

# Strike Vote **FAQs**

## Answers to some frequently asked questions about strike authorization votes

### How does the union's strike vote work?

According to CWA Local 1133's bylaws, local leaders must follow the rules outlined in CWA's Constitution. The union rulebook requires that the local provide reasonable notice of a member meeting and that a "majority of the members voting shall determine whether or not a strike shall be called." That means if 100 people show up to vote and 51 vote for a strike, those 51 people will determine the fate of all 2,000 Mercy associates represented by the CWA. That's why it's so important to vote on September 8 & 9.

If the members vote in favor of striking, according to CWA's Constitution, the local must still seek approval to proceed from CWA leadership in Washington, D.C. If the local were to engage in an unauthorized strike, CWA leadership in Washington may impose penalties on the local. Penalties may include denying financial, organization, and other assistance from CWA and/or revoke the local's charter.

### If there is a strike, how long would it last?

It is impossible to predict how long a strike might last. Even if the union calls a one or two-day strike, it's likely Mercy associates will be out of work, unpaid by Mercy Hospital, for at least seven (7) days.

### Will associates get paid during a strike?

**Mercy Hospital will not pay striking associates and associates will not be permitted to use PTO during the strike.** Associates should ask their local union leaders if CWA will provide strike pay and under what conditions.

Associates also may want to ask union leaders:

- Are associates required to participate in the strike?
- How many hours per day and days per week will CWA expect striking associates to walk its picket line?
- Can Mercy Hospital replace striking associates?

### Does a strike vote guarantee a strike will take place?

No. A strike authorization vote does not necessarily mean a strike is about to happen or even that one will occur. However, once union leaders have a strike authorization from its members, they can decide if and when to launch a strike without talking to their members again.

### What can associates who don't want to strike do?

Associates have the legal right to tell CWA 1133 how they feel if they don't want a strike and prefer that their union continue to bargain. **We have been waiting for more than two months for a response from the union to our wage, health plan, and retirement plan proposals.** Catholic Health also presented a recruitment and retention proposal for the float pool to help with staffing. Rather than focus on publicity and criticize our proposals in the media, the union should be at the bargaining table presenting a counteroffer on behalf of their members. **You can vote "NO" during the strike vote on September 8 and 9 and tell the union to return to the negotiation table and bargain in good faith.**

### What will happen to our patients if we go on strike?

We take our responsibility to serve our patients and community very seriously. Mercy Hospital has developed a comprehensive strike contingency plan to ensure our patients continue to receive safe, high quality care even if the union decides to lead a strike. The hospital will remain open, hiring fully licensed, highly experienced, temporary replacement nurses and qualified temporary healthcare workers to care for patients while the union is on strike.

### How will we know if there's going to be a strike?

In healthcare, a union is required to provide the hospital with a 10-day strike notice to allow the hospital enough time to prepare. While a union is permitted to withdraw a strike notice at any time for any reason prior to the strike, delivering a 10-day notice triggers a chain reaction that may be unstoppable once set in motion.

### How would a strike help to reach a new contract?

In our view, this union tactic does nothing to advance labor contract talks.

**Because it's important to have the facts regarding negotiations, we will share regular FAQs with you. You may visit [www.chsbuffalo.org/negotiations](http://www.chsbuffalo.org/negotiations) for the latest news and information related to bargaining and to review copies of these FAQs and other Negotiation Updates.**