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PSAC 901 ARE YOU STRIKE READY?

PSAC 901 Unit 1, the union representing 2000 graduate student workers at Queen's University is bargaining a new contract.

We have a rare chance to make real change at Queen's, but only if all of us are informed and ready.



What is a union?

A Union is a democratic organization formed and run by workers to leverage their collective voice and strength by bargaining for better working conditions and positive changes in their community.

As TAs, TFs, and RAs at Queen's, we are all a part of PSAC Local 901, our union!

At over 2000 members, we're the largest union at the largest employer in Kingston!

What is a Collective Agreement?

The contract negotiated between a union and employer is called a Collective Agreement. This year, PSAC 901 members are in "Collective Bargaining," negotiating a new contract with Queen's.

Your bargaining demands

A Union isn't an outside organization or a service provider -- it is you and your colleagues.

PSAC 901's priority bargaining demands were developed using survey data from over 500 members, then ranked by members at a Special General Meeting.

In no particular order, you ranked your Top Five bargaining priorities as:

- A Living Wage/Stipend
- Tuition Minimization
- Affordable Housing Access
- A Balanced & Equitable Funding/Labour Ratio
- Paid Hours to Learn Course Content

What is Unity Council?

Unity Council is made up of all the unions representing workers at Queen's.

It unites employees on issues and concerns that impact all of us. By

working together, Unity Council has the collective power of over 5000 workers.

This year, the majority of Queen's unions are bargaining contracts at the same time! We're working together so we can

maximize our collective strength to demand fair wages, respect, and dignity in the workplace for everyone.

We are proud to stand in solidarity with

Custodial and Admin Staff, Library and Lab Techs, Hospitality Workers, Residence Dons and many more.

We all deserve a better Queen's!

What is a strike?

A strike is a collective decision made by union members to withhold labour to help

push for better working conditions. It is a legal action taken to put pressure on the employer to agree to a fair contract.

In a strike, members do not perform any contracted work.

Who decides to go on strike?

A "Strike Mandate Vote" is a democratic vote where union members authorize their bargaining team to call a strike, if necessary. It is a collective declaration that

members are willing to stop working to support bargaining

Ontario's strict labour laws make it rare for a union to be in a legal strike position. It's important we take this opportunity to come together and fight for real change

I am an international student. Is it legal for me to strike?

Yes! *The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Ontario Labour Relations Act* guarantee all workers' rights to free

assembly, including international students workers. In the event of a strike, you can and should participate!

Will a strike affect my study permit?

No! Your study permit is tied to your enrolment, not your employment.

According to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), you won't face penalties for participating in a strike. You can qualify for strike pay and will remain eligible for off-campus work and the Post-Graduation Work Permit Program

Can I still do my research?

During a strike, withholding labour applies to pausing the specific duties in your employment contract. But, keep in mind that even your personal research

creates value for Queen's. Talk to your colleagues and union reps to

develop a plan that can build pressure to support bargaining in your department

Will I face backlash from my supervisor or PI?

Punishment for participating in union activity is illegal and something to be taken very seriously.

If you encounter trouble or if you are concerned about any negative repercussions, reach out to your union reps for help in protecting your rights.