

## STRIKE Q&As

**Q1: What is a labor strike?**

**A1:** A strike is a union-led job action in which the union asks its members to walk off the job and refuse to work. Strikes usually are not the most effective way to resolve contract disputes – continuing to bargain in good faith and working together to find constructive solutions is how most new contracts are reached.

**Q2: The union is taking a strike vote. Does a union strike authorization vote guarantee that a strike will take place?**

**A2:** No, unions can ask for a vote as a bargaining tactic. The New York Professional Nurses Union (NYPNU) is taking a strike authorization vote which, if authorized, allows them to give the Manhattan hospitals a 10-day notice to strike. In the healthcare industry, unions are required to give a 10-day notice before a strike may take place to provide time for an employer to find alternative staffing arrangements and continue to provide care.

The hospitals hope that there will not be a strike. However, we have to recognize that this is a real possibility and therefore have developed a comprehensive contingency plan to ensure we can continue to deliver safe, quality, compassionate care to the communities that depend on us in the event the NYPNU decides to hold a strike. This plan includes bringing in replacement staff if necessary to ensure safe, quality care for our patients.

We continue to bargain in good faith with NYPNU. While the hospitals respects NYPNU’s right to strike, we think that the talk of a strike is a distraction from good-faith negotiations. We believe that our time is better spent at the table bargaining trying to reach a fair agreement for our nurses. We do not think a union strike would serve the interests of our patients, nurses, staff, or community.

**Q3: How many nurses need to vote “yes” in order for NYPNU to obtain authorization for a strike?**

**A3:** A strike authorization vote is an internal union matter, similar to selecting delegates or ratifying a tentative agreement. Because it is an internal union matter, we recommend you ask a NYPNU representative this question.

**Q4: My co-workers and I don’t want to strike or picket. What can we do?**

**A4:** The hospitals do not want a strike either. We would rather reach agreement on a fair contract for our nurses. If you don’t want to strike then you have the right to vote “no” when NYPNU holds its strike authorization vote.

If a strike or picket occurs you have the right to choose whether or not you want to participate without fear of retaliation or reprisal.

**Q5: Does the union's delivery of a 10-day notice mean a strike is inevitable?**

**A5:** No. During the 10-day period, we would like to continue bargaining with NYPNU toward a new agreement. We hope to reach a tentative agreement with NYPNU and avoid a situation where the union takes our nurses out on strike.

**Q6: If the union calls us out on strike do we still get paid?**

**A6:** Striking nurses will not be paid by the hospitals, and generally would not be eligible for unemployment compensation until after a lengthy waiting period. Ask your union if, when and what it would pay striking nurses, and whether it will guarantee that in writing. NYPNU's phone number is: (212) 988-5565.

**Q7: How will the hospitals continue to serve patients if there is a strike?**

**A7:** The hospitals are committed to continuing to provide safe, quality care in the event of a strike. We have prepared a thorough Patient Continuity Plan to ensure we will meet the needs of our patients. This plan includes utilizing licensed, experienced replacement nurses from a staffing agency to enable us to maintain quality services and provide care to our patients.