#Bargaining for Better | COLLEGE FACULTY PERSONNEL SCOLAIRE DES COLLÈGES | #Négocier pour améliorer

WORK-TO-RULE FAQ

For CAAT-A Members

This document will be revised and updated as appropriate
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1. What is Work-to-Rule?

Work-to-rule is any job action in which employees do their jobs exactly as outlined by the rules of their contract or job description. This may cause a slowdown or increase pressure on supervisors, as faculty stop working beyond the time allotted in their contracts, SWFs, or (for counsellors and librarians) the 35-hour weekly cap.

This is not an unusual tactic, and is often highly successful. Examples in other sectors include nurses refusing to answer telephones, teachers refusing to work for free at night and during weekends and holidays, and police officers refusing to issue citations. Other examples of work-to-rule include refusing to engage in volunteer work such as recruitment fairs or committees, to work during periods that aren't covered by your contract, or to work beyond the time attributed for course preparation and evaluation every week. In a sense, "work-to-rule" involves applying to the letter rules that are normally set aside or interpreted less literally to increase efficiency, or refraining from activities which are customary but not required by rule or job description. Work-to-rule means doing your job to the letter of the law; it does not mean doing only the parts of the job that you like.

Because work-to-rule is an *organized* labour action, we will collectively undertake *specific* activities, in escalating phases. The bargaining team will determine these and share them with Locals and their membership. The list of actions associated with Phase One of our work-to-rule plan has already been shared in a separate document. Consult your union Local with questions.

As any new form of strike action takes place – such as a new phase of working-to-rule – members will be kept informed and up-to-date through local and provincial communication channels. There will be frequent updates provided through print publications, emails, and information meetings about the specific type of strike action that will be taken and how members should proceed.

Will this impact the functioning of the Colleges? It must, in order to work as a strategy. We are not responsible for the Colleges' chronic mismanagement of resources and staffing. We are not here to help management at this juncture, given that they have

shown no respect for us, our needs, or our students' needs at the bargaining table. Work-to-rule is one way of holding management responsible for the negative consequences of their own management decisions. It means that we will stop trying to save the Colleges from their own management.

2. Will I still receive pay during work-to-rule action?

We expect all members to continue to be paid as normal by the employer, since we will all continue to do the work for which we are being paid, according to our contracts. Since a work-to-rule does not involve walking off the job and does not include picket lines, strike pay provisions do not apply.

3. Why a work-to-rule?

We believe that it is a strong choice for a first step in work action, as opposed to a traditional strike with picket lines. A work-to-rule asserts the importance of the work that bargaining unit members perform, and can immediately demonstrate the obvious inadequacies in our Collective Agreement, by showing what happens when we stop volunteering our labour.

Work-to-rule can be combined with other non-strike actions such as rallies and political pressure on College Presidents, the College Employer Council, members of the Colleges' Boards of Governors, MPPs etc.etc.

In our communications/on our website, we have outlined exactly what the current phase of work-to-rule will look like. As you can see, these actions are designed to target administrators not students, and to demonstrate the amount of extra work faculty engage in every day.

ALL faculty should track their work using an app like Toggl, so that you know when you are at the limit of what you have been assigned for a task each week, then direct further work to your supervisor. If possible, professors and instructors should try to itemize the amount of time they spend on each of the following tasks:

- Teaching (in-person or online)
- Class preparation
- Evaluating or providing feedback on student work
- Out-of-class assistance to students (including office hours, zoom calls, and e-mail)
- Normal Administrative Tasks (including uploading materials, college emails, accommodating students, and completing all College paperwork)
- Coordinator tasks that have been agreed-to and put in writing (if applicable)
- Meetings (if listed on your SWF) If not on your SWF, ask your chair to put it on the SWF.

- Other complementary tasks ***that have been identified on your SWF*** (committees, program renewal, accreditation etc). If not on your SWF—don't go.

This also allows us to document what faculty actually do vs. how much time they have attributed. Tracking work is perhaps the most important solidarity action for **partial-load** faculty to engage in, and may help to shape work-to-rule guidelines for Partial-Load in future phases. Similarly, this will give faculty without a SWF, like **counsellors and librarians**, a good sense of how much volunteer work they are doing.

