

Collective Bargaining Index Levels

MRFA members are encouraged to contact members of the Negotiating Committee if they have any questions or comments at vpnegotiations@mrfa.net.

It is important to note that movement through the stages stops as soon as the collective agreement is ratified by both parties. Regular updates will be posted to the MRFA website, under the Collective Bargaining section.



<p>Stage 1: Prepare</p>	<p>In this stage collective bargaining is not taking place. Further, there is no possibility that legal job action will take place because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) There is a collective agreement in force, and ii) Collective bargaining is not anticipated to exceed beyond the expiry date of the collective agreement. 	<p><u>Role of Members at this Stage:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicate issues and concerns to the Negotiating Committee using vpnegotiations@mrfa.net
<p>Stage 2: Interest Exchange</p>	<p>Issued when the bargaining teams (MRFA & BoG) have exchanged letters expressing an interest to begin collective bargaining.</p> <p>There is no possibility of job action during this stage.</p> <p>At this stage, it is important to be mindful of the potential timelines affecting the process and the issues at stake.</p>	<p><u>Role of Members at this Stage:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain up-to-date knowledge of the collective bargaining process by visiting the MRFA website. - Maintain knowledge regarding what job action is and when it can be used.
<p>Stage 3: Negotiations</p>	<p>Issued when the teams have started to meet to negotiate a new collective agreement.</p> <p>The risk of job action is a future possibility, increasing from zero, but the possibility is still very low to low.</p>	<p><u>Role of Members at this Stage:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seek information regarding any outstanding questions or concerns that develop by contacting the MRFA office.
<p>Stage 4: Deadline Watch</p>	<p>A <i>deadline watch</i> index is issued when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) negotiations are still ongoing, without a clear end date in sight, and 2) the current collective agreement is nearing expiration (July 1, 2020). <p>The risk of job action occurring is low to moderate.</p>	<p><u>Role of Members at this Stage:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take advantage of specific opportunities to share information with the Negotiating Committee. - Stay informed about the legal framework of bargaining and job action.
<p>Stage 5: Alert</p>	<p>Issued when the requirements of Stage 4 have been fulfilled and collective bargaining has entered into the 14-day cooling off period following statutory mediation. Collective bargaining at this stage is ongoing.</p> <p>The risk of job action occurring is high.</p> <p>At this stage, membership action is vital.</p>	<p><u>Role of Members at this Stage:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seek information regarding any outstanding questions or concerns that develop. - Give feedback on key bargaining issues, as requested by the Negotiating Committee.
<p>Stage 6: Engage</p>	<p>An engage index is issued once a Strike Vote has taken place. The outcome of the vote will dictate what members should do.</p> <p>The risk of job action occurring is imminent.</p> <p>At this stage, membership action is critical.</p>	<p><u>Role of Members at this Stage:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow the direction of the Executive Board - engage in job action. - Follow the recommendation of the Negotiating Committee - return to stage 5.

Collective Bargaining Terminology

In discussions of MRFA's Collective Bargaining process, a variety of terms will be used. In order to ensure that there is a common understanding of what is being referenced, please consult these terminology contained within this glossary.

Note: Items are listed in order of occurrence within the Collective Bargaining Index Levels



INTEREST-FOCUSED BARGAINING - Is a negotiation strategy in which parties collaborate to find a “win-win” solution to their dispute. This strategy focuses on developing mutually beneficial agreements based on the interests of the disputants and occurs throughout collective bargaining.

ARBITRATION - Is a process in which a third party (an Arbitrator) is invited to engage in the bargaining process in order to bring resolution to collective bargaining. Parties submit their final positions to the Arbitrator, where by the Arbitrator determines which position will form the new collective agreement. Depending on the type of arbitration, the Arbitrator can be empowered to select elements from either position or a position in its entirety.

MEDIATION - Is a process in which a neutral third party is invited to participate in the collective bargaining process to assist the parties in reaching a decision. The third party does not make decisions, but offers suggestions on how the parties could reach an agreement. For the MRFA, our Negotiating Committee may access either, or both, types of mediation.

STATUTORY MEDIATION - Is a mandatory mediation process that the parties must engage in before parties can legally engage in job action. This process can be initiated by either, or both, parties making a formal request. This process must conclude prior to advancing to stage 5 of collective bargaining.

INFORMAL MEDIATION - Is a voluntary mediation process that the parties can mutually agree to undertake in order to assist in the negotiation process. Consult Article 21.5 of the collective agreement for more information. It can take place during any stage of collective bargaining.

14 DAY COOLING OFF PERIOD - Is a mandatory period of time in which parties must “cool off” after *statutory mediation* has concluded and before any *job action* can occur. It takes place in stage 5 of collective bargaining.

STRIKE VOTE - Is a process regulated by the Alberta Labour Relations Code in which MRFA members decide whether or not to engage in a *strike*. A positive *strike vote* grants the MRFA Executive the authority to initiate a *strike*. It takes place in stage 6 of collective bargaining.

JOB ACTION - Is an umbrella term used to refer to temporary actions of employees and employers aimed at affecting the outcome of a collective bargaining process.

STRIKE - Is a process in which employees remove their labour from the workplace, either in its entirety or partially. In the case of MRFA members this could include the withdrawal of teaching, scholarship, and service activities for the duration of the strike. When the conditions are fulfilled under the Alberta Labour Relations Code it is a legal *job action*. A *strike* cannot be initiated without approval of the membership (i.e. a *strike vote*).

WORK TO RULE - Is a process in which employees follow the official working rules and hours exactly in order to reduce output and efficiency. No extra work is undertaken during this process. Similar to *strike*, in order for this process to be a legal *job action*, conditions must be fulfilled under the Alberta Labour Relations Code.

LOCK-OUT - Is a process in which the employer prevents the employees from engaging in work (teaching, scholarship, and service), until the employer invites employees back into the workplace under conditions set by the employer. When the conditions are fulfilled under the Alberta Labour Relations Code it is a legal *job action*.