

Advice to GSO Guild Members in the Event of a Strike by the PSAC

April 2023

Guild Members are likely aware that the Public Service Alliance of Canada has not reached a Collective Agreement with the Treasury Board. In the event of an impasse in bargaining, their dispute resolution mechanism is a strike. Whereas, for the Guild, our own dispute resolution mechanism is “binding arbitration”.

In the event of a PSAC strike, Guild GSO Members, unless directed otherwise by the employer, are required to proceed to their workplace in their usual manner. When arriving at that location, if GSO Members are prevented from entering the workplace by a PSAC picket line, then there shall be no confrontations. GSO Members should remain in the vicinity (or nearby) and contact the employer for instructions.

Unions that support other unions in the event of a strike need to do so in a manner that does not contravene federal legislation. In order to get paid, Guild members working as GSO's in the Federal Public Service (in this case at Coast Guard and DND) will be required to present themselves at the entrance to their place of work in the normal manner, and then see what the situation is first-hand. Our bargaining unit is not on strike, and we have no right to participate in a strike by another bargaining unit. It is also possible that GSO's could arrive at their usual work location and then it turns out that there is nothing preventing them from entering that particular workplace. The PSAC strike strategies will be determined by the PSAC.

Guild Members shall not physically force their way thru any picket line. If the employer does make successful arrangements for Officers to enter the employer's property, and then an Officer is directed to perform the duties of those on strike, this would be a very disappointing development, and the Guild would need to be made aware of that in order to raise this matter with senior officials in Ottawa. However, unless that work is unsafe, a GSO should inform the employer that while they are not refusing to do that work, the employer should reconsider their instructions as they will be complaining to the union and filing a grievance after they commence this work.

GSO Members can obtain more information and assistance by contacting their local Guild office.