

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – STAFF

1. Why is planning underway for a work stoppage or strike?

Manitoba's Unions Representing Community and Facility Support Workers throughout much of the province have issued Strike Notice with an effective date of October 8, 2024 at 6:00 a.m.

While talks continue with both CUPE and MGEU, planning is underway to limit disruption to our patients, residents and clients in the event of a work stoppage.

2. How will health services be affected?

Essential Service Agreements are being finalized in each affected area, with the primary goal of limiting disruption and maintaining essential health services.

These agreements between the Employer and the Union(s) outline the minimum staffing required to maintain vital and essential health services.

Some areas will be affected, with delays or postponements likely, however every effort is being made to limit the disruption to patient/resident/client care.

3. When would a strike begin?

Notice has been served for a strike to begin at 6 a.m. on Tuesday, October 8.

4. I am a new hire and union member represented by striking areas of CUPE/MGEU – OR I am an internal transfer to a new role represented by striking areas. What does this mean for my start date?

Your Employer is unable to facilitate the commencement of employment for new hires (or transfers) during a labour disruption. A new start date will be provided to you as soon as possible.

Should you wish to discuss the specifics of your situation, please get in touch with your regular contact at the site.

5. I am a non-striking union member. Will my schedule or work duties be affected?

No. There will be no change to your schedule or duties.

6. I am a non-union staff. Will my work duties be affected?

You will continue to be scheduled and work your regularly assigned shifts.

Operations at your facility will be maintained to the degree possible through the use of essential services employees and non-striking employees in the event of a strike.

As the Employer prepares for job action, out of scope staff may be assigned to assist in areas outside their normal duties.

7. I am a member of the striking bargaining unit and have been identified as an essential worker. Will my schedule remain the same?

Staff can expect changes to hours and rotations related to the essential service agreement. If an individual staff member has concerns about their scheduled hours/rotation related to issues like child care, they should reach out to their immediate supervisor.

8. I am a member of the striking bargaining unit and have not been identified as an essential worker. Am I able to work if I would like to continue working?

No. Only staff deemed essential will be scheduled to work.

There are two exceptions:

If you are a float or relief team member who performs work that has been designated as essential but your unit/department has not been designated as essential, you could be assigned to work in an essential department.

9. I am a student in a health training program about to start my placement in a health facility. What does this mean for me?

We do not anticipate there to be any changes to student placements for individuals in training programs outside the striking bargaining units (ie. Nursing).

For students within training programs affected by the striking union (ie. Health care aides, rehab aides), placements will be discontinued/deferred with further communication coming from the educational institution/program.

10. I am a volunteer at a health care facility impacted by the strike. Will this affect my volunteer duties?

You will not be required to provide services outside those performed as part of your usual volunteer commitment.

If you encounter picketers when entering the facility, please know that while they are legally allowed to communicate information about the strike they cannot impede or otherwise hinder your right to enter.

11. Can volunteers still be used?

Volunteers can be used in the same manner they were used pre-strike.

This means if an area did not previously utilize volunteers, they may not begin using volunteers during the strike.

12. Are staff vacations (for staff within the striking bargaining unit) affected if a strike occurs?

Staff within the striking bargaining unit will have their vacation time cancelled, effective on the date strike action begins (October 8). All other unionized staff will maintain their approved vacation time.

Individuals affected by changes to their travel plans will need to address any questions to their union representative.

Essential Service Agreements are being finalized and will identify areas where out of scope staff may be asked to support the maintenance of health services.

13. Are staff within the striking bargaining unit able to request vacation during a work stoppage?

No.

14. Are staff vacations (for out-of-scope staff within the striking bargaining unit) affected if a strike occurs?

To ensure the continuity of operations during labour disruption, the following vacation guideline is now in effect for all out of scope staff:

Approved Vacations Beginning Prior to October 8, 2024:

Non-union employees who have an approved vacation that begins before October 8, 2024, may proceed with their vacation unless there is mutual agreement to postpone.

New Vacation Requests:

Effective immediately, no new vacation requests will be approved until further notice.

Previous Vacation Requests for time away after October 8, 2024:

Employees with previously approved vacation time scheduled for use after October 8, 2024, must consult with their manager to assess whether their time away can be accommodated without impacting operational needs.

- If no operational concerns arise, the vacation may be honoured with the approval of the HR/Executive lead for your area.
- If operational requirements prevent the time off from being granted, employees will be required to cancel their vacation.

Reimbursement for Cancellation Costs:

If an employee is required to cancel their vacation due to operational concerns, they may be eligible for reimbursement of non-refundable costs, such as airfare penalties, transportation, and deposits. Reimbursement can be requested through the standard process for claiming work-related expenses.

15. Can non-unionized staff book vacation during a strike?

Vacation requests will be reviewed on a case by case basis and if needed to support in operations, will not be approved.

16. Are staff within the striking bargaining unit able to request a vacation, statutory holiday pay or overtime bank payment during a strike?

No.

17. I am a member of the striking bargaining unit, with planned medical leave. Am I entitled to income protection during a strike?

Employers will not approve new requests for a medical leave of absence on or after the date strike notice was received, September 24, 2024, until a resolution has been reached.

18. Are casual workers allowed to work shifts during a strike?

Casual employees who are part of the union who have given strike notice and are not a part of baseline staffing and therefore all pre-booked casual shifts will be cancelled.

Casual employees of all other unions may continue to work shift during a strike.

Casual employees may be utilized to fill essential shifts but this will occur at the request of the Employer or Union and AFTER all other essential workers have been considered. Casual employees will however be offered the opportunity to fill essential shifts prior to a request for agency.

19. Can Agency staff still be used?

Agency staff can be used in the same manner they were used pre-strike. This means if an area did not previously utilize agency staff, they may not begin using agencies during the strike.