Defending our members, and our contract

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union have a long and proud history of defending and promoting the interests of our members. We have the experience, we have the know-how and we have the strength of our collective power to achieve what we need in collective bargaining.

In each round of bargaining, bargaining teams try to make the improvements that we tell them are the most important to us. At the same time, we must always be prepared to defend our contract against concessions brought forward by the employer.

We negotiate more than 500 collective agreements across all sectors of our union. While fewer than three per cent of those negotiations have resulted in strike action, those that did had one thing in common: Members fighting for fairness.

The two strikes by our OPS members in 1996 and 2002 taught us a lot about the power of collective strength and solidarity. Those lessons will never be forgotten, and we are a better union today thanks to the sacrifices made then.

Today, we know one thing for certain: Our previous victories can never be taken for granted, and we must always be prepared to defend our members, and our contract.

We hope the information and ideas in this Local Strike Manual will help prepare us to defend our gains, make bargaining for improvements even more successful. Our actions determine our success. Those successes will resonate far into the future, and our families, co-workers and future OPSEU members will reap the rewards.

It’s hard work, but not nearly as hard as being on strike – and the pay is much much better.

I hope that this manual will help all our OPS locals across the province give their bargaining teams the support they need to come back with strong contracts.

In Solidarity

Warren (Smokey) Thomas, President
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Introduction

The Best Defence

Our collective agreement is our most valuable asset. It sets out our contractual relationship with our employer, the Ontario Public Service and its agencies. Supporting negotiations toward a renewed collective agreement is the single most important contribution that all union members can make.

The articles in our collective agreements have been negotiated with the employer by our elected union representatives on bargaining teams.

Union members play essential roles in these negotiations by supporting our elected representatives. Our support will pay off in success at the bargaining table.

The threat of a strike – stopping our work – has grave consequences. That’s why it is the most powerful incentive to both sides to negotiate a fair contract. A strike is only a means to an end – it is far more important for members to actively show support to our bargaining teams by preparing for a strike.

Our goal is always to negotiate a fair contract, not to withdraw our services. Only by showing that we are prepared to strike can we be sure that management will take our proposals seriously at the table.

Why we must be prepared

Before a strike can be called, all union members will have an opportunity to cast a secret ballot on whether to support a strike.

That’s why it’s vital that our entire membership be drawn into the process of bargaining. Leaders at the local, regional and provincial level must engage as many members as possible in the process.

Less than three per cent of our contract negotiations result in a strike, but it is essential we be prepared because:

• Strike preparation lets the employer know we are serious about our contract. Management may attempt to force us into a strike if they think we are not prepared. And we can’t win any strike unless we are well prepared.

• Distributing leaflets in the workplace, setting up a headquarters, selecting Picket Captains, talking to members about issues, holding a strike registration day are activities that send serious signals directly to the employer through its management staff.

• Strike preparation affords us a great opportunity for workplace organizing. Membership interest in the union peaks during contract negotiations. Many members who are ordinarily indifferent will become interested because they know that contract negotiations will affect their future. We must be prepared to answer their questions and give everyone an opportunity to participate.

• Strike preparation reassures members that their union is prepared to take on the employer. Feelings run high during the tense countdown toward a strike deadline. Rumours abound. Members must be confident that their union will protect their interests.

If our Locals are already adept at keeping members informed and organized, ramping up strike preparations will be much easier.

We must prepare our Locals to be ready if the worst happens and a strike or lockout
occurs. We must keep members informed of the bargaining issues as determined and communicated by our negotiating teams.

**A word about rumours**
In every bargaining situation, rumours abound. Some are generated by management or the media, most are just idle speculation. Communication between our teams and the members often become difficult because negotiations are not always straightforward. Our bargaining teams may not always be in a position to divulge accurate and timely information to our members.

If confronted by a rumour, don’t spread it – we should check it out with someone in a position to know. It’s up to stewards to reassure our members that bargaining is proceeding in good faith. One of the best sources of information is the OPSEU website: www.opseu.org. Whatever happens, we must support our bargaining teams.

**Get going early**
Our ability to build to a successful strike is directly connected to the thoroughness of planning and preparation. Strike preparations must be a cohesive effort by all Locals while bargaining proceeds on toward a deadline.

In the event of a strike or lockout, locals are responsible for leading the membership, planning and carrying out all strike duties.

Local Executive Committees, stewards, Local Staff Representatives and rank and file members must be prepared to participate as fully as possible to carry out the necessary strike preparation.

This manual contains basic information to prepare for whatever action may be required to secure renewed OPS collective agreements.

Your best source of the most up to date information about bargaining is the OPSEU website: www.opseu.org.

**What about lockouts?**
In some situations, the employer may lock out workers who otherwise would have to go on strike.

Media coverage and public opinion are likely to be more favourable to the union if the employer “locks” us out.

A lockout can influence those workers who might not support a strike, since it is now management which is telling them not to come to work. Of course, we must do a good job of organizing and provide one-on-one communication to keep these workers from blaming OPSEU for forcing a lockout.

To win a lockout, we need the same preparation as we do to win a strike: strong pressure through organized picketing to keep the employer from operating normally.
1. OPS Collective Bargaining

We should understand some of the basics of the collective bargaining process. Overall bargaining strategy will be developed by our bargaining teams at the provincial level.

**OPS Bargaining Unit structure**

The OPS bargaining unit is divided into five bargaining unit categories: Administrative; Institutional and Health Care; Office Administration; Operational, Maintenance and Technical; and Corrections.

All employees in the OPS bargaining unit categories are covered by one central agreement. The issues covered in the central agreement include, but are not limited to, job security, leaves, vacations, seniority, posting and filling of vacancies, benefits, pensions, unclassified issues, classification systems, employment equity and pay equity. These issues are bargained by the Central/Unified Team.

The Unified Bargaining unit includes four categories of employees: Administrative; Institutional and Health Care; Office Administration; and Operational, Maintenance and Technical. The Central/Unified bargaining team bargains the Unified Bargaining Unit agreement. The Corrections Unit is covered by the Corrections agreement and it is bargained by the Corrections bargaining team. The category agreements covers, but is not limited to issues such as wages, hours of work, overtime and shift premiums. Any Local may have members in a number of bargaining units.

The Unified Agreement covers the following employees:

**Administrative**
Sample jobs: System Officer, Health and Safety Inspector, Transportation Enforcement Officer, Financial Officer, Geoscientist, Forrester.

**Institutional and Health Care**
Sample jobs: Psychiatric Nursing Assistant, Nurse, Child Care Worker, Cook, Residential Counselor.

**Office Administration**
Sample jobs: Clerk, OAD series, Court Reporters, Purchasing Officer

**Operational, Maintenance and Technical**
Sample jobs: Clerk, OAD series, Court Reporters, Purcha

**Bargaining teams**

The two bargaining teams (Central/Unified and Corrections) have 22 members. The Central/Unified Team is made up of seven delegates elected by their regions, plus one member from the Administrative category, the Corrections category (as chosen by the Corrections team), the Institutional and Health Care category, the Operational, Maintenance and Technical category, two members from the Office Administrative category, one unclassified representative and one member from the Central Enforcement and Renewal Committee. In total the Central/Unified Team has 15 members.

The Corrections Team has seven members, one elected from each region.

**Bargaining Team elections**

Delegates and Alternates from each Bargaining Unit, at each local, are elected to attend an OPSEU Regional Bargaining Conference. Delegates to the seven OPSEU Regional Bargaining Conferences held across the province elect the regional representatives to the Central/Unified team. The Corrections delegates
elect their regional representatives. And category delegates elect their regional category delegate to the Central Bargaining Conference. At the Central Bargaining Conference the election of category and unclassified representatives takes place to complete the bargaining team.

**Demand setting**

All OPS locals conduct membership surveys and hold meetings where the Local’s list of prioritized demands is established for the Central/Unified and Corrections bargaining teams.

Under OPSEU bargaining procedures, each local must hold a demand-setting meeting where members can discuss and decide what our most important goals will be when bargaining starts. Results of the bargaining surveys are presented and discussed at the local meetings.

**Bargaining under legislation**

The rights of OPSEU members in the Ontario Public Service and Crown agencies are covered by the Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act (CECBA), in tandem with the Ontario Labour Relations Act (OLRA).

These laws set out the procedures for bargaining. The basic steps to negotiating a new contract are:

- **Negotiations:** where our union’s elected teams meet across the table from the employer’s teams, who are appointed by Treasury Board/Management Board of Cabinet, to present their proposals for a renewed collective agreement. During negotiations and up to the point of an impasse (i.e. a strike/lockout) the terms of the collective agreement are frozen and do not change. Under CECBA, the first task is to negotiate Essential and Emergency Services Agreements that cover what happens in the event of strike or a lock out.

- **Conciliation:** a Conciliation Officer, appointed by the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB), attempts to bring the two parties to an agreement on outstanding matters. If the parties have not reached a settlement during negotiations, then conciliation is a required step. Conciliation can last one day or longer depending on the progress, or lack of progress, made.

- **Strike vote:** where all union employees in a bargaining unit vote by secret ballot to empower our bargaining teams to call a strike, if necessary. A strike vote is mandatory. 50 per cent plus 1 of the bargaining unit must vote in favour of the strike before going on strike. There is no preset date for a strike vote. The bargaining team evaluates the state of negotiations and determines the timing of the strike vote strategically. Separate strike votes will take place for members in the Corrections bargaining unit category and the Unified Bargaining Unit category. In addition, everyone will vote on the Central Agreement.

- **If members vote to authorize their teams to call a strike,** a strike deadline will be set that gives both the union and management negotiators a deadline to reach a settlement.

- **Mediation:** an optional step where a mediator is asked by the parties to assist the two sides in reaching a contract settlement. This step generally takes place in OPS bargaining.

- **The employer may also legally request that our members consider the employer’s proposals in a final offer vote.** A rejection of this offer is a vote in favour of a strike. A vote to accept the employer’s offer indicates a settlement and ratification of a new contract.

- **If there is no settlement,** either the union or the employer may ask the conciliation officer/mediator to release a report called a No Board Report. Union
members are in a legal strike position at 12:01 am on the 17th day following a No Board Report.

- **Strike/Lock Out**: Members of the OPS bargaining units have the right to strike, either individually or all at once if the Central Team fails to reach a central agreement. The employer may also decide to lock out employees in one or all bargaining units (Corrections and/or Unified).

- **Ratification of a settlement**: where all union members and dues paying non-members have the right to vote by secret ballot whether to accept a new collective agreement.

### Essential and Emergency Services

CECBA stipulates that the union and the employer must negotiate agreements to provide essential and emergency coverage at some worksites during a strike or lockout. Some union members, chosen through a random selection by union and management representatives at the worksite, may be required to perform minimum functions during a strike or lockout.

These essential and emergency service workers will be paid by the employer during a strike or lockout at pay rates existing in the current collective agreement. The OLRB has ordered that essential and emergency workers will be required to contribute a minimum of 31.375 per cent of their wages to a special union fund to help out their fellow workers who are on strike or locked out.

Many, but not all OPS Locals may be required to assist with procedures under special Essential and Emergency Services agreements. Special union worksite representatives will conduct local selection of essential employees and are empowered to inspect worksites to ensure that only the agreed to services are being performed and to report their findings back to the local strike committee. Please refer to the OPSEU how-to-manual for delivering essential and emergency services for more detailed information.

