



## INDIVIDUAL PRE-STRIKE FINANCIAL PREPARATION

### RESOURCE SHEET #1

#### FOOD

- If you can build up a supply of food, you can considerably reduce your costs during a strike. This will free up your limited cash income during a strike for things like rent or mortgage payments.
- Within your workplace/ local, a group might want to do this on a cooperative basis and enhance the savings by bulk buying.
- Approach a local supermarket and see if you can get a deal by buying in bulk.
- If you belong to a food cooperative, it might be worthwhile to contact the executive, explain the situation, and see if something can be worked out between the cooperative and the local.
- You might want to set yourself a target such as having one month's food supply in the house. Then at strike time your food expenditures can be limited to perishables like bread and milk.
- Growing your food in your garden or belonging to a community garden is another way of saving costs; however, this may be more of a long-term project and is dependent on the seasons.



## **INDIVIDUAL PRE-STRIKE FINANCIAL PREPARATION RESOURCE SHEET #2**

### **LOANS**

- Approach your credit union or other financial institution and ask about consolidating your loans. This can often result in a reduction in payments.
- Consider requesting interest relief for loans and mortgages from your financial institution during the period of the strike. You can also renegotiate the terms of your loan. This may be all you need to get you through the immediate crisis of the strike, and once you are on your feet again after the strike, you may be able to reduce the term of your loan again.
- If you renegotiate your loans, see if you can arrange to start payments the next month so you have a month where you make no payments. This extra cash may solve your immediate cash-flow problems.
- Some credit unions, financial institution and community-based organizations have free credit counselling services. It will be in your best interests to go to one of these agencies for support and help.



Public Service Alliance of Canada

## **INDIVIDUAL PRE-STRIKE FINANCIAL PREPARATION**

### **RESOURCE SHEET #3**

#### **SAVINGS**

Not everyone saves in the same way. Here are some ideas:

- Establish a fixed budget for while on strike
- Reduce the amount of cash you take out of your account by a fixed weekly amount.
- Save all your overtime cheques.
- Save your travel expenses cheques.
- Save all the change you have at the end of each day.
- Save every "loonie" or "toonie" you receive.



## **INDIVIDUAL FINANCIAL PROBLEMS DURING A STRIKE**

### **RESOURCE SHEET**

When faced with a payment, ask the four following questions:

1. Can I avoid payment?
  - Can I do without the thing I'm buying?
  - Can I trade, or pay in kind?
  - Is there an alternative?
  - Can I walk or use my bicycle instead of taking the bus?
  - Can I carpool, take the bus or use my bike instead of using the car?
  
2. Can I reduce the payment?
  - Can I reduce my food costs by not eating out?
  - Can I send an email instead of making a long-distance phone call?
  - Can I use my cell phone less?
  - Can I pay my home insurance for six months instead of a year?
  
3. Can I postpone the payment?
  - Can I put off out of province vacation?
  - Can I get the landlord or mortgage company to agree to skip paying this month?
  - Can I put off home improvement projects?
  
4. Can I raise some money for the payment?
  - Can I get a temporary job?
  - Can I sell something?
  - Can I get a loan?



## PSAC Strike Pay

**PSAC Regulation No. 6 outlines the schedule of strike benefits. It says:**

- The qualifying period for benefits takes effect the first day of the strike. Using attendance lists provided by the Locals and Branches, strike pay will be paid retroactively for the full period to each member participating in the strike.
- Only members on the active payroll of the Employer with whom the bargaining agent is in dispute shall be eligible for benefits.
- Members are expected to carry out duties as assigned by duly—recognized officers for a minimum of four hours per day.

**The amount of strike pay each member is entitled to is:**

- a) \$75 for each day to a maximum of \$375 per calendar week; for members in the three northern territories the rates are \$100 for each day to a maximum of \$500 per calendar week.
- b) For a member who normally works fewer than twenty (20) hours per week, \$53 for each day to a maximum of \$265 per calendar week; more members in the three northern territories the rates are \$70 for each day to a maximum of \$265 per calendar week.
- c) Where members are requested to and scheduled to picket seven (7) days per week, \$75 per day to a maximum of \$525 per calendar week for (a) above, and \$53 per day to a maximum of \$371 per calendar week for (b) above. For the three northern territories the rates are \$100 per day to a maximum of \$700 per week (a) above, and \$70 per day to a maximum of \$490 per weeks (b) above.

