

# PUBLIC SECTOR BARGAINING: FRONT COMMUN WORKERS WILL STRIKE ON NOVEMBER 6

**November 6 is the date on which 420,000 Front commun workers will go out on strike for the first time, for a period of one day. There is no doubt that the government is directly responsible for this first day of strike action.**

Its attitude at the bargaining tables, its offer of 9% over 5 years (unchanged since the beginning), its equivocal media operations – its contempt, in short – are forcing us to go on strike.

The last straw was a hateful statement made last week by premier Legault: “Unions always think that they have to go on strike to gain as much as possible. So we’ll wait for the strike [...].” What is the government saying? that it’s been refusing to budge at the bargaining tables for over a year, persisting with its arrogance, its disconnected offers, and its attacks on our working conditions, all this because it’s been waiting for us to go on strike?

On November 6, over 500 walkouts will be organized throughout Québec. In health and social services, schools, and higher education, workers will join picket lines, together as one, to force the government to move.

And if our message still isn’t heard, a second strike action sequence may be organized. That would be the largest strike movement in the public sector over the past 50 years.

## Reaping what it sowed

The Front commun presented its demands to the Treasury Board on October 28, 2022, after an extensive consultation process. The government’s offers were tabled on December 15, 2022. A few hours later, the Front commun denounced the government’s disconnected pay offer of 9% over 5 years. Given that inflation for that period would be close to 18% based on current and estimated rates, the offer could only make workers poorer. A year later, the government hasn’t budged and absolutely nothing has been settled.





The Front commun has been using every possible opportunity over the past months to remind the government that its offers aren't acceptable - and that telling workers nothing will change is guaranteed to add fuel to the fire.

The government nonetheless continues to provoke workers through irresponsible statements from the premier and the Treasury Board president.

And last spring, adding insult to injury, it increased the salaries of MNAs by 30% and offered SQ police officers a 21% increase, which they refused. Today, it is reaping what it sowed: the anger of the 420,000 workers who belong to the Front commun.

## A substantial offer

There's only one way the government can dig itself out of the hole it has dug for itself: it has to come up with a substantial offer. Front commun negotiators learned via social media on October 24 that the Treasury Board will be tabling a new offer this Sunday, October 29. We'll wait to see it before we make any comment. But one thing is certain: an insufficient new offer will be felt as a slap in the face by the women and men who make public services work. The strength of the strike mandates you have given us is a sign of the high expectations that exist in our institutions around the outcome of these contract talks.

The pandemic is over. The Legault government has gotten in the habit of ruling by decree and ministerial order, deciding everything by itself - but now, it will have to learn to negotiate. The Front commun's message today is very clear. Stop using PR moves as a way of negotiating; show some interest in what's actually happening on the ground; and come back to us with a serious offer.

For full details about how the strike action will take place, contact your union.

Let's all turn out on the picket lines across Québec on November 6!

And let's hope this time, the government will hear our anger.

**In solidarity.**