OPSEU members who are designated Essential or Emergency Services workers will be contributing to OPSEU’s strike power. It is not business as usual during a strike. Their duties in the workplace are restricted to those functions specifically outlined in the Essential and Emergency Services agreements. Essential and emergency service workers are, in the words of the Act, “to work to the extent necessary to enable the employer to provide essential services.” The essential service worksite agreements outline those specific job functions that are to be completed. Some of these agreements were negotiated between the parties and many agreements have been ordered by the OLRB.

Inside Picket Captains are members assigned to do essential services who help enforce the essential services agreements and carry out the inside strategy. To ensure strike preparation is carried out, the members of the Local Executive Committee should carefully decide who opts out and performs essential services before the lists are compiled. The Local needs to strategically evaluate how it will best maximize pressure on the employer inside and outside.

### Strike/Ratification votes

Regional, service area or local membership information meetings must be held to help inform members about the proposed contract changes. Notice for the meeting must be posted at least three days before the meeting date in a manner that ensures all bargaining unit employees will be notified, including those who pay union dues but who are not members of the union.
As a rule, only one Local meeting will be held; however, special arrangements may be made to cover shift workers. The OPSEU President may authorize mail-in ballots in special circumstances to cover remote locations.

OPS local presidents may be called to a regional service area meeting to discuss details before the vote. All stewards will receive a written summary or bulletin about the issues at stake or the proposed new agreement, which must be distributed to members before the vote.

All votes are taken by secret ballot. Bargaining unit employees who are not OPSEU members (i.e. dues paying non-members, members not in good standing) are entitled to vote, provided they are identified by an OPSEU member before being given a ballot.

No results of the vote will be made public until all province-wide results are relayed to OPSEU Head Office for a final tally and communicated to the bargaining team(s).
Mobilizing our members before the strike vote and the deadline shows the employer we are ready to defend our contract. Strike preparation is not the same as going on strike. But a strong strike mandate applies direct pressure on the employer and gives the bargaining team the strength that they need to achieve your demands at the table.

Mobilization should start with small, doable actions. A few ideas include taking coffee-breaks together, everyone wearing a union button on the same day, holding a union barbecue, setting up union information booths in the workplace and holding lots of information meetings in the workplace.

Getting a great contract demands maximum action as talks come down to the wire towards a strike vote and strike deadline. It’s at this point that more intense actions are required.

Building our bargaining leverage

A lot of people tend to think that all bargaining happens at the bargaining table. Some think they would do better if their negotiators were tougher, while others insist the way to move forward is to be less confrontational. Others insist that the team could get a good contract and avoid problems if only they were more creative.

Negotiating contracts is a complex skill that demands creativity, judgment, openness, bravery, and sacrifice under intense pressure. It’s like steering a race car.

Winning races takes more than steering, though. You can have the best driver on the track, but if you don’t have the power, you’re not going anywhere. In collective bargaining, power comes from union members when they support their bargaining teams.

There are lots of ways to support your bargaining teams, but the best way is to show that you support them. Our experience has shown that employers move at the bargaining table when members take action – inside and outside the workplace. Even more important is to show enthusiastic support.

What motivates members?

You can think about what motivates the members in your local. In the OPS, the employer’s restructuring agenda is still the source of much stress and exhaustion. People worry about the financial and personal costs if there is a strike/lock out. And if that’s not enough, family responsibilities mean most people don’t have any spare time. It all adds up to not getting involved.

Members tend to get involved in mobilizing for three reasons:

- Self-interest – the issue affects them directly
- Personal commitment to individuals – they help their friends
- A vision beyond bargaining – they see themselves as part of a larger social cause, and bargaining is one way they advance that cause.

Success in mobilizing depends on tapping in to these three motives, and communication with each member in a way that is meaningful to him or her. The secret to mobilization is that when many
people do a small thing, it becomes a big thing. Strong member support can give a bargaining team the leverage it needs to bargain successfully.

**Show your union colours**

In the early stages of mobilizing, the first job is to increase union visibility in the workplace. This is not hard. Put up OPSEU posters wherever you find a bare wall. Get OPSEU-branded paraphernalia. Buy a couple of OPSEU flags for your local and display them prominently.

**Tips for one on one contact**

- **Appeal to members’ self-interest.** What’s in it for them?
- **Appeal to a larger cause.** The more members taking part in strike preparation, the less chance of a strike.
- **Have a clear goal.** Know why you are asking them to do something or even why they should attend a local meeting or be a part of a workplace action.
- **Use OPS bargaining literature to break the ice with uninvolved members.**
- **Encourage members to ask questions.** Ask for ideas and opinions. Your discussion should enable members to draw their own conclusions.
- **Listen.** Be honest and frank. If you don’t know the answer to a question, that’s okay. Don’t make up an answer – get back to the member later.
- **Be polite.** If someone refuses to talk to you don’t get into an argument – just follow-up with them later.
- **Start small with specific tasks for members to do.** For example, ask a member to distribute 10 buttons to the co-workers in their area. Then encourage greater involvement.

**Remove barriers to participation.**

Do meeting times make it possible to attend? Is food provided by the local? Is the meeting accessible? Does the agenda include time for new members to be brought up to speed?

**Have fun!**

**Demonstrating our solidarity**

Any activity that shows that the membership is prepared to take organized action will help our bargaining teams reach a settlement. These activities could originate with the bargaining teams or be planned by the Local. The point is that all stewards and as many members possible should take part. That means planning the event to be as widely inclusive as possible and be responsible for enlisting as many members as possible.

It could be a large demonstration, a petition on a bargaining issue or other workplace problem, or on a particular day having members come to work at the same time, donate money to a special cause, wearing buttons, stickers, or the same colour clothing. Be creative: doing something fun helps to get people involved. If planning a lunch time event, it helps to supply food or refreshments.

It also could involve informational picketing at the employer’s offices. Offices of the Member of Provincial Parliament (MPPs) are another good location where it draws public attention to our issues.

Informational picketing means displaying signs that inform members, the public and management about specific issues without asking employees to stop work or customers to withhold their business.

**Contract enforcement**

In this tactic, stewards encourage the employer to respect the collective agreement by filing grievances over every violation of the contract. It could also
mean taking legal action on employer actions that violate health and safety regulations, employment standards, municipal bylaws or other laws.

This reminds the employer of the difference between labour peace where we may speak to them about our concerns to attempt resolution, and the kind of labour trouble that can develop if a fair contract can’t be reached.

It also reminds members of the importance of their contract rights and their legal rights.

Organizing a contract enforcement effort may require a special meeting/training session for stewards to prepare them to make sure each worker is contacted in person or through a phone tree.

Each member should be provided with a short leaflet which explains the purpose of the enforcement effort and the sections of the contract or the laws that management is most likely to violate. To add to the pressure, violations could be publicized in local newsletters and the media.

Mini campaigns on workplace issues

Identify a workplace problem to be solved. Ideally, start with an issue that reinforces the union’s bargaining proposals, is of concern to a large number of workers, and has a clear solution that is winnable.

Here are some ideas:

- Conduct a survey in order to document the problem and educate workers about the issue and the union’s efforts to do something about it.
- Circulate a petition summarizing the survey results and promoting the union’s proposed solution.
- Organize protest actions in an escalating pattern, starting with symbolic protests like button days, and building toward mass meetings or refusal to do certain tasks until the problem is solved.

Claim victory if the employer agrees to a solution. If the employer refuses on grounds that workers have no right to the proposed change under the current contract, point to the refusal when organizing support for the bargaining teams.

Working to contract

In many cases, the most powerful worksite tactic is for members to do only what they are required to do under the collective agreement. Work to contract tactics should be discussed with local presidents and executive members to ensure the legal requirements are met.

Workers must understand the difference between work to contract and a work slowdown or refusal to follow directions, which is generally illegal. In most cases, any concerted effort to slow down work will be treated as illegal strike activity by the employer.

Each day the employer relies upon OPSEU members to provide high quality public services in understaffed offices. On a work-to-contract campaign, workers cannot withdraw services or refuse to follow directions, but they can show the employer that they support the bargaining teams. Take your breaks; take your full lunch-hours. Follow all of the employer’s rules. Follow the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Be extra kind to clients and the public. Organize study sessions of the employer’s offer. Enforce the contract. **DON’T** take any more short cuts. **DON’T** volunteer to work overtime. **DON’T** talk to supervisory personnel except where the job requires it.
Political action matters
Most MPPs are extremely sensitive to public opinion. They respond to political pressure and negative media. Lobbying includes any means of directly communicating with a public official. You can lobby by sending postcards, phoning, faxing, emailing, make a personal visit to the MPPs office, leaflet the riding, and hold rallies and demonstrations outside their office. Lobbying your MPP can influence government policy choices and your contract. The MPP can be part of the answer to getting the contract improvements you deserve. By lobbying your MPPs you can persuade them to support OPSEU members. A co-ordinated lobby effort is a powerful tool to support our bargaining teams.

Strike preparation as a tactic
Our local strike machinery must be running before the strike deadline is reached. Preparations, such as setting up a strike headquarters, and selecting Picket Captains and picket teams, demonstrate to the employer that we are serious and ready to take the next step.

A key part of your strike preparations is outreach to non-members and unclassified employees in the bargaining unit. Encourage them to sign union cards.

Preparations are reassuring to members during the tense countdown toward a strike deadline. We can’t win a strike unless we are prepared, and if we’re not prepared, the employer may force us into a strike position or a lockout.

If we are not prepared, many members may be compelled to vote for an inferior contract, having no confidence that their union can carry off a successful strike. At all costs, we must avoid allowing our members to be put in that position.
3. Strike Preparation and Delivery

Our goals, our strategy and our strike duties
For centuries, workers have withdrawn their labour to pressure their employers to improve their wages and working conditions. All strikes have provided valuable lessons on how to develop more effective strategies.

The goal of strike strategy is to support the bargaining strategy to get the best possible result at the lowest possible cost to members and the union.

An effective strike depends on thoughtful strategy, strong solidarity, intelligent organization, and well-defined roles for all participants.

Strike action is collective action. During a strike, union leaders at every level must act deliberately to strengthen the strike by building solidarity:

• among striking members;
• between striking members and members providing essential services;
• between striking members and non-striking OPSEU members;
• between striking members and the labour movement;
• between striking members and the users of the service they provide; and
• between striking members and the community at large.

Each Local Strike Committee needs to spend some time considering the forces working for and against them: the members and their allies, the employer and its allies, service users, the community, the news media, municipal and provincial politicians, current events, and so on.

OPSEU Local Strike Committees will develop strike strategies and tactics appropriate to their local level. It is the duty of Local Strike Committees to work in concert with the Area Co-ordinating Group and the Provincial Co-ordinating Group (described below) to implement these strategies and tactics. Well before any strike, the bargaining unit will do as much as possible to build co-operative relationships with potential allies.

A strike withdraws services; it also frees up resources. People on strike have the time and the motivation to take part in activities that would otherwise be very difficult. Thus, strike duties include:

• picketing at worksites, secondary targets or other key locals;
• lobbying of MPPs, local politicians, directors of employer organizations, and the employer’s allies;
• outreach to service users and groups that represent them;
• outreach to labour, community, and other potential allies;
• mass rallies and demonstrations;
• media relations work and advertising; and
• any other activities that help end the strike with the desired result.

Communication is the key to a successful strike
During negotiations and especially during any resulting job action or strike, there are regular updates through the OPSEU website, e-mail, and the bargaining team newsletter Table Talk.
Direct communication with members as directed by your Area Co-ordinating Groups, is also a vital tool in keeping members informed. All stewards must assist in the dissemination of information. That means that Locals must set up an internal communications network: It’s important that we have contacts in all worksites.

Creating an effective and informed network linked to all worksites is the best way to answer membership questions about what’s going on at the bargaining tables. For information on what’s happening in bargaining, stewards should contact their Local Staff Representative or check the OPSEU website at www.opseu.org.

