

Frequently asked questions: Picket lines



How long will the strike last?

The more united and well-organized we are, the shorter the strike will be. 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 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.

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 the bargaining team has strong support from the members. As the saying goes, *"the longer the line, the shorter the strike."*

When the employer sees that we are united and strong, they are more likely to concede to our demands at the table.

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

The picket line belongs to the union. Picketers take their direction from the Picket Captain and Picket Captains take direction from the Strike Committee.

Security guards work for management. They have no authority over us.

What do I do if the police come?

Direct them to your Picket Captain.

Picket Captains have been trained to speak to the police. They know about what we can and can't do on the picket line.

What about alcohol and drugs?

Alcohol and drugs are not permitted on the picket line.

If you come to picket under the influence, your Picket Captain will ask you to leave and your strike pay may be affected.

Can I bring my children or pets to the picket line?

Please check with your Picket Captain before inviting friends, family or pets to the picket line.

There may be days/times that are better than others to boost the picket lines and we also have to ensure everyone's safety.

What do I do about scabs?



The Strike Committee will have a plan for dealing with scabs. Your Picket Captain will give you directions. It's important that we treat scabs the same way at every picket line.

Can I take pictures or videotape things that happen on the picket line?

Yes, but ask your fellow picketers permission first. The Communications Committee will collect pictures and videos of positive scenes that show solidarity and high morale. They make great memories for when the strike is over.

Take pictures and video of security, managers and scab activity too. Pass these on to your Picket Captain. They may be useful to the Strike Committee.

Who do I contact if there's a problem on the picket line?

Always go to your Picket Captain.

They can contact the Picketing Coordinator, the Strike Committee, the National Rep or even the police.

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

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