### **Who is eligible for benefits?**

- a) Members who are involved in a legal and authorized strike action.
- b) Members or their representatives who incur expenses beyond the normal costs of collective bargaining in conjunction with approved third party actions.
- c) Members must carry out four (4) hours each day of picket duty, or other approved activities.

### **Non-Eligibility in the Event of Strike**

Members will not be eligible for benefits under the following circumstances:

- a) Members unemployed or on lay-off at the beginning of the strike.
- b) Members on paid vacation, sick leave, injury on duty leave, compensation benefits or other paid leave.

For more detailed information on the Strike Fund, please see Regulation No. 6 of the PSAC Constitution.



## **PSAC STRIKE ROLES**

### **ROLE OF PICKETER (STRIKING MEMBER)**

- Participates in strike shifts
- Signs in when attending the picket line
- Receives strike pay
- Is accountable to strike protocols
- Strikes only in designated areas
- Respects union and employer policies while on the picket line
- Does not engage in discriminatory activity or harassment
- Refrains from participating in any mischief that may adversely impact the bargaining process or the integrity of the picket line
- Is subject to criminal charges and disciplinary actions, up to and including termination if conduct warrants it

### **ROLE OF THE PICKET CAPTAIN**

- Appointed by and reports to the Strike Captain
- Is responsible for a group of strikers at a worksite
- Maintains the picket line—

- brief picketers on rights and duties/ distributes “information sheets”
- keeps the line moving,
- check signs and placards
- watches strangers
- keeps telephone numbers for emergencies
- takes pictures (to record incidents; for documentation of activities)

Maintains an accurate record of attendance of picketers. Follow-up with members who do not report for picket duty.

- Keeps an eye out for irregularities/ problems on the line
- Immediately files reports of any picket line incidents with the Strike Captain
- Deals with the public and the news media

## **ROLE OF THE STRIKE CAPTAIN**

- Appointed by and reports to the Area Coordinator
- Coordinates all strike activity at the worksite through a strike committee
- Establishes a strike committee for the worksite which usually includes the Strike Captain, Picket Captains and chairperson of appropriate committees
- Together with the strike committee develops a strike plan that meets the needs of the members at the worksite
- Works with the picket captains to establish an effective picketing system for the worksite



- Ensure the necessary committees (communications, picketing, finance and welfare, accommodations, essential service) are set up and tasks delegated amongst activists and members
- Where applicable, ensures members in non-striking units and essential service workers are fully integrated into the strike plan for the worksite
- Informs Picket Captains, chairs of committees and other strike leaders of the resources they need to carry out the tasks assigned to them
- Makes contact and maintains liaison with the local police authority

### **ROLE OF THE AREA COORDINATOR**

- Liaise with the regional strike coordinator, strike captains and local officers, to make sure that strike actions in a particular area are well coordinated
- Serve as members of the **regional strike coordinating committee**, which prepares a regional strike plan, oversees coordination of strike activities and ensures good communication amongst everyone involved. This committee includes the Regional Executive Vice-President in their jurisdiction and is chaired by the regional strike coordinator.

### **ROLE OF THE REGIONAL STRIKE COORDINATOR**

- This role is occupied by the PSAC Regional Representative assigned to the strike
- Coordinates strike training
- Ensures appropriate strike support if available through the Regional Office

- Keeps the Area Coordinator informed about strategy and direction of the strike
- Establishes effective communication systems with the capacity for quick information flow

## **ROLE OF THE NATIONAL STRIKE COORDINATOR**

- This role is occupied by the Director of Regional Offices Branch or the Strike Mobilization Officer
- Reports to the National Strike Coordinating Committee
- Oversees the entire strike communications network
- Resolves strike network problems
- Ensures that regional strike structure is operating effectively

## **REGIONAL STRIKE COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

- Chaired by the Regional Strike Coordinator
- Includes the Regional Executive Vice-President
- Prepares a regional strike plan
- Oversees coordination of strike activities
- Ensures good communication flow amongst everyone involved



## Tips for Successful Picket Signs

### How to design appealing posters, signs and banners

Posters and signs are an important part of most campaigns. They tell the public and the press why you are taking action and what it is you want.

Your message can be depicted either in words or by illustration. Either way, it is important that your message is brief, consistent and to the point.

Your message should be something anyone and everyone can understand. While “inside jokes” or innuendo can be an effective way of mobilizing activists, they can prove confusing to the public.

Your message must be effective but not offensive. Using humour, sarcasm and wit are fine — unless it alienates others. Keep in mind the diversity of your community and be sure your messages and images are culturally sensitive.

Short, to-the-point slogans are better than long statements. Slogans that rhyme or include a clever play on words, or those that would be suitable for chants make the best poster slogans.