Roles and Structures
In large-scale, multi-location strikes, OPSEU centrally, regionally and locally organizes support structures to ensure the bargaining team and members can achieve their goals and run an effective strike.

Provincial Co-ordinating Group - the central strike strategy committee
A Provincial Co-ordinating Group is established to coordinate strike activities. The Provincial Co-ordinating Group is comprised of the OPSEU President (or designee), the 1st Vice-President/Treasurer, Executive Board Members as assigned, the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Bargaining Teams, the Lead Negotiators as well as OPSEU staff from Communications, Campaigns, and Research. Their role is to develop the mobilization, communications and strategy leading up to and during a strike or lockout.

Strike mobilization and administration activities are coordinated through Area Co-ordinating Groups and the Local Strike Committees.

Area Co-ordinating Groups (ACGs): Collective leadership in a strike
Area Co-ordinating Groups, sometimes known as clusters, pull together locals from a similar geographic area. Executive Board Members, bargaining team members, OPSEU staff and local presidents (or their designee) work together to coordinate the mobilizing and strike activities in a geographically-defined area.

The purpose of co-ordinating group strike committees is to provide support to striking locals and to enable locals to pool resources, share headquarters and plan strategies across geographical areas to maximize the effectiveness of the strike.

Area Co-ordinating Groups have the authority and responsibility for the conduct of the strike in their geographic area. They are the hub of the strike in that area. They work to implement the strategies of the Provincial Co-ordinating Group. OPSEU staff will be assigned to local strike committees to assist and advise locals about strike strategy and administration.

Responsibilities of the Area Co-ordinating Group Strike Committee
The Area Co-ordinating Group Strike Committee has the sole authority and responsibility for the conduct of the strike in its geographical area. They:

- assist locals in setting Local Strike Committees and local strike headquarters
- assess strike preparation needs to avoid duplication
- report regularly to the Provincial Co-ordinating Group, through the Local Services Division
• assist locals in planning membership meetings and voting procedures
• perform some strike administration functions for the service area
• organize multiple-local rallies and special events
• coordinate picketing to ensure strong picket lines at key facilities
• handle legal issues, assign lawyers
• co-ordinate hardship relief fundraising and distribution to the Local Hardship Committee.

Local Strike Committees
As we move toward a strike deadline, the Local Executive Committee (LEC) becomes the nucleus of a Local Strike Committee. It is chaired by the local president and empowered to run all aspects of a strike or a lock out at the local level.

The Local Strike Committee is responsible for strike strategy, strike duties, financial administration (including hardship requests), strike communications and other issues that may arise during a strike.

All members in a local are expected to perform their strike duties as assigned by the Local Strike Committee. Essential and emergency service workers are expected to follow the inside strategy to support the strike. It is the role of the Local Strike Committee to ensure all members follow the strategy.

The Local Strike Committee must include:
• the LEC (including Strike Duties Committee and Picket Captain Co-ordinator)
• OPSEU Local Staff Representative
• Any other members or stewards that the LEC may appoint to the committee to ensure that all bargaining units and all worksites are represented

• In locals with Essential and Emergency Services Agreements (EESAs), worksite representatives and inside Picket Captains should be included in the Local Strike Committee. In large locals with EESAs, policing the application of the agreement may require a separate sub-committee, which includes a representative of the local Health and Safety Committee.

• Members of the local who are on the bargaining team are ex-officio members of the Local Strike Committee.

• All local officers can choose to exempt themselves from the eligibility lists for essential and emergency services work during a strike or lockout.

To ensure strike preparation is carried out, the local president and other members of the Local Strike Committee should declare their intention to opt out to the worksite reps before the lists are compiled in stage 1 of the EESA process.

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Responsibilities of the Local Strike Committee
In a province-wide strike, it’s up to the Local Strike Committee to decide which tactics and strike strategy – recommended by the Provincial Co-ordinating Group to the Area Co-ordinating Groups - are possible to implement.

Local Strike Committees should be set up many weeks before a strike deadline. This not only ensures that all preparations are undertaken, but also sends a message to the employer via its management that OPSEU members are serious about negotiations.

Local Strike Committee meetings should be scheduled when Local Staff Reps (who act as a link between OPSEU Head
Office and the local) can be present. The success of the strike will be their main priority.

The Local Strike Committee must:

- Assist the essential services worksite representatives (if necessary) to complete procedures.
- Plan logistics for strike votes, in cooperation with the Area Co-ordinating Groups and explain the bargaining issues and/or final offer to the members.
- Recruit stewards and members on sub-committees to do the legwork, especially to prepare for strike duties.
- Communicate with members, allies and the public.
- Sign up non-members before a strike/lockout. Canvass them immediately so they can’t say no one asked them. Explain to them that dues-paying non-members are not eligible to receive strike pay even when they complete picket duties.
- Set up a strike headquarters.
- Make necessary financial arrangements for strike accounts, etc.

Local Strike Committee chairs participate in the Area Co-ordinating Group Strike Committee to coordinate activities, share resources and plan and execute strike strategy.

**Local Strike Sub-Committees Overview**

In all well-organized strikes there is a need for committees to handle specific chores. However, establish only those that serve a useful function.

The local strike committees should have a chairperson and include the four sub-committees required by OPSEU policy during a strike.

**The Strike Duties Sub-Committee**

select members to act as Picket Captains, organize the picket teams ensuring that all members are assigned appropriate strike duties (including those who require accommodation to participate), set up strike headquarters and handle logistics, and reports to the Strike Finance Sub-Committee on strike duty performance. This sub-committee should be prepared to assign one of its members to deal with accommodation requests. This sub-committee assigns and trains Picket Captains provide on-the-ground leadership and administrative support to perform their strike duties. And the committee helps provide leadership for the Picket Captains and members to implement strike strategy.

**The Strike Finance Sub-Committee**

handles strike pay calculation and submission; financial transactions through the local strike administrative bank account; trouble-shooting; fundraising and scrounging. The Local Treasurer often heads this committee. Appeals from members who need financial help are heard by this committee. The Strike Finance Sub-Committee is accountable to the Area Co-ordinating Group and Local Executive Committee to report on all aspects of receipt and distribution of all funds received by the local during a strike.

**The Communications Sub-Committee**

keeps members informed and up-to-date with current information and useful advice. This committee should include Area Co-ordinating Group members to share information with other OPSEU locals and OPSEU Communications. It puts out leaflets/newsletters/emails as well as distributes OPSEU’s daily strike report. This committee provides information to local labour groups, community organization and the community at large. It also handles media releases, public relations, social media and garners support from other unions and the community; appeals for funds; plans
social events and general morale-boosting activities.

When the Local Strike Committee receives a hardship request, it then needs to set up a Hardship Committee. This committee handles all requests and keeps them confidential. These committee members are active in administering and finding hardship donations. It oversees a separate bank account. It works with local financial institutions to assist members in difficulty. This committee is also the main contact point with the Area Co-ordinating Group’s hardship relief fundraising. During a strike, the ACG helps to co-ordinate relief fundraising efforts to the neediest members in the area.

When selecting committee members, consider the following:

• Make sure committee members clearly understand the job of their committees and how it relates to the overall work.

• Search out stewards and members who are competent, energetic, show an interest or have experience.

• Involve new people. In most cases, there is too much work for the same core of local leaders to handle. Contract mobilization provides a good opportunity for recruiting new activists because there normally will be a wide variety of tasks and a heightened feeling of group spirit.

• Strikes are an excellent opportunity to learn new skills, so spread the work around.

• Committees should reflect the make-up of the work force, with a good balance by department, type of job, seniority, age, gender, race, ability and ethnic background. This balance will help ensure that the union’s proposals and strategy accurately reflect the membership’s concerns, and that we have the greatest possible membership support.

• Be prepared to hold people accountable for getting the job done.

Start-up funds

After the members have voted to strike and prior to the commencement of a strike, the locals can request a start-up advance of $1,500. This is an advance for strike administration and will be deposited into the local strike administration bank account that is opened by OPSEU Head Office Before it is granted an Application for a Strike Administration Advance (Form A attached to this manual) must be approved by the local’s assigned Staff Representative and submitted to OPSEU Head Office for each local.

These are accountable grants, meaning that a record of expenditures must be kept and submitted every week by the local strike committee. Originals of paid invoices must be attached to these statements.

The local should also decide what funds from its own treasury it wishes to assign to the strike account.

Accommodation

All members of a striking bargaining unit have the right to participate fully in the strike. However, some members may not be able to perform all strike duties. In such cases, the Strike Committee has a legal and moral obligation to modify the member’s strike duties to enable him or her to earn strike pay. This is called “accommodation.”

The Human Rights Code may require accommodation so as not to discriminate on the basis of race, sex, colour, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, marital status, same sex partner status, sexual orientation, age, disability, citizenship, family status or religion.

Members have a duty to inform their Strike Committee if they need to be accommodated. Members seeking
accommodation also have a duty to co-operate in finding accommodation solutions.

Accommodation requests are confidential. A member of the Strike Duties subcommittee shall be assigned to deal with these requests.

Accommodation must be provided in a manner that respects the dignity of the person. This includes the way accommodation is provided and the individual's participation in the process.

The Strike Committee should respond to accommodation requests in a timely fashion and make sure that the accommodation continues until the member no longer needs it.

Members who feel they are not being accommodated may seek help from their regional harassment and discrimination advisors and/or their OPSEU Regional Vice-President. OPSEU's Harassment and Discrimination policy provides a process for filing and resolving complaints.

No member shall be denied strike pay because the Strike Committee cannot provide alternate duties.

Tips on Committee Operations

- Start planning early
- Don't call a meeting unless there is a purpose. Meetings need not be long, but should be held daily in the early stages of a strike
- Each subcommittee must report daily to the Strike Committee
- Try to keep the same members on the committees during the strike
- Meeting should include a report on progress and search for solutions to any problems
- Teach people how to get other workers to help them
- Discuss assignments that committee members have taken on and how other workers could help with those tasks
- Maintain a system for accountability and support. Spell out each task clearly, including target date for completion. Keep a record of committee operations
- Make sure each person knows what everyone else is doing – log books are helpful
- Have committee members give progress reports. This should be an opportunity to share ideas and to decide what to do if previous plans are not working out.
4. The Nitty-Gritty: Committee Operations

Strike Committee operations
Your Local Strike Committee has three sub-committees: Finance, Communications and Strike Duties. The responsibilities and duties of each are outlined below.

Finance Sub-Committee
OPSEU strike policy says that the Strike Finance Sub-Committee will:

- make sure that strike pay, and advances for strike administration are administered and accounted for in accordance with OPSEU policy;

- make sure that Form E (Strike Administration Expense) is completed and submitted regularly to the assigned OPSEU Staff Representative for approval, with original receipts/invoices attached;

- when the strike is over, submit to the assigned OPSEU Staff Representative a completed Form I (Final Account of Strike Fund) reconciling advances received and expenditures made during the strike; and

- when the strike is over, provide a full report to the next General Membership Meeting of the Local on all strike finances.

This committee is also responsible for trouble-shooting, welfare, fund raising and scrounging. It is often headed by the Local Treasurer.

Local strike preparation
After the membership has voted to strike and before a strike starts, each Local must set up its strike accounting structure. OPSEU’s Accounting Department will provide each local with a CD-ROM that contains the list of that local’s bargaining unit members. Please review the OPSEU Strike Finances Checklist at the back of Strike Manual and follow the listed steps. If there are any questions etc., the Strike Finance Sub-Committee can email strikeforms@opseu.org for assistance.

