



## The Picket Line

Picketing is part of our rights to freedom of expression and can help us maximize pressure on the employer.

Our picket line helps us:

- Inform the public that there is a strike;
- Discourage people from entering the struck premises;
- Impacts the flow of materials in or out of the struck worksite (if applicable);
- Discourage union members from working in violation of the legal strike;
- Inform union members who may not yet be aware of the strike;
- Disrupt the employer's business.

**To be effective, it's important we adhere to picketing guidelines for conduct.**

## Picket Line DOs

- **Listen to your Picket Line Captain (PLC).**
- **Be on time.** If each group of pickets arrives on time, then everyone will be able to leave on time as well.
- **Stay at your post** until the next group is there to relieve you.
- **Report attendance to the Picket Line Captain.** Do so when you arrive *and* when you leave.
- **Dress for the weather.** Standing around could be colder /hotter than you think. If you aren't dressed appropriately, and can get wet and or cold/hot. Picketing will be needlessly more difficult.
- **Show your union colours.** Wear SEIU paraphernalia and colours when possible. It shows unity and communicates our strength.
- **Carry and walk with your picket sign.** If you need to leave the picket line for any reason, please leave your picket sign on the line. You might also be able to wear a sign. Take turns resting.
- **Refer all strangers, including media, police, or employer representatives to the PLC (or Strike Captain / Designated Union Officer).** Even if they appear friendly, statements made by uninformed picketers may be used against the union in court or reported in the media. The PLC may ask a spokesperson to provide the media with an interview or a statement.
- **Report concerning or unusual incidents on the picket line, to the PLC.** Bring your charged phones/cameras. You have the right to take pictures and videos of anything in public spaces – including people. If an altercation occurs and it's safe to do so, record the event. **DO NOT POST THE IMAGES ONLINE.** Submit to the PLC, SC or DUO.
- **Participate in chants and have fun.** No one *wants* to be on strike. We are here because we've been left no choice. We might as well make the best of it.

# PLCs

**Picket Line Captains (PLCs)** are active members assigned to provide on-the-ground leadership and administrative support for members performing picket line duties. They report to Picket Captains (PCs) and/or Designated Union Officers (DUOs).

## PLCs Duties

**Please listen to your PLC's instructions.**

They are there to help ensure everyone understands the role of a picketer and have various responsibilities including:

- Oversee safety & morale
- Maintain a strong and orderly picket line
- Report incidents
- Monitor attendance
- Respond to questions from co-workers
- Liaise with media & police

**NOTE: PLCs have the authority to remove people on the line who engage in improper conduct.**

**Complaints about PLCs should be reported to a Strike Captain or Union Officer.**



# Picket Line DON'Ts

- **Never make threats, intimidate others, or get into physical altercations.** Lawful picketing is for communication only. Engaging in this behavior is likely to result in a court injunction, severely limiting the effectiveness of our action and hurt our bargaining position.
- **Never picket alone.** Some picket lines may be dark (early morning or late in the evening). Your safety is of utmost importance. Always have a fellow picketer or picket buddy by your side. Rides can be arranged by your picket captain. Be safe, and if you feel uncomfortable for any reason discuss with your PLC.
- **Do not give statements to the media.** Direct media to the PLC. Know that you might always be “on the record,” and a statement could be used against us.
- **Do not carry anything that could be considered a potential weapon**, like a penknife.
- **Do not obstruct public use of the sidewalk or roadway.**
- **Do not enter the struck facility** for any reason.
- **Do not bring drugs or alcohol of any kind to the picket line** or arrive under the influence.
- **Do not litter** in front of the building. Use trash bins.

## MEDIA

Community support can help build pressure on the employer and can increase our leverage at the bargaining table.

For this reason, getting our message out through the media can be an effective strategy.

**Member spokespeople are trained to ensure we focus our message and are prepared to answer questions.**

## POLICE

**Generally, members on the picket line should:**

- Avoid provocation
- Avoid bodily contact
- Refrain from verbal assaults
- Obey the orders of police; and
- Remain aware of what's happening in your area; you may be called as a witness in future proceedings.