

On the Line: Job Action FAQ

We are now in the final stages of preparing for work stoppage (i.e. either lockout or strike). This document will answer most of your questions about the picket line and picketing activity. If you have additional questions, please email 2025.strike.dfa@gmail.com and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

When could a lockout or strike happen?

The Conciliation Officer filed his “no board” report on July 28, 2025. This has triggered a 14-day count down to any job action. We have one more conciliation date scheduled for August 11.

The earliest job action could begin is midnight on August 11, and 48 hours’ notice must be given by whichever side initiates the job action.

****The DFA will not strike in August.****

The Dalhousie Board of Governors could begin a lockout effective midnight on August 11, 2025 – in other words, at 12:01 a.m. on Tuesday, August 12, DFA Members would not have access to any part of campus.

How long could the lockout or strike last?

A lockout would be driven by the Dalhousie Board of Governors so the duration is out of our control.

A strike would be driven by the DFA. The DFA has not been on strike since 2002 - that strike lasted three weeks, which is the average length of strikes in Canadian universities. The more united and well-organized we are, the shorter the strike will be. We only need to withhold our labour one day longer than Dalhousie can function without us.

What is the intent of a picket line?

Whether the picket line is in response to being locked out by Dalhousie, or if it is a strike initiated by the DFA, the intent of the picket line is to withhold your labour in a visible way, building awareness of the issues on the table and educating affected stakeholders (such as students and the community). It is also a chance to build solidarity among your colleagues and generate public support by letting the public know we’re on strike (or locked out).

The intent of a picket line is **NOT** to generate conflict or block access to Dalhousie. This does nothing but create negative sentiment and generate unnecessary physical risk for picketers and others.

Do picket lines have any real effect on the bargaining process?

Picketing when negotiations break down is our greatest power as an association. A strong presence on the picket line sends a clear message to the Dalhousie Board that the bargaining team has the backing of its Membership. As the saying goes, *“the longer the line, the shorter the strike.”* When Dalhousie sees that we are united and strong, they will be more likely to make a better offer.

Where will DFA picket lines be located?

We have several spots selected for picket lines in Halifax and Truro, but we keep that information confidential until it is time to assign picket duty.

Where do we park when we have picket duty?

During work stoppage, DFA Members will still have access to Dalhousie parking. We also suggest that you car pool where feasible, make use of available street parking and explore paid parking options near your assigned picket line. We also encourage biking where possible.

For those of you in Halifax, explore paid parking garage at the Halifax Professional Centre (DFA Job Action HQ is in that building). Public transit may also be an option. [Metro Transit routes can be found here.](#)

Will there be water and snacks available for picketers?

Water and snacks will be provided to people on the picket lines. We will also have space for picketers to gather at the end of their shift, grab a coffee and chat.

Where do we pick up our picket sign for the beginning of our shift?

Picket signs will be delivered to the picket line at the start of each day and passed from shift to shift. You are welcome to bring your own picket sign if you prefer. Each day at the end of the last shift, picket signs will be picked up and delivered to our storage unit at the Dalhousie SUB.

How long is a picket shift?

Picket lines will operate Monday to Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. There will be no picket lines on Saturdays, Sundays or statutory holidays.

Each picket shift will last 2 hours, and there will be a maximum of 5 shifts a day at each picket line. Members performing picket duties are expected to work 5 shifts of 2 hours each during the week, for a total of 10 hours, to qualify for strike pay.

Alternate strike duties will be assigned to those who are physically unable to serve on a picket line.

If I am out of town/physically unable to be on a picket line, how do I qualify for strike pay?

First, you must withhold all labour- including teaching, research and service - from Dalhousie. Second, you must notify the Job Action Committee of your circumstances by email 2025.strike.dfa@gmail.com. Alternate duties will be assigned where necessary. These may include data entry, communications support, social media, writing thank-you notes to supporters, shuttling supplies to and from the picket lines, etc. A list of those duties will be finalized and assigned as required.

How much will I be paid while we are on lockout/strike?