• Make sure each member fills out and signs Form B (Member Personal Information Form); otherwise, they cannot perform picket duty and therefore will not receive strike pay and be covered for benefits. The original forms are submitted to OPSEU Head Office via the Regional Office before the strike begins.

• Complete Form A (Application for Strike Administration Advance) and submit it to the Regional Office for approval by the OPSEU Staff Representative, who will forward it to the Accounting Unit at OPSEU Head Office.

• Locals will be required to complete an original BMO signatory card (available from your Regional Office). The card is for strike administration purposes only.

• The local will designate at least two members of the Strike Committee
or Strike Finance Sub-Committee as cheque-signing officers. A completed original signatory card is to be given to the Staff Representative who will then pass on to the Accounting Unit at Head Office for processing. Please note: Identification is no longer a requirement.

Upon receipt of the completed Form A, Accounting will produce a cheque and deposit a start-up advance of $1,500 to the Local’s strike administration bank account. The Strike Finance Sub-Committee chair and the Staff Representative will be notified once the deposit is completed.

Locals are encouraged to complete Form C (Strike Items Request) and submit to your Staff Representative. Head Office has a limited number of items that are available for locals to use during a strike.

Locals can apply for re-imbursement for purchased Items that are deemed re-useable and were unavailable from Head Office by filling in Form H (Reimbursement for Strike Items Returned). Items will have to be returned to the attention of the local’s Staff Representative.

Locals that have submitted an up-to-date Trustee’s Audit Report (TAR) to Accounting can receive an extra quarterly rebate cheque equivalent to the last rebate cheque after the strike has begun. In the case of a unit it will receive a pro-rated portion of the last rebate cheque. This money may be used for strike expenses not covered below.

**Strike Administration**

**Where do I get all the necessary forms?**

All administration forms are at the back of the strike manual and are available from your Regional Office.

The chair of Strike Committee or Strike Finance Sub-Committee fills out Form C (Strike Items Request) and submits the completed form to the Staff Representative for approval and then to the OPSEU Head Office Accounting Department. Once the forms are received in the Accounting Unit, the items in stock at Head Office will be allocated to the striking local. Items will be sent to the attention of the Staff Representative. Items that are not available at Head Office can be rented/purchased by the striking local as per OPSEU policy.

**What costs are covered for strike administration?**

Accounting will reimburse locals for the following strike administration expenses:

- appropriate strike headquarters and/or strike trailer rentals, if approved by the OPSEU Staff Representative;
- hydro hook-up or electricity generator, and generator fuel;
- portable toilets, where necessary;
- land-based telephone lines and related charges; and
- cell phone usage charges, where appropriate.

In exceptional cases, expenses not listed above may be reimbursed, if they are authorized by an OPSEU Staff Representative first, and if they are approved by the Accounting Department prior to the expenditure being incurred.

All strike expenses must be supported by original receipts or invoices. Expenses must be reasonable and/or be the low-cost option.

**Running strike finances**

1. Each striking Local must regularly forward a completed Form E (Strike Administration Expense) to the
assigned OPSEU Staff Representative for approval.

This form must be signed by a member of the Strike Committee or Strike Finance Sub-Committee and accompanied by:

- original supporting receipts/invoices;
- cheque stubs for all issued cheques; and
- cheque and stubs for all voided cheques.

Your local won’t receive any additional strike funds until Accounting receives the completed Form E with accompanying documentation.

2. Locals must keep copies of all strike administration forms and supporting documentation such as receipts, disbursements, paid invoices, etc.

3. Strike Committees must refer issues arising from lost, stolen or stale-dated cheques to the Accounting Department by emailing strikeforms@opseu.org or by contacting the resource centre.

**Strike pay**

Members who perform a minimum of four or more hours of strike duty per day, or a minimum of 20 or more hours per week, are eligible for strike pay.

It’s important to ensure that everyone who is receiving strike pay has signed a union card. People often assume, mistakenly, that because dues are deducted from their pay they are union members. Non-members are not entitled to receive strike pay.

Members who are unclassified/seasonal employees shall receive the same strike pay as members working full time, based on their hours of picket duty.

Note: A member who works for two employers represented by OPSEU, and is on strike against both at once, does not receive double strike pay.

To receive strike pay and benefits, members must fill out **Form B (Member Personal Information Form)** and submit it to the Strike Finance Sub-Committee.

Form B should be filled out for each member ahead of the strike deadline.

Can a member do their picket duty at another local?

A member may apply to perform strike duties at a Local other than his or her own by filling out the appropriate section of **Form B** and needs approval by both the home local and receiving local. The application will be approved if:

- the member’s Strike Committee approves the release of the member to perform strike duties at another location (such approval shall not be denied unreasonably); and
- the member finds a receiving Local that agrees to assign strike duties.

The receiving Local will only accept a member from another Local upon receipt of a completed and signed **Form B**. Once accepted, the member will be treated as a member of the receiving Local for the assignment of strike duties and payment of strike pay.

What happens after the strike is over and a member isn’t called back right away?

After the strike is over, any eligible members awaiting recall to work may continue to earn strike pay until they return to work, to a maximum of two weeks’ strike pay.

In such a case, strike pay is dependent upon the performance of “clean-up” duties, if any, assigned by the Strike Committee.
Who is responsible for handling disputes over strike pay?

Disputes over entitlement to daily strike pay may be appealed to the Strike Committee, whose decision shall be final and binding.

How much is strike pay?

NOTE: only members who have completed three weeks of picket duty are entitled to an increase in strike pay.

**Strike pay is as follows:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Each dependant</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weeks 1-3 daily max</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>$4.80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weeks 1-3 weekly max</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>$24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weeks 4+ daily max</td>
<td>$48</td>
<td>$4.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weeks 4+ weekly max</td>
<td>$240</td>
<td>$24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How to administer strike pay

Strike pay is calculated and submitted by the Strike Finance Sub-Committee on a weekly basis. Accounting will pay members for their picket duty based on the local’s weekly submission. This payment will be either a cheque or direct deposit.

OPSEU’s Accounting Unit requires the following before it processes strike pay.

- a completed “MemberDetails” tab from the Strike Register;
- a completed original Form B for each Local member who is requesting strike pay and benefits.
- original Direct Deposit agreement

At the end of each week, Picket Captains must deliver a completed and signed Form F *(Weekly Strike Duty Performance Register)* to their Strike Finance Sub-Committee.

Strike pay is earned daily but paid weekly. The weekly maximum shall be no more than five days of strike pay.

Note: Strike pay is earned daily and paid if, and only if, the strike lasts for more than one day. A strike which lasts one day or less does not entitle members to strike pay. However, if the strike lasts for more than one day, strike pay is retroactive to the first day strike duties are performed.

Locals are authorized to calculate strike pay amounts to members who are registered for strike duties and/or accommodation.

Supplementary strike pay, (any strike pay provided to members that is above and beyond the amount dictated by OPSEU policy) must be paid for entirely by the Local.

Bargaining team members are assigned their strike duties by the team chair as opposed to the local, with strike pay dependent upon performance of such duties. Strike pay for bargaining team members will be issued through their home local, upon authorization by the bargaining team chair.

For strike purposes, a week is seven consecutive calendar days. The first day of the strike is the first day of Week One.

The first strike pay will not be issued until seven (7) days after the beginning of the strike. Thereafter, strike pay will be issued on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

The Strike Committee or Strike Finance Sub-Committee must enter all approved member hours on the weekly Form F and enter them into the strike database for calculating strike pay amounts.
Once completed, a copy of the Pay Details tab must be sent electronically to Accounting (strikeforms@opseu.org) at the end of each week.

**Essential Services Dues**
In order to support those who are on the picket lines, those who are selected to work will be required to pay 31.375 per cent of their basic pay into the Central Strike Fund during the strike or lockout.

Essential and Emergency Service Workers are entitled to a daily top-up if their net daily EES wage is less than their daily minimum strike pay entitlement. Net pay EES wages are calculated as gross pay wages received less income taxes, EI and CPP. Other deductions are not used in the calculation of daily net pay.

EES workers whose net daily pay is equal to or greater than the strike pay they would earn if they were not performing EES work shall not receive strike pay.

**Maintenance of Employee Benefits**
OPSEU strike policy states that prior to a strike, the Central Bargaining Team shall initiate negotiations with the employer to have the employer pay their usual share of premiums (with OPSEU members paying their usual share) for continuance of insured benefits coverage and to have the employer arrange with the insurance carrier(s) to continue coverage as per the collective agreement for all bargaining unit members on strike or lock-out. If the employer agrees to continue coverage under the insurance policy, but refuses to pay their usual share of premiums, OPSEU will pay the required premiums for members on strike/lockout.

If the employer does not agreement to continue coverage, OPSEU will provide a limited benefit package through the

OPSEU Joint Trusteed Benefit Fund ($100,000 Life Insurance and extended health coverage).

OPSEU will also supply insured benefit coverage for any member who is off on a pre-existing disability claim who has had his or her coverage terminated as a result of a strike/lockout.

When requested, OPSEU will provide through the OPSEU Joint Trusteed Benefit Fund, insured benefit coverage for members on strike/lockout who do not have insured benefits while at work but would be receiving a percentage in lieu of benefits if not for the strike/lockout. This is applicable for unclassified members who participate in the strike, fulfill their strike duties and are not performing essential or emergency service work.

**What needs to be done once the strike is over?**
No later than two months after the end of the strike, the Local must:

- complete and return Form I to Accounting;
- pay all bills arising from the strike;
- provide a full account for all funds received, with supporting documentation, to Accounting;
- submit all reports, with supporting documents, to Accounting for review;
- provide a full report on strike finances to a General Membership Meeting.

Accounting will hold back quarterly rebates for each Local until the Local has submitted all original strike forms and/or all advances have been returned.

Note: If the Local hasn’t sent in its accounts after three rebates have been withheld, OPSEU may start the process of putting the local into trusteeship as
outlined in the Constitution. At the end of the strike, all funds paid to the strike account by OPSEU Head Office in the form of grants, or additional grants, must be accounted for and any surplus returned.

A *Weekly Administration Expense Record (Form E)* must be kept and submitted to the Area Co-ordinating Group every week for its reports to OPSEU Head Office. Originals of paid invoices must be attached to these statements.

**Budgeting for a strike**

We can’t live on strike pay. It is designed only to help us supplement savings and other sources of income during a dispute. The union puts aside a percentage of membership dues towards a strike fund. While this fund is in the millions, the amount per member is not large when large bargaining units are on strike.

Obviously, the union could not sustain a strike of any length if it was to make up the total wage loss of its members. That means every member should be planning ways to get through the difficult times ahead. Members should be advised to put aside extra for mortgages and rent, and postpone major purchases. Delaying mortgage payments can be arranged with banks and credit unions.

Only members who register for strike duties and perform picket or other strike duties will receive strike pay. Members who choose not to perform picket duties will not receive pay.

**Scrounging and fundraising**

Money, goods and services can be obtained if the right people are on the scrounging committee. It has the broad mandate to raise funds for the strike, acquiring goods or services that will save administrative costs and raise some money for the members and their families.

Form a scrounging committee to solicit aid from other OPSEU locals, other unions and any organizations in your communities who might support you or be sympathetic to the strikers’ situation.

Appeals will be made by OPSEU Head Office to the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE), and the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), and where applicable, to affiliated unions.

Working with the Area Co-ordinating Group Strike Committee, the scrounging committee should approach the local labour council, as well as OPSEU Area Councils, for assistance. Members of other unions in the community can be asked to appeal to their fellow workers and take up a collection where they work. Collecting outside workplaces (often called tin-canning) should be discussed with the union concerned.

