



CUPE 3913 STRIKE MANDATE VOTE FAQ

1. What is a strike mandate vote? Why is it important?

The strike mandate vote asks you to give your bargaining team permission to call a strike if or when the union and the university reach an impasse at the negotiating table.

A positive strike mandate vote does *not* mean we will go on strike, but it does authorize the bargaining team to call a strike if one becomes necessary in order to secure a fair deal. It also instructs the union to begin necessary preparations for a strike or lockout situation. It's important for you to know that a **strong strike mandate vote with a high turn-out is the best way to avoid a strike,** because it gives the bargaining team the leverage they need to make the university return to the table and seriously address the membership's proposals and priorities.

Strike mandate votes must happen in accordance with Section 79 of the Ontario *Labour Relations Act* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/95l01/v23>) and Section B.2.2 of the Local's bylaws to learn more about a strike mandate vote, click this link: (https://cupe3913.on.ca/Portals/0/3913_Bylaws_2021.pdf?ver=c6QNqXZJ1l09Jy3JO9oIQ%3d%3d)

2. Why are we calling for a strike mandate vote NOW?

When we began bargaining last October, we and the university expressed a desire to complete negotiations relatively quickly. Your bargaining team made it clear that we wanted to complete work on non-monetary proposals by the end of the Fall 2023 semester and begin work on monetary proposals this semester.

While we worked steadily to respond to all the university's proposals and questions, the university failed to match our commitment, working at a pace so slow that we have not yet completed the non-monetary proposals, and, if they keep to the current pace, bargaining may drag on through the summer. This puts them at an advantage, as striking during the summer is very ineffective because there are far fewer courses being offered from which TAs and Sessionals could theoretically withdraw their labour. Also, many of the university's proposals so far are unclear, and their team offered no productive responses to our questions about them.



In short, we believe the university is not taking bargaining seriously, and we believe that a strong strike mandate vote will compel them to come to the table with the energy they committed to at the beginning, especially as the monetary proposals will be discussed soon.

3. Why should you vote YES in the strike mandate vote? Does voting YES mean we will go on strike?

No. It does not mean that we *will* go on strike. It only gives the union authorization to (a) prepare for a strike, and (b) if needed, call for a strike vote to call a deadline to begin strike action.

We need a significant majority of the membership to vote “yes” for the strike. Based on past collective bargaining experiences both at University of Guelph and at other universities, **when a union has have a strong strike mandate vote, it can more effectively bargain a new collective agreement in its favour.** That is, it sends a clear message to the Employer that the Union’s membership is not willing to simply accept a bad deal, or have one imposed on them.

4. I’m an international student, can I get in trouble for participating in a strike mandate vote?

All strike votes, including strike mandate votes, are required by law to be undertaken via **secret ballot**. It is illegal to discipline or punish someone, including international members, for participating in a legal strike vote or legal strike in Canada. Participating in strike mandate votes and/or strike action at your workplace cannot negatively impact your student visa, citizenship application, or immigration status. If there is any reprisal against a member for participating in a strike mandate vote or action, CUPE 3913 will represent you.

5. How many strike mandate votes will there be?

Only one, so it is imperative that you vote!

6. Will the Union continue to negotiate with the Employer after a strike mandate vote?

Yes. We will remain committed to trying to reach a deal at the table without having to call for a strike vote until the very last minute. Again, our power to do so will be increased by a strong strike mandate vote.



7. How do I vote in the strike mandate vote?

If a strike mandate vote is called, it will be in mid-February. The vote will be carried out online via Simply Voting, the site we have used for the past three elections and for other issues and amendments. It is secure and anonymous. All members within their political membership (i.e., who have had a work assignment since W23) will be sent login information via Simply Voting at 12:01 am on the first day of voting. In the event a strike mandate vote is called, rest assured that we will keep you updated, and announce all information related to participating in the vote via email, social media and on our website at www.cupe3913.on.ca.