****DFA will not strike in August.**** If there is a lockout by Dalhousie anytime in August, the pay will be \$130 per day. Effective September 1, pay will increase to \$150 a day and increase by \$10 a day each week to a maximum of \$170 a day. You are paid for 7 days a week even though picket lines only operate 5 days a week. There are no deductions from lockout pay for taxes, union dues or benefits premiums so the entire pay goes into your bank account.

If the DFA goes on strike, the pay structure is a different. Daily pay begins at \$150 per day for the first week, and increases as the strike continues. In the second week, pay increases to \$160 a day; and in weeks three or more, pay is \$170 a day. You will be paid for 7 days a week even though picket lines only operate 5 days a week. There are no deductions from strike pay for taxes, union dues or benefits premiums – the full amount will be deposited into your bank account bi-weekly if you perform the required amount of strike duty.

(The required amount of strike duty is 2 hours a shift x 5 shifts a week for a total of 10 hours a week, or the equivalent in alternate picket duties.)

Can I be punished/disciplined for playing a role during the strike or lockout?

You have a legal right to strike and cannot be punished or discipline for participating in any capacity to support a legal and peaceful DFA strike. DFA will support you if any action is taken by Dalhousie, security or the police.

Do I have to obey security guards and Dalhousie's picket line monitors?

Essentially, the picket line belongs to the union. Picketers take their direction from the Picket Captain and Picket Captains take direction from the Job Action Committee. Security guards work

for the Administration and have no authority over DFA Members. If you are approached by a security guard, direct them to your Picket Captain.

What do I do if the police come?

Picket Captains are the designated point-of-contact for the police. Direct the police to your Picket Captain. Picket Captains know about what we can and cannot do on the picket line and they receive training on how to speak to the police.

What if a reporter asks me questions while I am on the picket line?

Picket Captains are the designated media contacts on their lines, so please direct all media inquiries to the Picket Captain – they will have instruction on how to handle media and will refer requests for information about the job action, bargaining or media interviews to the DFA Communications Officer.

What if I see a colleague cross the picket line?

Some of your colleagues do have permission to cross lines (e.g., to feed animals in labs). If you are concerned that a colleague may be breaking the picket line, please don't confront them directly; instead alert your Picket Captain who can check with the Job Action Committee to clarify the matter.

Can people other than DFA Members join the picket line?

Support from students, other Dalhousie employees, members of other unions, and the general public are always welcome on the picket lines, but everyone must check in with the Picket Captain when they first arrive at the line and respect the instructions given to them. This is very important for the safety of everyone, and for maintaining DFA policies for behaviour on the picket lines.

Can I bring my children or pets to the picket line?

Please check with your Picket Captain before inviting friends, family or pets to the picket line. There may be days/times that are better than others to boost picket line activity, and we also have to ensure everyone's safety.

Can we have music and entertainment on the picket line?

Absolutely! As long as by-laws regarding noise levels are respected, we encourage picketers to have fun and build camaraderie while on the picket line.

Can I take pictures or videos of things that happen on the picket line?

Yes, but ask permission from your fellow picketers first. The Communications Committee will collect pictures and videos of positive scenes that show solidarity and high morale. They make great posts for social media, and capture memories for when the strike is over.

Take pictures and video of security, managers and scab activity, too. Pass these on to your Picket Captain. They may be useful to the Job Action Committee.

Who do I contact if there's a problem on the picket line?

Always go to your Picket Captain. They can contact the Job Action Committee, the DFA or even the police if necessary. In case of a medical emergency, call 9-1-1.

What happens when a tentative agreement is reached?

Once a tentative agreement is reached, work stoppage ends immediately. The DFA will hold a meeting of our Bargaining Unit Members and review all details of the tentative agreement. Members will then be invited to participate in a ratification vote. If 50% plus one of the Members vote to ratify (i.e. accept) the tentative agreement, it is accepted and becomes the new Collective Agreement. The Board of Governors must also vote to ratify the tentative agreement.

When job action is over, how do we get back to work?

Once an agreement is reached and it's time for faculty return to work, various protocols will be in place. The DFA works with the Dalhousie Administration to develop and finalize those protocols. Once available and applicable, protocols will be shared with the DFA Membership.