Scrounging committees might arrange the loan of a camper van, a microwave or large coffee pot for strike headquarters, games and materials if there’s a strike daycare centre. Cookies, coffee, sandwiches, or canned goods can come in handy and can be scrounged by the committee, as well as clothing or children’s presents if the strike is likely to last over a traditional holiday.

Locate a supply of burning barrels and a good source of scrap lumber to keep pickets warm in cold weather.

**Tips for members on budgeting for strike**

- **Mortgages and Rents:** Talk to your bank or credit union and negotiate a plan for the duration before the next payment is due.
- **Taxes:** Ask if an accommodation can be arranged to defer property taxes.
- **Utilities:** Request to spread your payments.
• Loans: If your lender won’t allow a deferral, consider refinancing to reduce the payments.

• Credit Cards: Charging purchases while on strike is not recommended, but pay the minimum charge or use a line of credit with lower interest.

• Insurance: Investigate ways to spread out the premiums.

• Child Support: Contact your ex-spouse and try to work something out.

Hardship Cases
A lengthy strike can take a toll on your family’s finances. Being on strike is a financial hardship, but not all striking members are equally well-equipped to handle this hardship. The Strike Committee may provide these members with extra help over and above strike pay. This is called “hardship relief.” Hardship is when members have exhausted all other options.

Upon receiving a request for hardship relief, the Strike Committee sets up a Hardship Relief Committee. This committee shall have two or more members.

The tasks connected with hardship relief require tact and diplomacy as well as a good business sense, since relief counselors will need to provide advice to members experiencing financial problems. Counselors should also have the ability to recognize signs of problems that may require other kinds of assistance. If there are any local members who have taken the union counselor course, or have a similar background, their skills may be useful to the Finance Sub-Committee for these duties.

The Hardship Relief Committee will assist members in a variety of ways to assess the request, administer funds, work with others in your area to solicit donations for the hardship fund, notify and negotiate with local financial institutions, and ask for help, where necessary from the 1st Vice-President’s Office.

The Area Co-ordinating Group coordinates local hardship fundraising efforts and channel funds to the neediest members in the area.

Special problems
There are many community agencies that can provide assistance to members in time of dire need. In most communities, it is usually possible to find at least some agencies that deal with job finding, assistance for food, shelter, clothing, heat, and child welfare.

Striking members trained in counseling on these matters should be enlisted to assist in dealing with hardship cases.

Communications Sub-Committee
The Communications Sub-Committee is responsible for two-way communications between their bargaining unit teams and members. This committee is also responsible for maintaining the local telephone tree. During a strike, the Communications Sub-Committee puts out leaflets and a newsletter, is responsible for social media, handles media releases, public relations and garners support from other unions and the community. It appeals for funds and plans social events.

The committee shares information with other OPSEU locals, the Area Co-ordinating Group, and OPSEU Communications Department. One of the most important roles is to provide information and liaise with local labour bodies, community organizations and the community at large.

The local’s Communication Sub-Committee is charged with handling media relations such as planning news events,
writing and distributing news releases and advisories, updating social media, returning phone calls from reporters and kick-starting letter-to-the-editor writing campaigns.

It organizes special rallies and other public events with clients and coalition partners. When setting up the Communications Sub-Committee, it is wise to recruit members with good writing skills, computer skills and members who are creative. Each Communications Sub-Committee should have a copy of the OPSEU Communications Department’s *Telling Our Stories: A Complete Guide to Media Relations* for reference.

**Duties**

- Prepare and post notices for meetings and rallies
- Write and distribute local newsletters
- Prepare, maintain and activate telephone tree as required
- Keep files on all messages received at headquarters and follow-up
- One-on-one communications with picketers, reporting to the Strike Committee
- Organize rallies and other morale boosters
- Issue press releases, recruit media to events and prepare local spokespeople for interviews as needed
- Handle all social media (e.g. Twitter, Facebook)
- Take photographs at rallies and keep a record of events for the local
- Keep members informed and up to date with current information
- Share information with other OPSEU locals, Area Co-ordinating Groups and OPSEU Communications

**Helping news reporters do their job**

Local officials should meet well in advance with reporters who will be covering the strike or lock-out in order to brief them on the issues and the bargaining process. Identify the reporters who cover labour issues, or call the city desk at the newspapers or the news director at a TV or radio station. Don’t overlook the smaller community newspapers – they may prove to be our best allies.

Give reporters the facts so they don’t have to hunt for them. The easier we make their job, the better the coverage we are likely to get.

Before an interview or in planning a statement for a news release or news conference, try to develop a catchy way of expressing our main message so reporters can come away with the good, short quotes they need.

If we want a reporter to cover a particular event such as a rally or community meeting, always call to invite him or her. The news release we sent may have been lost in the mail or may not have stood out from others received.

Ask reporters about schedules that are most convenient for them. For example, scheduling a news conference for late in the afternoon may be good for our members, but may come at a time when most reporters have already completed their stories.

When dealing with reporters:

- Don’t lie and don’t guess. Even if we get reporters to use inaccurate information once, eventually they will find out and be angry that we put them in an embarrassing position. If we don’t know an answer, find out and get back to them.
• Don’t assume that any statement is truly off the record. A reporter’s first loyalty is to his story. If we don’t want to see a particular fact in print or on the air, don’t give it to the media in the first place.

• Don’t ignore the impact of social media sources to both get your message out and to be mindful that the content posted accurately reflects the position of the Union and Bargaining Teams.

• Don’t be upset that reporters report what the other side has to say. That’s their job.

• Don’t assume reporters understand anything about the labour movement. Offer to explain the basics.

• Don’t take a hostile approach or cut off contact with the reporter; that only hurts your chances of getting better coverage.

Our message to the media
We want to make sure that the union is speaking with one voice and not giving out inaccurate or contradictory information or opinions. News reporters should be referred to local strike headquarters, the OPSEU Regional Office or the OPSEU Communications Department. Official union publications will always be authorized for distribution by the President of OPSEU.

Organizing successful rallies and demonstrations
Well organized rallies can be one way to pressure the employer, by demonstrating worker solidarity and support from allies and by attracting public attention. Rallies also can boost group spirit by letting workers see proof of their strength in numbers.

Rallies which are well attended and smoothly run can boost morale and create interest in future organized events.

• One on one contact is the most effective way to get support for your event. Organize a network of on-the-job contacts or use the phone tree to remind each worker to come to your event. Asking for a commitment to attend is always helpful.

• Involve members in making banners, signs, or other props ahead of time. Keep the message simple and in large enough type to read at a distance and to show up well in photographs or on TV.

• Consider balloons with slogans printed on them as a way to make the event seem more spirited.

• Give people an opportunity to play an active role by singing, chanting, or marching. Otherwise, instead of feeling pumped up people may feel like they have watched someone else’s rally on TV.

• Arrange for musicians to lead the crowd in singing before and after the speeches and, if appropriate, once or twice between speeches.

• Brainstorm ideas for chants ahead of time.

• Incorporate a short march into the event.

• Include among the speakers, members of the unit and, if appropriate, members’ spouses – all of whom can talk from the heart about what the contract means to them.

• Talk with speakers ahead of time about what they are going to say and set a limit on the time they have to say it. For example, if politicians are going to speak, get their agreement that they will use the time to clearly endorse the union’s position.

• Consider using humour to make some of the points that might otherwise be buried in serious speeches. For
example, ask one of the members to dress up as the top management official and give a speech that parodies management’s positions.

- Talk to local police well in advance about permits you may need.
- For a big rally, train marshals to keep order and help anyone who becomes ill or lost. Provide arm bands to identify the marshals.
- Test the sound system enough in advance so that you can get other equipment to the event if something is not working properly.
- Make sure someone calls each media outlet and invites the appropriate reporter to attend. Offer to have a member meet the reporter at a particular time and place and stay with the reporter throughout the event to provide any necessary help such as identifying workers to interview or explaining something one of the speakers said.
- Arrange to have photographs taken.
- End the rally with a clear statement of what the next step is and how people can get involved.

### Strike Duties Sub-Committee

#### Strike Duties Sub-Committee responsibilities

- Reports to the Local Strike Committee
- Sets up the local strike headquarters, in consultation with the Local Strike Committee
- Recruits stewards and members to act as Picket Captains and provide ongoing support.
- Makes sure that all striking members are assigned strike duties
- Organizes the picket teams
- Handles relations with police
- Sets up picket lines and rest areas
- Handles logistics
- Helps recruit essential service workers to act as Inside Picket Captains
- In co-operation with the Strike Finance Sub-Committee, make sure that all striking members have the supports they need (e.g. accommodation as per OPSEU policy (4.6), headquarters if necessary, equipment, materials) to perform their strike duties effectively.

### Local Strike Headquarters - the strike information centre

The Local’s strike headquarters should be an information centre for members as well as the meeting place for strike administration.

If it’s close to the picket lines, it can also be a rest place for pickets. Mobile construction trailers with washrooms are ideal. Sometimes parking lots will rent spaces for strike trailers.

You will also need electricity, either by wire or generator, to run the lights, coffee maker, a computer and printer. You will need access to a phone line for e-mail and if possible a fax machine.

Photocopying is important, and you will need the usual office supplies – paper, pens, stapler and so on, as well as picket signs, string, a staple gun, megaphone, etc.

The strike policy spells out a list of specific items that the union’s Head Office will pay for. You will have to scrounge for the paper and paperclips, coffee and other essentials that fuel the strike and the strikers.
Telephones

The telephone is the single most important tool in a strike – even more so than a computer. Compile a list of useful numbers, including all pay phones that pickets may use.

The home telephone numbers of members must be readily available. Stewards and Picket Captains should compile lists of members for their groups. Keep duplicates at headquarters. One phone should be reserved for picket control only.

Set up teams to answer telephones and relay messages. Each local headquarters should maintain a phone log to keep track of calls and member’s questions. Use message pads to prevent messages from going astray.

Set up an information hot line, which members can call for general information. The operators of the service must have up-to-date information from the strike committee and communications sub-committee.

Provide the media with the number of the communications sub-committee and home numbers to designated spokespersons where they can be reached after office hours.

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<tr>
<th>Strike headquarters checklist</th>
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<td>Mailing/phone list for allies</td>
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<td>Space for production, picket signs</td>
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<td>Phone/fax list for media contacts</td>
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<td>Picket Captain meetings</td>
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<td>Picket training</td>
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<td>Copier or print shop access nearby</td>
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Information basics for strike headquarters:

- Membership mailing list, e-mail list and phone lists
- Mailing and phone list for allies
- Emergency contacts: police, local picket liaisons, community numbers etc.
- Contact list for Area Co-ordinating Group members
- Copies of union bulletins about bargaining, filed chronologically
- Copies of strike training materials provided at union educational
- Organizer calendars to track meetings
- Picket team lists, flying squad lists, lists for other strike duty
- Have a record manual for tracking donations, borrowed items and use of materials for strike activities
- Scrap book for photos, media coverage and stories

Role of the Picket Coordinator or Strike Duties Subcommittee Chair

- Set up the picket line protocol with police well in advance of a strike – work with ACGs on overall police relations
- Recruit and train Picket Captains
- Develop picket schedules
- Assist Picket Captains in their role
- Work with the ACGs to establish flying squads
- Work with the communications committee on special events
- Organize picket signs
- Work with the essential services committee, where applicable
- Work with essential services worksites reps and inside Picket Captains to maximize pressure on the employer

Picketing

The purpose of picketing is:

- To inform the public that there is a strike;
- To discourage people from entering the struck premises;
- To cut off the flow of materials in or out of the struck worksite;
- To discourage non-essential union members from working in violation of the legal strike;
- To inform union members who may not yet be aware of the strike
- To disrupt the employer’s business

Strike Duties

Strike duties may include:

- picketing; at your local worksite, cross-picketing or secondary picketing
- lobbying of MPPs, local politicians, directors of employer organizations, and the employer’s allies;
- outreach to service users and groups that represent them;
- outreach to labour, community, and other potential allies;
- mass rallies and demonstrations;
• attending and planning media relations work and advertising; and
• any other activities that help end the strike with the desired result.

