Unity Strike FAQ

What's a strike?
A withholding of our labor to pressure our employer into a fair contract agreement which improves working conditions including issues like workplace safety, wages, patient care, and more.

Do strikes work?
Yes! They aren't a silver bullet, but past nurse and teacher strikes shows us striking is a way to improve our working conditions together and encourage the employer to reach a fair contract agreement.

When will it happen?
If nurses vote to authorize a strike in a strike vote, it gives our bargaining team the power to call for and schedule a strike if needed. They'll pick the most strategic date(s) based on input from the membership and the bargaining calendar. Additionally, there will be at least a 5 day notice to nurses before a strike vote. After the vote, we are required by law to give the hospital a 10 day notice of a scheduled strike.

What will happen to my patients?
As stated above, we are required by law to give Legacy Health a notice of 10 days minimum to strike. This gives Legacy ample time to make contingency plans to keep patients safe. Nurses are frontline advocates of patient care: this is about improving patient care and saving patients’ lives. We won’t let Legacy shame us for standing up for our patients at the bedside or on the picket line. Legacy can choose to avoid a strike by addressing our workplace and patient care concerns.

Can Legacy or the Oregon State Board of Nursing discipline me for going on strike?
Absolutely not. Your right to strike is protected by federal law under the National Labor Relations Act. Nurses across the country strike every year to protect their patients and profession. Nurses cannot be charged with patient abandonment for going on strike.

What does a successful strike look like?
Strikes work when we stand together. We need a significant majority of nurses withholding their labor for the duration of the strike.

How long is a strike?
Your bargaining team will determine the length of a strike based on input from the membership and so that it places maximum pressure on Legacy. The goal is to move Legacy to make a fair offer at the bargaining table, so it's up to Legacy to do the right thing.

Is there a strike fund and how would I access it?
Yes, there is some money set aside at ONA and at our national affiliate. It will not replace a regular paycheck but can help those who need it most so that a strike is not catastrophic for
anyone. If a strike is approved by the membership, your team will authorize a strike that minimizes the impact on nurses. Requests for strike fund money will be evaluated by our executive committee and approved according to needs.

**Will my PTO still accrue?**
No. When you are on strike, you are not working so any benefits associated with working don’t apply.

**What will happen to my health insurance benefits?**
Upon authorization from Unity RNs, our bargaining team will call for a strike that minimizes impact on us. That includes a strike that protects our health insurance.

**Who will vote on whether or not to authorize a strike?**
WE are making this decision as a group, every ONA Unity nurse member will have a right to vote on strike authorization, and we encourage everyone to exercise that right!

**How much support do we need to pass the vote?**
A strike may be authorized by a majority vote of the membership. However, in order to maximize the leverage of a strike and win at the table the things we need to address patient care concerns, we would want a large majority of nurses committed to walk out on strike and honor the picket line. That means we want an equally large majority to vote to authorize the bargaining team to call a strike.

**I live paycheck to paycheck. What happens if I can’t afford to strike?**
Many people live paycheck to paycheck and going without pay is not something many people can do. If you are concerned about the financial impacts, we encourage you to pick up extra shifts now if you can. Also, our bargaining team will call for a strike that minimizes the financial impact on all of us. Most importantly, if a nurse is in financial need as a result of the strike, they are strongly encouraged to apply to the strike fund for financial assistance.

**What if I’m out on FMLA or disability or worker’s comp at that time?**
Nothing changes for you during that time because you are not working anyway.

**What if I cross the picket line?**
Our ability to fight for and win a contract that protects our patients comes from each and every one of us standing together. The quality of our profession and practice is rooted in 30+ years of nurses picketing and striking. Every nurse who crosses a picket line weakens our ability to protect for our patients, advance our profession, and fight for what we deserve.

**What is a lockout?**
A lockout is when a strike has officially ended but management continues to use replacements through the end of their contracts instead of calling everyone back to work right away.

**How do I get recalled back to work?**
We would negotiate a return to work. Typically, it is based on census, seniority order and unit.