4. What does imposition mean for our work?

Because the Colleges refused faculty's offer to extend the existing terms and conditions of the Collective Agreement, and instead imposed their own terms, the College Employer Council can change the terms and conditions of our work at any time with no notice. Just because they have only imposed a limited range of terms now, does not mean that they will stop there. Further, the terms they have imposed are not entirely clear, such as the updated counsellor class definition. No details have been provided to the faculty doing this work, nor to the bargaining team.

The only recourse we have to changes in imposed terms is to escalate our work action plan.

5. Can we give out the Chair's, Associate Dean's, College President's, College Bargaining Team members', College Employer Council CEO's and manager's work numbers and email addresses for student, faculty, or public inquiries, complaints, and feedback?

Absolutely! In fact, they should hear directly about the impact of their choices on students, and the broader college community.

6. What happens if a member does not follow the work-to-rule?

A work-to-rule is considered strike action even if there are no picket lines that can be crossed. If you notice a member who is not following the work-to-rule, speak to them and make sure they are aware of the strike action. All members should understand that the purpose of our work-to-rule is to resolve negotiations without further escalation. ***The more each member participates in this stage of action, the less likely it is that we will need to escalate to a full strike.***

7. What should I do if my manager disciplines me for participating in a work-to-rule?

Both our Collective Agreement and our governing legislation offer protections for all

Union members who are participating in lawful Union activities, including a strike or Work to Rule.

If your manager disciplines or threatens to discipline you for participating, you can explain to them that you are adhering to the current terms and conditions of employment – that is exactly what a work-to-rule is. If a manager explicitly directs you to do something that is in violation of work-to-rule, you should follow up with an email reflecting what they have asked and explaining that it is not in your contract (or not on the SWF. Contact your union Local and OPSEU right away to make sure that they know and can intervene. (letterbox237@gmail.com)

8. What if I am on a leave when a work-to-rule starts?

You will not be able to take part in work-to-rule activities, but the College could change the imposed terms to cancel leaves if they choose.

9. What are the types of job action/strikes?

There are many kinds of job actions/strikes. Some of them include:

Work-to-rule

A work-to-rule is when workers obey all the laws and rules applying to their work (i.e., through legislation or the collective agreement), but follow "the letter of the law" to stall productivity. Since the colleges and College Employer Council are treating college education like an assembly line producing widgets for the economy, and have refused to bargain items that would benefit students and faculty alike, work-to-rule is effectively our mass refusal to continue to volunteer our labour.

We have the legal right to do this only because a majority of us voted to authorize strike action.

Rotating strike

A rotating strike is a strategic series of work stoppages of all bargaining unit members for fixed periods of time (e.g., one day or one week) at various colleges or campuses.

Targeted work stoppage

Targeted work stoppages feature an organized refusal to perform specific parts of members' assigned work, or a refusal to work at specific times of the day. A targeted work stoppage at Colleges, for example, could see faculty stop participating in processes related to Ministry approval of programs. Since a targeted work stoppage (unlike work-

to-rule) involves the refusal to do a portion of assigned work, it would typically be accompanied by a *proportional* reduction in salary.

General strike

A general strike is a cessation of work by all members in a bargaining unit. It is typically accompanied by picketing.

10. What's next?

The work-to-rule strategy is just the first step in our job action activities. Other types of job action, including rotating strikes or a general strike, are all options under consideration for future, escalating phases of our job action. The level of escalation required is entirely determined by the Colleges' willingness to engage with faculty demands, to refer outstanding issues to binding interest arbitration, to impose further terms and conditions, or to force a final offer vote.

The bargaining team will consult with local leadership to develop a plan and determine when, where, and for how long job actions will happen.

If you have any other questions about the job action, please contact your union Local first.

REMEMBER:

We make tremendous gains when we exercise our right to take job action. It's one of our most effective tools to ensure that the employer understands we deserve respect and listens to our demands. Keep these things in mind when you speak with your family, with people in your community, and with other union members. We are stronger together. *All of us or none of us!*

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

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