Police Relations
One of the first tasks of the Strike Duties Sub-Committee is to contact the local police. Police will be interested in reducing the possibility of violence on the picket lines. Your OPSEU Local Staff Rep will assist Locals with these meetings. Some meetings may be organized with your Area Co-ordinating Group. Many Police forces have special labour disputes squads and publish basic guidelines for labour disputes that cover the legal aspects of picketing in the community.

Steps for an effective picket strategy:
1. Set up an official meeting with the appropriate police force.

   Inform the police that we are also interested in maintaining orderly and peaceful picket lines, however, our members will not tolerate continuous crossing of the lines by replacement workers or managers.

2. Establish your local’s guidelines for the picket line strategy.

   The objective is to maximize pressure on the employer. Picketing is part of our members’ rights to freedom of expression. The picket line strategy requires an ongoing assessment of risks and where members will have the greatest impact. Secondary picketing involves identifying third-party workplaces that are involved our work.

   On a picket line, for example, you may delay persons for the purposes of communicating with them. This is recognized as a 10 to 15 minute wait. However, in some cases it may be longer. One of the best strategies may be to set definite times when managers will be allowed to cross the lines. Make it clear that these times must be as short as possible – no more than 10 minutes at the beginning of a shift. Inform all Picket Captains of the times and the rules. Sometimes people do not cross picket lines where there is something in the way: a stalled truck, a fallen tree, a barricade.

   Emergency vehicles or vehicles containing valuable emergency cargo should proceed without delay.

3. Review your Strike Duties schedule and discuss who has permission to cross the line.

   Special letters signed by the Strike Duties Sub-Committee Chair or Picket Captains, may be issued to essential and emergency services members who must cross the line. You can issue these letters to your members prior to a strike with the expectation that they will need to produce the letter in order to cross the line.

Picket Captain Duties
Picket Captains report to the Strike Duties Sub-Committee. Picket Captains are responsible for maintaining picket lines at the appointed picketing site. They should be respected and experienced union stewards or workplace leaders. Being appointed as a Picket Captain gives stewards a good opportunity to participate.

OPSEU Staff Representatives may stage a training session for Picket Captains to confirm our responsibility to maintain a strong picket line, maintain order and report on incidents, monitor picket attendance, and respond to questions from workers.
Enlist Picket Captains well in advance of the strike deadline to map their worksites, review possible secondary picket sites to assist with the strike strategy, and contact members for picket duty. That way, all members will become aware of the strike deadline and begin budgeting accordingly.

Picket Captains should meet regularly in the weeks before the strike to discuss worksite logistics and set up a shift schedule. There should be enough Picket Captains for all shifts at all picket locations.

In the case of strike or lockout, all picket lines should be established in consultation with your Area Co-ordinating Group and your Local Strike Committees. For special picketing problems such as remote sites or to strengthen picket lines at key sites, contact your OPSEU Local Staff Reps and your Local Strike Committees.

To prepare for a strike, Picket Captains must:

1. Develop the picket strategy. Map our worksites. Map secondary picket targets. All entrances and driveways should be mapped in order to help plan picket sites. Some of this information may be garnered from health and safety committee members.

2. Plan picket schedules and contact your picket team members long before the strike deadline. That way, all members will become aware of the strike deadline and begin preparing accordingly. If a member cannot picket they need to discuss other strike duty options with the Strike Duties Sub-Committee (4.6.1).

3. Advise members about the possibility of strike action and ask them to adjust their household budgets, plan for contingencies, etc. Keep a record of any issues that should be brought to the attention of the committee.

Rules for pickets

By picketing, we protect our jobs, build our own unity, and send a message to management and the community. Misconduct on the picket line by a few individuals could cause us to be hit with court injunctions and could damage our image in the community. Please observe the following rules. The picket captain has the authority to enforce these rules, and to remove anyone who does not follow them:

- Report to the picket captain when you arrive and when you leave.
- Be on time. If each group of pickets arrives on time, then everyone will be able to leave on time as well.
- Don’t leave your post until the next group is there to relieve you.
- Carry or wear a sign and take turns resting.
- Dress casual, but neat. Wear comfortable clothing and shoes, and be prepared for the weather. Do not carry anything that could be labeled as a potential weapon, like a penknife.
- Maintain a strong picket line to discourage scabs, but don’t obstruct public use of the sidewalk or roadway.
- Talk to people who cross the line and try to convince them to support the strike. Think about what would convince you if you were in their shoes.
- Refer all strangers, media, employer representatives or police to the Picket Captain, even if they appear friendly. Statements made by uninformed pickets may be used against the union in court or reported in the media.
- Report any unusual incidents to the Picket Captain. They will report these incidents to the strike headquarters.
• If rumours threaten to disrupt the picket line, ask the Picket Captain to check them out with the local strike headquarters.

• Rotate your rest periods so the line is always strong.

• Do not enter the struck facility for any reason.

• There will be no drugs, no alcohol, no weapons, and no violence on the picket line.

• Don’t litter or lounge in front of the building.

Picket Captain’s pre-strike checklist
• Compile a list of all members at the worksite, with their home phone numbers.

• Approach all non-members to sign union cards

• Meet with other Picket Captains to set up schedules and discuss worksite logistics.

• Identify nearby coffee shops, rest rooms, pay phones, and sheltered rest areas. In some cases, a rented portable toilet may be necessary. Report the need to the Strike Duties Sub-Committee.

• If it’s likely to be cold, scrounge for empty oil drums and scrap lumber for fire pits.

• Set up a schedule of pickets and call each person on the picket team.

Setting up a schedule for pickets
Factors to take into account include the following:

• Share the burden fairly.

• Take family responsibilities into account to the extent possible. Find alternative tasks or committee work for people with special needs or disabilities who may not be able to picket.

• You must take accommodation issues into account when assigning strike duties.

• Use natural social groupings (people who know each other and work together, for example) so picket line duties will be more pleasant. On the other hand, picket duty can be an opportunity to make people from one department or work area more familiar with the concerns of workers from other areas.

• Mix more experienced and less experienced union members to ensure that individuals who can provide leadership are always present.

• Arrange transportation for picketers who need it.

Picket Captain’s on-strike responsibilities
• Train pickets on the schedule, the guidelines for conduct on the picket line, and the need to refer reporters or any other visitors to those designated for that purpose.

• Make sure that picket signs and food are at the right location at the right time.

• Be spokesperson on the line to the media and the public, or refer media to strike headquarters.

• Maintain communication with police who may be called to the lines.

• Maintain constant communication with Essential and Emergency Services Worksite Representatives about who the Essential or Emergency Services
Workers are and other issues affecting the picket lines.

- Determine who will be allowed to cross the picket line, i.e., Essential or Emergency Services Workers, etc.

- Keep accurate records on who fulfills their picket duty which is a requirement for receiving strike benefits. Picket Captains must help complete Weekly Strike Duty Performance Record (Form D). This form must be signed by the chair of the Local Finance Sub-Committee and then forwarded to OPSEU Head Office, Accounting Department.

- Make sure that the picket line always includes a camera in the event you need independent evidence of incidents or employer tactics.

- Management also has the right to photograph or videotape picket line incidents, but it may be an unfair labour practice for management to take pictures of legal, peaceful picketing.

- Report to strike headquarters by phone or in person after every picketing shift.

Know your rights

Chances are none of you will be charged as a result of a labour dispute. However, the Local Strike Committee must be prepared to contact their OPSEU Staff Representative immediately should any members be arrested. The OPSEU Staff Representative will have the emergency phone number for the area’s designated lawyer to assist.

If arrested, follow seven basic rules:

1. Offer no resistance, either physical or verbal.
2. Don’t make oral or written statements to the arresting officers.
3. Request that someone inform local

strike headquarters immediately. OPSEU will provide legal counsel.

4. Go along to the police station and correctly identify yourself: name, address and phone number.

5. Refuse to answer any questions other than those regarding identity.

6. Request to see a lawyer and ask why you have been arrested.

7. Keep cool, regardless of the tactics used by police.

As a rule, a person arrested is released in a few hours after signing a “promise to appear” in court. Ideally, a lawyer should read it before you sign it; if no lawyer is available immediately, read the document carefully. It should specify the charge against you and the date of the alleged offence.

No one should be detained for more than 24 hours without a court appearance; however, it could be longer on weekends.

Remember: no oral or written statements to police. Remain calm. Ask for a lawyer.

Picketing with a different local

Many OPS members commute to their worksites and it may be more convenient for them to picket with another local. Under OPSEU strike policy, members may do strike duties and picketing outside of their home local, or “cross-picketing.”

In order to arrange cross-picketing the member must first fill out the appropriate section of Form B. The application will be approved if the member’s own strike committee approves the release and if the member finds an agreeable receiving local. Once approved, the member will be treated as a member of the receiving local for both strike duties and strike pay. If a member cannot find a receiving local, they are expected to complete strike duties with their home local.
Secondary picketing
It may be necessary to form various flying squads to strengthen normal picket lines or carry out special pickets of companies that do business with the OPS. Flying squads may be required to picket highway sites or places where OPS work is being done via computer hookup. This could also mean picketing a scab’s home if you know that struck work is being done from that location.

Problems on the picket line

Disorderly Conduct:
Alcohol and drugs are prohibited on picket lines. Picket Captains have total authority to remove people on the line who engage in improper conduct. At the same time, complaints about Picket Captains should be reported to the Strike Duties Sub-Committee, investigated and resolved quickly before morale is affected. Members should pick an alternate Picket Captain if for some reason their designated Picket Captain does not appear.

Abuse or insults:
Members should not respond to abuse or insults from anyone. Be firm in asking persons not to cross the picket line. Picket Captains will determine who is allowed to cross.

Scabs:
Unauthorized OPSEU members (those not selected as Essential or Emergency Workers) who cross picket lines are strike-breakers or scabs. Identify them, take their photo, if possible, and inform them of the seriousness of their action. Do not use physical violence to stop them. Have a very long conversation with them. Report all strike-breakers to strike headquarters. When in doubt, politely ask the names of all persons crossing the picket lines and take down the license numbers of vehicles.

Wrongly accusing someone of being a scab could result in legal action. Speaking freely and truthfully, but not maliciously, will protect you from legal actions against verbal and written responses to scabbing. The Strike Duties Sub-Committee may plan ways to approach habitual strikebreakers.

Essential and Emergency Service Workers:
Essential and Emergency Service Workers are required to work during a strike. These workers will be allowed to cross the picket line, once they produce their letter and are identified by the union worksite representative. When in doubt, politely ask for the names of all persons crossing the picket lines.

Deliveries:
Many truck drivers are union members and will refrain from crossing the line, if asked. The Local Strike Committee may have negotiated with police to set specific times for deliveries or crossing lines.

Repeated crossing of lines by trucks or busloads of replacement workers should be reported immediately to local strike headquarters and plans made to deal with them. Note all vehicle license numbers and find ways to identify the reason for their entry.

