

PUBLIC SECTOR BARGAINING: FRONT COMMUN WILL LAUNCH AN UNLIMITED GENERAL STRIKE EARLY IN 2024 UNLESS A DEAL IS REACHED

Unions making up the Front commun – CSN, CSQ, FTQ and APTS – convened their respective delegates to meetings on December 19, 2023, in order to review what has been happening at the bargaining tables and to discuss what will happen next.

No hypothetical deal had yet materialized at the time the delegates met, and some 1,500 people attending the meetings therefore reasserted two crucial elements.

First of all, union bargaining teams will spare no effort over the next days to try and reach a satisfactory agreement. The Front commun still wants to achieve a tentative agreement before 2024, and that remains a possibility.

Secondly, delegates were unanimous in saying once again that if no deal is reached before the end of the year, the Front commun will rapidly launch an unlimited general strike at the most appropriate moment in early 2024. The strike will include every sector and will take place throughout Québec. The date will be chosen to ensure maximum impact.

News from the bargaining tables

While progress is being made at the central bargaining table, the issues of pay, insurance, regional disparities, and skilled workers are not yet resolved.



A number of contradictory messages have circulated in the media. We want to be clear about what we are saying to the employer party: we are willing to discuss a collective agreement covering a period of up to five years, as long as it meets our demands in terms of a catch-up increase. We have not put figures on these demands, but we have told the government that two conditions must be met:

1. Protection of workers' purchasing power must be guaranteed, and
2. There must be a catch-up increase, for which no figure has been given in order to leave room for negotiating at the bargaining table.

Issues relating to insurance and skilled workers are still being discussed. The Front commun has been extremely clear with its counterparts that in order to reach an agreement at the central table, there will have to be progress on these points, and on working conditions currently being discussed at sectoral tables.

For the past few days, the Front commun has been proposing solutions in response to the government's issues. It will be important that the government also finds solutions in response to workers' priorities. Given the current state of our public systems, the status quo is not an option, and attacks are even less appropriate.

In conclusion, the Front commun hopes its members will be able to restore their energy levels over the holiday season. If we are still at the bargaining tables in early 2024, we know that 420,000 Front commun members will be called on to play their part, and the involvement of each and every one will be crucially important.

Happy holidays and solidarity for all!