Art is good, but it should not be complex. A symbol or stick figure can be more identifiable than trying to illustrate a person or a complex design.

If you have a logo or motto, it is important to make this clearly visible.

### Putting it together

- Make sure the print on your signs is large, with tall lettering that is easy to read at a distance.
- Use both sides of your sign, poster or banner. It is okay to create two different messages, one for each side.
- Use a dark colour for lettering against a light background or light lettering against a dark background.

- Choose script that is easy to read. Lower case letters are easier to read, especially from a distance.

### **Be prepared**

Plan in advance for inclement weather. Choose materials that are waterproof or find a way to make them so by using a plastic covering, laminating and/or by using rainproof fabric for banners.

Whether you use a pole or a string around the neck or you carry your sign with your hands, choose your method of display based on what will be the most effective under the circumstances. Signs attached to poles or sticks are difficult to carry on a windy day and can get heavy after a while. Still, they are more easily seen in a crowd than signs draped from a string around the neck.

*(Please be aware that to reduce the chance of accidental injury to other picketers or to people who may try to force their way through a picket line, be sure when building picket signs to use suitable cardboard for the message, and relatively thin pieces of wood (e.g. nailing boards) or light plastic for the handle. Suitable items can be found at most office supply and/or building supply/hardware stores, inexpensively. Our experience teaches us that picket signs should be sturdy enough to be re-useable and to withstand wind, rain and snow, but that they should not be constructed of materials so heavy, solid or stiff that they could cause injury if someone were accidentally bumped by a sign, or that a sign could be perceived by police as a potentially threatening "weapon.")*

Banners are best carried by hand — one person at each end — in a long march but are best displayed using poles during a rally.

Banners are effective when used as a backdrop for speakers and/or chants, songs and theatre. Where possible, banners can be hung in central locations.

It is not essential for everyone in a large group to carry a sign or banner. This task can be shared by the participants while others are handing out leaflets, leading chants and so forth.

Remember, it's all about the message. Keep it simple, be creative, and have fun!



## PICKETING “DO’S” AND “DON’TS”

- DO** keep moving and remain visible.
- DO** ensure that all entrances are picketed.
- DO** ensure that all picketers wear placards or carry signs that identify the union.
- DO** keep a camera available.
- DO** refer all media enquiries to the Picket Captain or Strike Captain
- DO** make sure the picketers are in sight of each other.
- DO** follow any instructions from the police, but record the name of officer(s) and details of the instructions.

- DO** picket on public property.

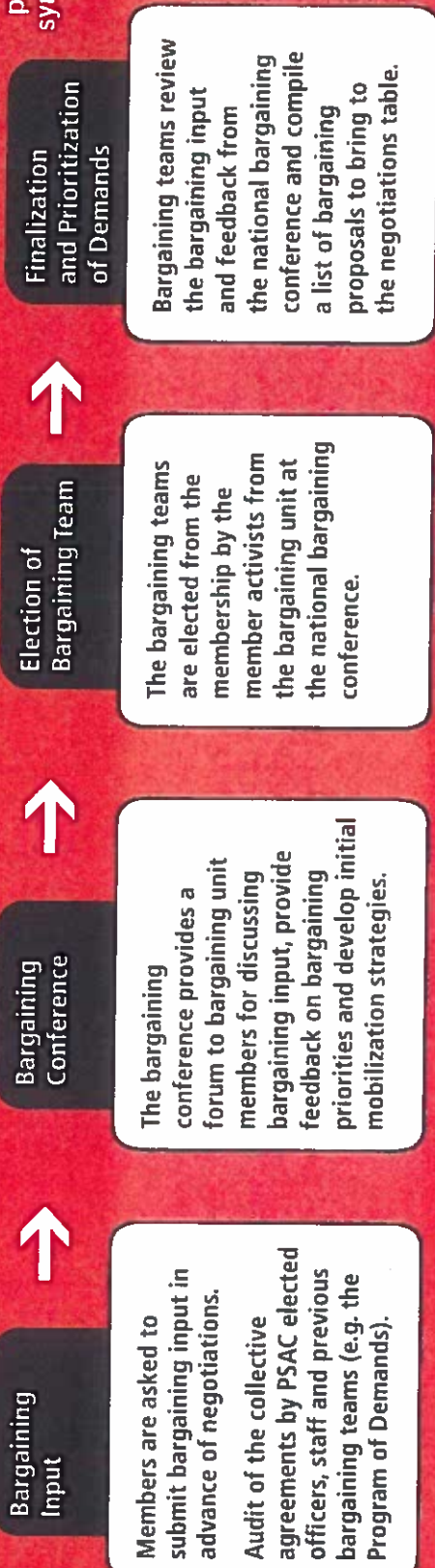
✓ wear sensible clothing & prepare for weather  
(umbrella, jacket, hat, visibility vest, etc.)