Trespassing:
We have the right to picket on public property such as sidewalks, laneways and driveways leading to public roadways. Managers, security guards or the police may attempt to intimidate or threaten members who are on adjacent private property. Under law, only the actual property owner can lay a trespassing charge. However, the property owner may have designated an agent. Negotiating ahead of time with the property owner or agent may prove useful when attempting to set up pickets on these sites.
If a strike or lock-out is called:

- Arrange for Picket Captains to meet members as they come off the job.

- If possible, arrange a large strike meeting somewhere near the work location or in a nearby hall you’ve rented.

- For the first few hours, all members should be on the picket lines as a show of solidarity and strength.

- Picket Captains should meet with or contact all members of their picket teams to confirm picket shift schedules.

Dealing with police and security guards on the picket line

Normally, if pickets conduct themselves in an orderly manner there will be no police interference with our picket lines. However, managers, an over-zealous police officer or a security guard may attempt to harass the pickets.

Our response should be non-abusive, but firm. We have the right to legally picket the premises. Any serious harassment by police or security guards should be reported immediately to the local strike headquarters so that police officials can be contacted. Note all names and badge numbers.

Some police forces have special labour dispute squads and they publish basic guidelines that cover the legal aspects of picketing in the community.

The Local Strike Committee should meet with police before the strike deadline to negotiate specific short periods of time when non-members may be allowed to cross our picket lines.

Inside Picket Captains

Traditionally, picketing is done outside of your workplace. But with the legal requirement to provide essential services, an inside strategy will also require the full enforcement of the Essential and Emergency Services Agreements. The Local may appoint inside Picket Captains who will help deliver the inside strategy in the event of a strike.

Inside Picket Captains are members assigned to do essential services who are willing to help enforce the essential services agreements and willing to develop the tactics of the “inside” strike. There is no limit on the number of Inside Picket Captains a local may have. Some of the Inside Picket Captains may also be designated as Union Worksite Representatives for the purpose of worksite essential service inspection.

Inside Picket Captains must work with Union Worksite Representatives to maximize pressure on the employer through regular inspection and on-going enforcement.

The main duties of the Inside Picket Captain include:

- Informing and educating all members about the inside strategy, before the strike starts.

- Educating and planning the inside strategy with the Local Strike Committee before a strike.

- Organizing Inside Picket Captains into an effective enforcement strategy.

- Building a communication system between the Inside and Outside Picket Captains. Meet before and after each shift to debrief and discuss.
the enforcement of the Essential and Emergency Services Agreements.

- Ensuring the health and safety of members in the workplace.
- Completing site visits throughout the entire workplace.

Strongly discourage members from doing any kind of non-essential function. If inside essential workers continue to perform functions not listed in their site agreements as ordered by the Ontario Labour Relations Board, the workplace will work as usual and the strike will last longer!

Find out if managers are intimidating members who are working essential services. If this is taking place, encourage all essential service workers to advise the on-site union rep and stewards immediately by phone or after their shift.

Develop worksite-specific inside tactics to maximize pressure on the employer.

Refusing non-negotiated functions

Inside Picket Captains should ensure that all essential service workers are aware of their rights to refuse non-negotiated functions, and assist them in refusing to do these duties. Make sure that the union is using one voice in the enforcement of the Essential and Emergency Services Agreements. An essential service worker who is asked to perform a non-essential function by a manager should point to the site agreement for that work location. The agreements were ordered by the Ontario Labour Relations Board or have been agreed to by the parties. The Inside Picket Captain should notify strike headquarters if a manager is insisting you perform functions that were not agreed to or ordered.
5. A few last reminders

Strike deadline procedure
A strike deadline will be set by the Bargaining Teams and the Provincial Coordinating Group and communicated to the locals well in advance.

Stewards and Picket Captains must know the precise time of the strike deadline to minimize confusion.

No OPSEU member can go on a legal strike before the official notification from OPSEU centrally.

Back-to-work protocol
After a strike or lockout, the Bargaining Teams negotiate a back-to-work agreement with the employer that covers issues that may be hangovers from the strike. Generally, the employer agrees to drop any discipline, legal actions or other sanctions against union members, and cover pension, benefits and seniority issues. Outstanding criminal charges may not be covered under the back-work-protocol. These would have to be dealt with at a later court appearance.

Reasonable deadlines will be set for an orderly return to work.

Postscript
Whether or not we’ve been forced to strike, been locked out or been forced back to work by legislation, those of us who fully participate in strike preparation and action have acted in solidarity with our sisters and brothers.

Whatever the outcome, we can be satisfied that we have undertaken the best defence possible of our membership and our collective agreement.

For further information about collective bargaining or how you can get involved in OPSEU strike preparation activities, contact your Local Executive Committee or OPSEU Local Staff Representative.
# My notes and contacts

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Form A - Application For A Strike Administration Advance

OPSEU Local _________ hereby makes application for a start-up Advance of $1,500 as provided for under Section 5.1 of the Strike Policy.

Please make this cheque payable to:

OPSEU LOCAL _________ STRIKE ADMINISTRATION ACCOUNT.

And

Deposit to Bank of Montreal - Designated Bank Account

Note: Any unused or non-reconciled amount remaining from the initial $1,500 advance must be returned to Accounting - Head Office upon completion of the strike.

Additional Information:

Employer Name:____________________________ Date of Strike Vote ______________

Contact Information for the Strike Finance Committee’s Chair

Name:____________________________ (Please Print) ` Member Id____________

Secure Email Address_______________________

Submitted by:

__________________________________ ___________________
Chairperson, Local Sub-Finance Committee Date

__________________________________ ___________________
Staff Representative Regional Office

SUBMIT TO YOUR REGIONAL OFFICE FOR FORWARDING TO ACCOUNTING - HEAD OFFICE Fax 416-448-7450
Form B - OPSEU Members Personal Information Form (MPIF)

This form must be completed and submitted to your Local Finance committee in order to perform picket duty and collect strike pay.

Members Name: ________________________________   Local # ______________

Street: ________________________________

City: ____________________  Prov: ____________________  Postal Code: ______________

Home Phone: ( )__________________________  Work Phone: ( )__________________________  Ext #: ______________

Home e-mail address: ____________________________  Work e-mail address: ____________________________

Members Union I.D. #:__________________________  this line to be deleted

List of Dependents

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<th>Dependents Full Name</th>
<th>Date of Birth (mm/dj/ya)</th>
<th>Relationship to Member</th>
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Dependents are defined as a non-working spouse (excludes spouse on strike) and children under 18 (under 26 if attending school), disabled and/or an elderly (65+) dependent).

Members Signature  Date  LEC Signature  Date

Authorization of the information provided above requires both the member and a LEC member to sign and date.

Picketing /Accommodation Information

☐ I will be picketing at my Work Site (no approval required)

☐ I would like to Cross Picket at Local # __________

☐ I will require accommodation and can perform modified strike duties.

☐ I will require accommodation and cannot perform modified strike duties.

To picket at another Local, a member must receive authorization from their home Local, as well authorization from the receiving Locals Strike Committee. A copy of this MPIF must be given to the Local in order for the member to receive Strike Pay.

Home Local

______________  Strike Committee Member Name

(please print clearly)

Signature

Receiving Local #

______________  Strike Committee Member Name

(please print clearly)

Signature
Form C - Strike Items Request

Date: ________________________ Local ____________________ Bargaining Unit name: ________________________

Regional Office: ________________________ Staff Rep: ________________________

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<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Qty Requested</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
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<td>(A) Generator (capacity)</td>
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<td>(A) Trailer</td>
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<td>(A) Portable Toilet</td>
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Items On Hand at Head Office

- Two-way Radios
- Shelter/Canopy
- Safety Vest/Shirt
- Video Camera
- Extension cord
- Chains
- Locks
- Cone/Pylon (Traffic/Safety)
- Computer/ Printer
- Digital Camera
- Garbage Bin
- Batteries (for 2 way device only)

* (A) = Allowable expense as per policy

Requested by: ________________________ Vetted by: ________________________
Local Finance Committee Staff Representative

Items to be shipped to: Regional Office Strike Headquarters

Strike Headquarters Location ________________________ ________________________

Office use Only

Shipped to: ________________________ c/o: ________________________ (Regional Office) (Staff Rep/Designate – please print)
Prepared by: ________________________ Date ________________________

Items received in good order by: ________________________ ________________________ Date: ________________________

(Print name) (Signature)
Form D - Request For Additional Quarterly Rebate

OPSEU Local _________ hereby makes application for an Additional Quarterly Rebate as provided for under Section 5.1.3 of the Strike Policy.

Strike Date: _______________________ Requested by: _______________________

Last Trustees Audit Report: _______________________

Last Rebate Amount: $ _________________ Number of Members: _______________

For Units of Local Only (where more than one bargaining unit in local):

Number of Members in Unit: ___________ % Of Rebate Payable to Unit: $ __________

Please make this cheque payable to: OPSEU LOCAL ________________

Send cheque to:

(NAME) (ADDRESS)

Chairperson, Finance Committee Date

Local President Date

SUBMIT TO YOUR REGIONAL OFFICE FOR FORWARDING TO ACCOUNTING - HEAD OFFICE Fax 416-448-7450

For Accounting Use Only

Amount to be paid: $ ________________

Charge to Strike Fund Account Code: ________________________________

Approved by: _______________________

Date: _______________________

Print name: _______________________

42
Form E - Strike Administration Expense
Fill out and submit when additional funds are required

LOCAL/UNIT NAME_________________________________________ LOCAL #__________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION OF SUPPLIES PURCHASED</th>
<th>AMOUNT $</th>
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Signed: __________________________________________

TOTAL $ __________

LOCAL FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

Notes:

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<th>APPROVED TOTAL $</th>
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Approved by: ____________________________

OPSEU STAFF REPRESENTATIVE

**ATTACH ORIGINAL RECEIPTS/ INVOICES AND FORWARD TO THE OPSEU STAFF REPRESENTATIVE AT THE REGIONAL OFFICE TO BE APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO ACCOUNTING, HEAD OFFICE.**

_Retain a copy for local records & final account of strike finances (form I)_

43
Form F - OPSEU Weekly Strike Duty Performance Register

Strike Week No. _______ for week ending _____/_____/_____

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>INDICATE NUMBER OF HOURS FOR EACH DAY</th>
<th>Member Signature</th>
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<tr>
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<td>M  T  W  T  F  SAT  SUN</td>
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</table>

PICKET CAPTAIN
Print Name Clearly ___________________________ Signature ___________________________

SUBMIT ORIGINALS WEEKLY TO ACCOUNTING - HEAD OFFICE.
RETAIN A COPY FOR LOCAL RECORDS

FORM F

Local_______

mmm dd yyyy
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member Name</th>
<th># of Dep</th>
<th>Cheq. Number</th>
<th>4/Jun/12</th>
<th>5/Jun/12</th>
<th>6/Jun/12</th>
<th>7/Jun/12</th>
<th>8/Jun/12</th>
<th>Total Hrs</th>
<th>Total Strike</th>
<th>Total Dep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
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Form G - OPSEU Strike Duty Performance Record

Cheque Run Period: 04-Jun-2012 To 10-Jun-2012
Eligible items: two-way radios, safety vests, video/digital camera, extension cords, locks & chains, cones/pile-ons, garbage bins, shelter/canopy.
Form I - Final Account Of Strike Fund

LOCAL/UNIT NAME_______________________   LOCAL #_______

1) Start-up Advance received $1,500.00

2) Expenses
   a) Form E’s submitted & reimbursed – total amount $__________
   b) Expenses still outstanding – Attach Form E $__________

Total administrative expenditures $__________

3) Balance owing/owed $__________

FORM E’S SUBMITTED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Submitted</th>
<th>Approved total</th>
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Total approved $  

At the end of the strike, all funds paid to the Local strike administration account by the SACG and/or Accounting, Head Office must be accounted for and any surplus returned.

