

OPEIU Local 8 STRIKE AT WELFARE & PENSION, INC.

Questions we've been asked...

1. Did we vote to strike at our meeting on Wednesday, August 15?
The bargaining unit took a Final Strike Vote and over 80% approved to go on strike.
2. When we're on strike and then offer to return to work, can our employer choose who returns and who doesn't?
No, the employer cannot for example take back only those who didn't support a strike or employees that the employer likes without any logical criteria. Any return to work settlement must be done fairly and without discrimination. However, a scenario could arise where the employer hires permanent replacements for positions and allowed employees to return to work only as openings occurred. In that case, some employees could return to work and others not.
3. What are the Local 8's strike benefits?
OPEIU sanctioned strike benefits are \$58 a day up to \$290 a week starting the 8th day of the strike. Strike benefits are offset by any vacation pay, disability benefits, unemployment benefits or sick leave benefits.
4. Can I use my vacation time while on strike?
Management cannot cancel already approved vacation during the strike period, but they are not required to allow you to use vacation time not previously approved.
5. Can I collect unemployment while we're on strike?
No unless the employer locks us out and doesn't allow us to return to work.
6. Can our employer hire temporary replacements for my job? Can I be permanently replaced?
Yes, to the extent they can find people to do your work and who are willing to cross a picket line you can be temporarily replaced. Although unlikely, in an economic strike, your employer can also permanently replace you.
7. How long will this strike last?
A strike can be as short as a few hours or it can last for months or years. We must be prepared for all possibilities including being locked out. A strike requires lots of planning to ensure maximum impact to the employer, with minimum impact to our members.
8. What happens if I cross the picket line?
Whether or not you cross the picket line is not a legal question but a question of conscience. It is an indication of whether or not you will stand with your co-workers and fight for a fair contract. Solidarity wins strikes.

Additional questions? Please contact Local 8 Business Manager, Suzanne Mode at
206-441-8880 ext. 101.