



Strike Vote - Frequently Asked Questions

Q) What is a strike vote?

A) A strike vote is a referendum that gives your Union the legal ability to take strike action, if necessary, in support of negotiating a Collective Agreement. According to the BC Labour Code the wording on the ballot must be, "Are you in favour of a strike?"

Q) What is strike action?

A) Strike action includes a range of possible measures, including overtime bans, work to rule, study sessions, rotating strikes and full walkouts. None of these measures can legally be taken without a favourable strike vote in hand. All the measures and implications of a strike vote will be discussed in membership meetings before, during and in the days and weeks after the strike vote. Taking a strike vote **DOES NOT** mean you pick up a picket and refuse to go to work. It is another bargaining tool, particularly in mediation.

Q) Why are we taking a strike vote now?

A) We are one of several Lower Mainland CUPE locals bargaining with our Employer through their agent, the GVRD representatives. Our Employer has asked for the most concessions and the most regressive demands in the history of our bargaining.

- No increase to benefits without concessions
- Significant changes to Sick Leave that will impair your access to your sick leave banks
- Removal of Technological Change protection
- Removal of restrictions on Sunday Hours of Work
- To restrict Auxiliary employees who have not worked within 60 days prior to the date of ratification access to any retroactive negotiated monetary increases (including wages).
- Removal of the VESP plan and Supplementary vacation
- Post positions internally and externally, simultaneously
- And much more - watch for updates - come to meetings.

There has been not change in the Employers' position in four meetings and they have canceled two of the seven scheduled. The GVRD is trying to set a pattern of unacceptable contracts for all the tables in the Lower Mainland.

We have not had any movement from the Employer's side in the four meetings. CUPE 15 has had no movement in sixteen meetings. Neither has Delta/CUPE local 454, Burnaby/CUPE local 23, and Vancouver/CUPE local 1004. They have all achieved strike votes from 89% to over 94%. They have asked their members for a strike vote because they have either been forced into mediation or have asked for it. In either case, all the locals need a very solid strike vote if they are to have any credibility with the mediator. It is hoped that bargaining between the locals and their employers will get back on track and make some progress, as a consequence.

Q) Why is a strong strike vote crucial?

A) A strong strike vote lets the Employer know that the membership stands behind the Bargaining Committee on the issues that were ratified by the membership at the October 2006 Ratification meeting. If our negotiations proceed to mediation, a strong strike vote will obtain the best possible agreement.

Q) Does a favourable strike vote mean we are going on strike?

A) No. Historically, CUPE 391 has reached a settlement without striking. However, several high in-favour strike votes have helped to reach a better settlement at the bargaining table with little or no job action being taken. A poor, not-in-favour of a strike vote will result in the mediator putting more weight on the Employer's proposals.