All bills must be paid and the strike account closed no later than two months after the strike is finished.

Any monies remaining in the Strike Administration Account must be returned to Accounting, Head Office sixty (60) days after the strike.

Please make cheques payable to OPSEU.

Please ensure that all Administration Expenses have been reported on Form E and submitted to the Regional Office. Original Receipts must be attached.

Failure to complete and forward this information to Accounting, Head Office within the time lines provided, will result in Local Rebate(s) held in trust until such time as this information is received at Accounting, Head Office.
OPSEU Strike Finances Checklist
A tool for locals/units managing the $ for a strike

Make sure your local/unit takes all the steps necessary to manage its strike finances. Use this checklist to remind yourself of what you’ve done & what still needs doing. (*Items with * are described at the end.*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Done</th>
<th>To Do</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Sign up your bargaining unit members as union members</td>
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<tr>
<td>a) Update your membership list.</td>
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<tr>
<td>b) Talk to bargaining unit members who are not yet signed-up union members, and get them to sign union membership cards</td>
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<tr>
<td>c) Submit signed union membership cards to your regional office to the attention of your Staff Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Establish your Strike Finance Committee (after a positive strike vote)</td>
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<tr>
<td>a) The Committee includes the local treasurer or unit designate and selects a chair.</td>
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<tr>
<td>b) Arrange a briefing for the Committee with the Staff Representative on committee roles and responsibilities. You can use this checklist as one of the tools for the briefing. (See 7. below, Train your Committee.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Get your Form B’s* filled out and submitted</td>
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<tr>
<td>a) Work with the Strike/Mobilizing Committee to provide a briefing session to all your stewards on their roles and responsibilities during a strike; specifically instruct them about Form B’s and that they provide critical information for administering the strike and ensuring that signed-up members do picket duty and get their strike pay.</td>
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<tr>
<td>b) Stewards distribute Form B, Membership Personal Information Form MPIF to signed-up members, and help members to fill them out. (Note: In the absence of shop stewards, the Mobilizing Committee chair may use information stewards*.)</td>
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<td>c) Stewards give filled-in Form B’s to the LEC, or designated steward for signature.</td>
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<tr>
<td>d) LEC*/designated steward signs Form B’s and gives to Strike Finance Committee. The Committee will use these forms to develop its data base. (See 5 below).</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Get your Local Strike Signatories Set Up</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local members who are signatories need to sign a BMO card that are available from the regional office. (outlined below)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.1 Strike Administration Bank Account</td>
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<tr>
<td>a) Strike Finance Committee Chair fills out Form A*, Strike Administration Advance and submits to assigned Staff Representative for approval.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
b) Staff Representative approves and sends Form A to Accounting, Head Office for processing.

c) Accounting, Head Office opens Local xxxx Strike Administration bank account with BMO. The local/unit assigns at least 2 Committee members as signatories. The number of signatories will depend on the size of your local.

d) Signatories fill out a BMO card (Identification is no longer required) and submit to the Staff Representative who will forward to Accounting Head Office.

e) Strike Finance Committee Chair receives notification from Accounting that $1500 has been deposited to the local's Strike Administration bank account.

4.2 Central Strike Pay

f) It is **very important** to get the Direct Deposit Agreement forms filled out as quickly as possible and submitted Head office Accounting.

g) Forms are available at the regional office where the local can pick them up.

h) Staff Representative forwards to head office accounting the following documents before the start of the strike:
   i. The signed, BMO card (Identification no longer required)
   ii. Original Form B’s for each member;
   iii. E-mail “MemberDetails” tab from Strike CD to strikeforms@opseu.org. (see 6. Organize your data base below)
   iv. Direct Deposit agreements (original copies)

5. Get your Strike Administration Lined Up

a) Strike Finance Committee fills out Form C*, Strike Items Request Form which is then signed by the Staff Representative and sent to the Accounting Department.

b) The local/unit then arranges & pays for trailer, electricity, hydro hookup, etc from this new Strike Administration bank account. Local keeps all receipts and uses good bookkeeping practices (see below).

c) Strike Finance Committee Chair fills out Form E*, Strike Administration Expense, when additional funds are required. S/he signs the form, attaches original receipts for allowable expenses, and sends to assigned Staff Representative for approval (see OPSEU Policy Manual section 25.2). Staff Representative forwards to Accounting, Head Office for payment.

6. Organize your data base

a) Strike Finance Committee Chair installs Strike Administration CD on local’s computer and sets the local code. (Note: if the local or unit does not have a computer or printer, please request items on loan for the duration of the Strike, by
filling out Form C, *Strike Items Request Form*. Submit Form C to Staff Representative for signature, and forward to Accounting Head Office.

b) Strike Finance Committee updates the “MemberDetails” for each member’s dependents based on completed Form B’s.

c) Strike Finance Committee e-mails this tab to strikeforms@opseu.org.

d) Staff Representative reviews work to date of Strike Finances Committee and offers support as needed.

7. Train your Committee

**For locals bargaining provincially:**

a) Staff Representative and regional supervisor request Accounting, Head Office, to provide strike finance training for Strike Finance Committee

b) Accounting provides 1-day training and distributes Strike CD’s with the following on it:
   i) list of all bargaining unit members of the local;
   ii) forms and program to calculate strike pay amounts;
   iii) instructions on how to use the program;
   iv) latest constitution, policy and forms on strike finances.
   v) Strike Headquarters Insurance Coverage form

**For smaller locals not bargaining provincially:**

a) Staff Representative or designee provides training.

b) Staff Representative or designee ensures local Strike Finance Committee has a copy of the CD with the resources on it and a computer if it’s available. (See above 7.b) and 6.a).)

On Strike

8. Strike Benefits

If the employer agrees to continue benefits during the strike, no action is required by the Strike Finance Committee.

If the employer discontinues benefits during the strike:

a) The Staff Representative informs Accounting, Head Office that benefits are discontinued.

b) Accounting, Head Office requests, in writing, coverage from the Joint Benefit Trust. All members will be enrolled based on the list of members sent at the beginning of the strike.

c) Strike Finance Committee sends Member Details Tab to Accounting, Head Office who forwards that information to the Joint Benefits Trust.
d) Strike Finance Committee adds or removes names of eligible members during strike by e-mailing to strikeforms@opseu.org. Eligible members are signed-up members performing picket duty during the strike.

e) Joint Benefit Trust ensures benefits for all eligible members for the duration of the strike.

f) At the end of the strike, the Staff Representative informs Accounting, Head Office of the return to work.

g) Accounting, Head Office notifies Joint Benefits Trust to terminate coverage.

9. Members perform picket/strike duty
a) Members are assigned picket duty by the Local Strike Committee or designee (not Strike Finances Committee).

b) Members sign in, and perform required hours.

c) At the end of the week, the picket captain* signs Form F*, Strike Duty Performance Register, and gives it to the Strike Finance Committee for processing.

10. Prepare strike amounts for week 1 of the strike
a) Strike Finance Committee creates a “Weekly Pay Detail” and adds members to the pay details from Form F. The picket duty hours are then recorded on the “PayDetails” tab for all members.

b) Strike Finance Committee prints this tab and checks it against Form F to verify data.

c) Strike Finance Committee saves the Excel file as Local xxxx Week 1.

d) Strike Finance Committee e-mails this tab to strikeforms@opseu.org.

e) Refer to the “Strike Database Instructions” on your Local Strike Administration CD for more detailed instructions on calculating strike pay amounts or e-mail strikeforms@opseu.org for assistance.

11. Repeat process for week 2 and onwards if strike continues
If the strike continues, repeat the above process again, and save the Excel spreadsheet as Local xxxx, Week 2.

12. Maintain overall accounts
a) During this period, the local treasurer and the LEC maintain regular accounting, and continue to file Trusteed Audit Reports (TAR’s) on time.

b) Strike Finances Committee Chair fills out Form D, Request for Additional Quarterly Rebate, to apply for additional funds which would be equal to the local’s last quarterly rebate. Locals/units on strike are entitled to additional funds to cover
non-allowable strike expenses such as picket line refreshments, mileage or TTC tickets, etc. For units on strike the additional funds would be pro-rated to the number of dues payers in their unit and not the entire local. Additional funds are not available to newly-organized units who have not yet begun paying dues. Additional funds will only be issued if the Local’s TAR’s (Trusteed Audit Reports) are up to date.

**Return to Work & Settling the Accounts**

**The Strike Finances Committee:**

a) Submit all “PayDetails” tab information for picket/strike duty. Follow the process above.

b) Submit Form F’s, *Picket Duty Performance Register*.

c) Returns all unused and voided cheques for strike administration.

d) Close strike trailer, disconnect telephone and hydro and dismantle strike headquarters/porta-potty’s, burn barrels etc.

f) Fills out Form I, *Final Account of Strike Fund*, and submits to Accounting, Head Office along with a cheque for any outstanding money owed. If there is outstanding money owed to the local, the Strike Finances Committee attaches a filled-out Form E, *Strike Administration Expense Form*, to Form I and submits. Accounting Head Office will reimburse any money owed.

g) Report local strike spending at the next general membership meeting.

**Accounting, Head Office**

h) OPSEU Head office closes Local XXXX strike administration bank account within 60 days of the end of the strike.

**Glossary:**

**Form A: Strike Administration Advance.** The local/unit submits the completed form to the Staff Representative in order to get the $1500 00 Start up advance for strike administration

**Form B: Membership Personal Information Form (MPIF)** This form is filled out by each member in order to perform picket duty and collect strike pay. This form is given to a member of the LEC for signature

**Form C: Strike Items Request.** This form is filled out by the Strike Finance Committee indicating what items they require for the possible upcoming strike. Head Office does have some strike items that can be sent to the Staff Representative for distribution

**Form D: Request for Additional Quarterly Rebate.** Local/unit are entitled to one additional quarterly rebate or pro-rated portion if unit is on strike and its’ Trusteed Audit Reports are up to date. The amount will be based on the last rebate cheque issued to the local.
Form E: Strike Administration Expense Form. The Strike Finances Committee submits this form along with original receipts to the Staff Representative, whenever additional funds are required. The Staff Representative signs and sends it to Accounting, Head Office for payment.

Form F: Weekly Strike Duty Performance Register. This form is submitted to the Strike Finance Committee at the end of the week by each picket captain. The Strike Finance Committee enters the amount of hours picketed for each member on the Strike database.

Form G: Strike Pay Register. This form is submitted weekly by the Strike Finances Committee to Head Office, Accounting to ensure payment of strike pay to members. This form/tab can be emailed to strikeforms@opseu.org.

Form H: Reimbursement for Strike Items Returned. This form is for locals who want reimbursement for eligible items the local has purchased for the strike and is turned in to Head Office for further use.

Form I: Final Account of Strike Fund. This form along with any remaining funds form the advance, is submitted to accounting within 60 days of the end of the strike and documents all monies received and spent.

Direct Deposit Agreement. This form is signed by the member and once completed and submitted to Head Office Accounting authorizes head office to electronically transfers funds to the members designated bank account during the length of the strike.

Information Steward. This is a member who volunteers to perform certain tasks in the unit/local such as gathering information from members, distributing leaflets, coordinating part of a phone tree, etc, but is not willing to be a steward who also processes grievances.

LEC – Local Executive Committee includes the local’s president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, chief steward/unit stewards.

Picket Captain: active member(s) assigned to provide on-the-ground leadership and administrative support for members performing strike duties.