they continue during the strike?**

The employer should continue to pay your maternity leave top-up during the strike for as long as you are eligible.

**I am on EI maternity or parental or adoption leave prior to the strike. Will my Employment Insurance benefits continue?**

Yes, your EI benefits should continue for the duration of your leave if you were on EI prior to the strike.

**I need to apply for EI maternity, parental or adoption leave benefits after the strike has started and need a Record of Employment (ROE) from the employer. Are they obligated to provide one?**

Yes, the employer should give you your ROE.

**What happens if I am on short-term sick leave/short-term disability when a strike starts?**

If you are on approved short-term sick leave/short-term disability prior to the strike your sick leave/short-term disability benefits should continue.

**Am I eligible for Employment Insurance (EI) sickness benefits during a strike or lockout?**

Maybe, if you can show that your leave was anticipated and arrangements for it were made prior to the strike. If you were on short-term sick leave before the strike that may demonstrate that your leave was anticipated. If your sickness wasn't anticipated or starts during the strike you will not qualify for EI sickness benefits.

**What happens if I get sick during the strike and cannot fulfill my strike duties, will I receive strike pay?**

If you are sick and cannot report to your strike duties, you should contact your picket captain who will communicate with your local strike committee co-chairs. You should not picket if you have COVID or other symptoms of illness as you could potentially make other members sick, however as soon as you are well again you should return to picket duties. If you are sick, you will receive strike pay for your lost shift, if you can provide reasonable proof of illness.

**I am on LTD. Will my LTD benefits continue during a strike?**

Members on approved LTD claims prior to the strike should continue to receive LTD benefits. If an insurance carrier or employer discontinues LTD benefits then you should contact your local strike committee.

**Who will pay the cost of the employer and employee LTD premiums?**

CUPE will continue the employee and employer LTD premiums for members participating in the strike.

**What happens to my pension during a strike or lockout?**

When you are on strike, you do not earn any pay from your employer. Therefore, OMERS contributions are not deducted and there is no credited service added to your pension record for the strike period. For pension purposes, the time period of the strike is not included on your pension record. Your employer will report this time to OMERS as a leave period if it was a scheduled workday.

**Will I be able to purchase my strike period?**

Yes. OMERS rules allow a member, on a voluntary basis, to make a service purchase for the period of a legal strike. Once the strike has ended, your employer should provide you with a service purchase application form. If you choose to pay the cost of the service purchase, the time period of the strike will be added to your pension record as credited service.

**How much will the OMERS service purchase cost?**

The cost will be equal to “double contributions” – in other words, if you choose to make the purchase, you will pay both your portion and your employer’s portion of the contributions to cover the strike period. You can find more information on the OMERS website here: [A Legal Strike and Your OMERS Pension](#).

**If I am injured while on strike duty, can I make a WSIB claim?**

No, you can’t but you can apply to continue on strike pay.

**If I am getting WSIB benefits will they continue during a strike?**

Yes, provided that you continue to qualify medically and continue to co-operate with WSIB requirements.

If you have any questions, please contact your local’s strike committee and/or assigned National Representative.

**Printable version:** [CUPE\\_OSBCU\\_Strike\\_Pay\\_and\\_Benefits\\_FAQ\\_2022\\_08\\_05.pdf](#)



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## Key Contacts

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### Regional picketing plans:

Contact your region's Regional Lead

#### Barrie HQ Lead

Anne Marie Brunner & Chris Juniper

[barriehq@osbcu.ca](mailto:barriehq@osbcu.ca)

249-877-3703 (Anne Marie) & 226-974-1778 (Chris)

CUPE locals supported: 1176, 1310, 3447, 3987

#### Durham HQ Lead

Sean Hebert

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905-260-9807

CUPE local supported: 218

#### Eastern Ontario HQ Lead

Nancy Ripley

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613-349-0922

CUPE locals supported: 4155, 5678, 4154

#### Hamilton HQ Lead

Laurie Penner

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905-518-7024

CUPE locals supported: 1011, 3166, 3396, 4153, 5100, 5200

#### Kingston HQ Lead

Daniel Todd

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613-328-0215

CUPE locals supported: 1022, 1479, 1480

#### London HQ Lead

Jennifer Eckert

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519-639-8746

CUPE locals supported: 256, 2512, 3615, 4186, 4222, 7575

#### Niagara

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289-668-8967

CUPE locals supported: 1317, 4156,

## North Bay HQ Lead

Mitch Gagnon

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705-303-5057

CUPE locals supported: 1165, 2799, 4865

## Ottawa HQ Lead

Jessica Sheanan

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613-404-8839

CUPE locals supported: 1202, 1321, 1247, 2357, 4297, 5335

## Peel HQ Lead

Chris DeMelo

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647-405-3825

CUPE locals supported: 2026, 1483, 2544, 1628

## Peterborough HQ Lead

Taylor Popplewell

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CUPE locals supported: 997, 1453, 5555

## Sault Ste Marie HQ Lead

Judy Leffler

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705-206-6147

CUPE locals supported: 16, 4148

## Sudbury HQ Lead

Korey Fowler

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705-662-3575

CUPE local supported: 895, 1369, 4274

## Thunder Bay / Fort France HQ Lead

Alyssa McGee

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807-629-6813

CUPE locals supported: 2486, 65, 1939

## Timmins HQ Lead

Lucien Lambert

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CUPE local supported: 4681, 7777, 8888

## Toronto HQ Lead

Brittany Wall

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CUPE locals supported: 1328, 3155, 4400

## Windsor HQ Lead

Jacqueline Ouellette

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226-347-9720

CUPE locals supported: 27, 1238, 1348, 1358, 4168, 4299

## York HQ Lead

Beth Rinne

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905-716-2915

CUPE locals supported: 1196, 1571, 1734, 2331, 5476, 4340

## Local hardship funds and strike pay:

Contact your local's finance committee.

## Media requests:

### For regional communications requests:

Jesse Mintz, CUPE Communications Staff Representative: 416-704-9642

### For requests for interviews about central bargaining:

Ken Marcinec, CUPE Communications Staff Representative: 416-803-6066

## Strike preparation contacts:

Tammy Graham, OSBCU Secretary Treasurer

705-238-9259

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## **OSBCU Central Bargaining Committee**

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