- DO NOT** respond to any situation with violence. Walk away from anyone seeking to cause trouble. If you sense trouble, call your Picket Captain or Strike Captain.
- DO NOT** get into debates with passers-by. Answer questions civilly and give out information about the issues, but **DO NOT** get into arguments.
- DO NOT** allow alcohol consumption on the line and send home any picketer who is “under the influence.” A strike is a time for cool heads.
- DO NOT** spread rumours. Your union will be doing everything possible to keep you informed and up-to-date on strike developments. Before spreading any rumour, check it out before adding to the confusion.



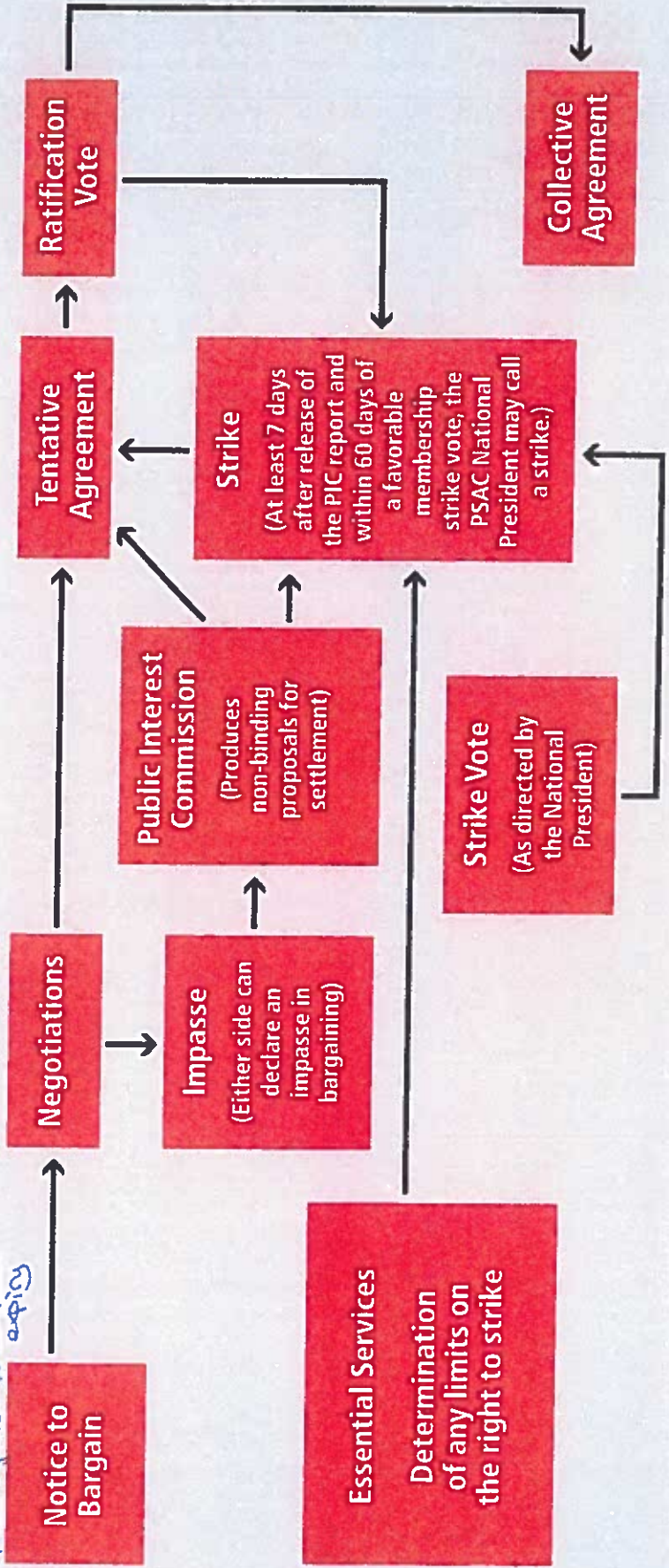
# FPSLRA Bargaining: The Process at a Glance

Setting the stage for bargaining



## Negotiation process at a glance

*A contract expires to contract*



*Vote: simple majority 50+1*

