

**Q: What does it mean that there is a strike?**

CUPE 2361 which represents workers in trades, grounds, and cleaning at Western are officially on strike as of August 20th, 2024.

**Q: Do I have to cross the picket line?**

Faculty, librarians and archivists must continue to fulfill their academic responsibilities in the event of a CUPE strike. We encourage our Members to honour picket lines by entering campus at locations other than those being picketed. When you are able, CUPE members would be thrilled to have you join them on the picket line. "Solidarity picketing" is done on a Member's own time but we suggest adding it to your PE report as service to the Association. You may also wish to assemble a group of colleagues to picket together. It is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate to the Western Administration that we support CUPE's efforts to negotiate a fair deal. Always report to the Picket Captain when joining a picket line, and ask where and how you can best help in the time you are there. We will share information about picket times and locations as these become public.

**Q: How will a strike affect me as a faculty member?**

Offices, classrooms, washrooms, and residences will not be cleaned. Waste disposals will become full quickly. If you are having difficulty with lighting, heating and cooling, ventilation, or leaks it is unlikely that you will have these issues resolved quickly, but you should submit work order requests as always. With the beginning of the academic year aligning with the strike deadline we anticipate significant delays for those who commute to work by car. LTC bus lines will be detoured off campus.

**Q: I am responsible for a lab. Do I need to make sure that cleanliness and safety standards are maintained so my teaching and research can continue?**

UWOFA understands that some of the work of maintaining safe conditions in labs is carried out by workers who are not represented by CUPE. This work should continue as normal. Members should decline any requests or suggestions to deposit waste anywhere other than the usual designated locations or to perform any work normally carried out by CUPE 2361 members. If you are uncertain whether work should be taking place in your lab while CUPE is on strike please [reach out to us](#) directly. If a labour disruption will threaten your research and/ or teaching, you should make this known ASAP.

**Q: What if Western hires ‘replacement workers’ to fill these roles in the event of a strike?**

The hiring of replacement workers undermines the foundational principles of the right to strike.

We wrote directly to the Western Administration to say that UWOFAs members greatly value the services of the CUPE 2361 workers and place a great deal of trust in the people who access their offices and labs where there is often highly important and sensitive information and equipment. We expressed concern about the hiring of replacement workers who might have access to these spaces.

Following our inquiry, we were told that only Western employees would be accessing faculty offices and lab spaces in the event of a labour disruption and that those individuals would be limited in number. We will continue to monitor this situation with respect to the amount and quality of service being provided and the plans for spaces other than offices and labs where access may be sensitive to security concerns.

We were also informed that Facilities Management will assign a senior staff member as a designate for each Faculty for service-related questions in the event of a labour disruption.

At this time it is not clear whether replacement workers that Western may be hiring for tasks such as classroom, washroom and residence cleaning will be subject to background checks, as, we understand, regular CUPE employees routinely are.

**Q: I volunteer at a Care Hub. How will this impact my time spent doing this work?**

CUPE 2361 workers are responsible for the setup and installation of equipment at Care Hubs. Members who are volunteering should not set up, install or repair anything at these locations. They can continue to collect waste as always, but should not pick up or move the bagged waste, nor help unload deliveries of water or supplies.

**Q: I have an in person event planned. Am I responsible for cleaning the space before and after the event?**

CUPE 2361 workers are normally assigned the duty to remove waste and ensure a level of cleanliness is maintained throughout campus. Members who are hosting in person events should decline any requests or suggestions to deposit waste anywhere other than the usual designated locations or to perform any work normally carried out by CUPE 2361 members.

**Q: Who can I talk to if I have concerns about the impact of the strike on my work?**

We are here to support you as we navigate the CUPE 2361 strike. We encourage you to direct questions and concerns to your Associate Deans, Deans, Associate Chief Librarians, the Chief Librarian, and Matt Mills, Director of Facilities Management, and CC [outreach@uwofa.ca](mailto:outreach@uwofa.ca). You can always reach out to us by [email](#) or by phone (519) 661-3016.

**Q: How can I help?**

- You can express your support for CUPE 2361 by sending an email to [President Alan Shepard](#), Provost [Florentine Strzelczyk](#), AVP (HR) [Jane O' Brien](#) and Board of Governors Chair, [Sarah Shortreed](#).
- Join the CUPE 2361 solidarity rally this Saturday August 31st from Noon-2 PM at Richmond Gates
- Follow and share their stories on Instagram and Twitter [@cupe2361](#)
- Join the CUPE picket lines when you can

**Q: How can I stay informed?**

Continue to check your email and our website FAQs for updates from UWOFA. You can also follow our socials:

Twitter/Instagram: [@UWOFA1](#)

Facebook: UWOFA