



FAQ

Strike Vote FAQ

Frequently asked questions about the strike vote and what it means for QUFA Members

Here are some answers to frequently asked questions about strike votes, why they are important, and what they mean for QUFA Members.

What is a strike vote?

A union holds a strike vote to give strength to its bargaining team. A vote in favour of a strike signifies that members support the bargaining team's efforts and are prepared to go on strike, if needed. Unions must hold a strike vote before taking any job action, including strike or work to rule.

Does this mean we are going on strike?

Not necessarily. The QUFA Bargaining Team will continue to negotiate after the strike vote, believing that a strong strike vote is an expedient tactic to assist these negotiations. A strike is not inevitable, but should one be necessary, Members will be informed of any developments. As per the QUFA Policies and Procedures, "A vote to approve a strike does not initiate a strike but empowers the Executive to do so if necessary."

Why is a strike vote important?

A strike vote vastly increases bargaining power. A strong vote in favour of a strike sends a message to university administration that QUFA is serious about our position and wants our Bargaining Team to come out with the best possible agreement. Because the Executive Committee cannot decide to authorize a strike without a strike vote by the general Membership, QUFA needs to hold a vote early enough in the process so that the appropriate preparations can be made.

Why now?

The Bargaining Team is currently in conciliation with the employer. A conciliator is a government-appointed third party who assists the two sides to reach a deal. Conciliation is required by the Labour Relations Act before a strike or lockout position becomes legal, and it is a normal part of negotiations. It is important to realize that both sides have been negotiating since May for forty-six days. Even with the

recent help of a conciliator, there has been little progress. For the most recent update on conciliation, please see the Bargaining Alerts on QUFA's Bargaining Web site.¹

If QUFA and the employer cannot reach an agreement after conciliation, the conciliator, who reports to the Ministry of Labour, will file a "no-board report." The release of this report begins a seventeen-day countdown to QUFA being in a legal strike position and to the employer being in a legal lockout position. Once the Ministry releases the no-board report, we would be able to communicate the exact date at which job action (strike or lockout) becomes possible. However, this is just the date on which job action becomes *possible*; it does not mean that job action must commence on that date.

Having a strike vote during the conciliation process is advantageous to prepare for the possible no-board report and legal job action position.

So far, there have been two days of conciliation (29-30 July 2026), and two more are planned (18-19 August 2026). We hope that a strong strike vote (11-14 August 2026) will make these days more productive than bargaining has been so far.

For a nuanced analysis of the value and importance of strike votes in Canadian labour relations, please see "The Folly of Not Voting to Strike in Canadian Collective Bargaining Law"² and "Without a Successful Strike Vote, York Faculty Are Sitting Ducks"³ Work, Law, and Labour-Relations Professor David Doorey of York University.

For more detailed information about Job Action (strikes and lockouts) please see QUFA's Job Action FAQ⁴ released on 9 July 2026.

If you have any questions, please contact us via e-mail.

Notes

¹<https://qufa.ca/bargaining/#ale>

²<https://lawofwork.ca/strikevotes/>

³<https://lawofwork.ca/without-a-successful-strike-vote-york-faculty-are-sitting-ducks/>

⁴<https://qufa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/4-Alert-9-July-2026.pdf>

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