



Strike Preparations: Frequently Asked Questions For Local 2 Kaiser Members

Why are we (potentially) going on strike?

OPEIU is a member of the Coalition of Kaiser Permanente Unions (CKPU), a coalition of twenty-six unions that represent Kaiser employees nationwide. We've spent the last twenty-plus years creating a strong labor-management partnership that has brought about the impressive wage scales and benefits that employees at Kaiser like you have fought so hard for. We bargain the contract every three years and have seen it improve in many ways every time.

In March of 2018, however, when Kaiser was supposed to come back to the bargaining table with the CKPU, they refused to negotiate with us. They stood us up and would not sign off on our contract. Instead, a number of CKPU unions broke off and formed the Alliance of Health Care Unions. The Alliance was willing to give back a lot of the benefits and protections that the CKPU had worked so hard for; Kaiser took advantage of it and signed off on a contract for Alliance members that lowers your raises and takes away many of the benefits you deserve. The CKPU, on the other hand, does not believe union leaders should make unilateral decisions that sacrifice member livelihoods for the sake of a quick contract. We are committed to the fight and won't sign off on anything that gives less than you deserve.

Kaiser refused to come to the bargaining table with the CKPU, so we filed and were awarded an Unfair Labor Practice charge with the National Labor Relations Board. Kaiser appealed the decision and is going back to court in August. Kaiser has since begun bargaining with us; however, they have come out saying they want to take away pensions for new hires, reduce raises, raise employee copays to \$20 each visit, create a two-tiered wage scale, and more.

We're planning on going on strike to protest Kaiser's unjust attempts to take away the pay and benefits you've worked so hard for. If we don't act, they'll know that they can keep exploiting their employees. It's on all of us, 85,000 strong across the country and 4,800 in the DMV, to show them that we deserve a fair contract. Kaiser's CEO Bernard Tyson made \$16 million in 2017: Kaiser can certainly afford to use the \$32 billion it keeps in reserves to treat its employees fairly.

Do we know for sure if we are striking?

The short answer is no. We will know more later this summer once bargaining progresses, but either way, we need to prepare as if we are going on strike so that we have everything in place.

Who will be on strike?

All 4,800 OPEIU Local 2 Kaiser members in the DMV will be going on strike, along with all 85,000 CKPU Kaiser employees across the country. This includes employees represented by OPEIU, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE).

When will we go on strike?

The current contract we are operating under expired in September of 2018, but will remain in place until September 30 of 2019. The agreement has a no-strike provision that prevents us from striking as long as the contract is in effect; however, once it expires on September 30, we have the right to do so. That's why we're planning on striking the first week of October 2019.

How long will we be on strike?

While we cannot guarantee anything about the length of the strike because we will remain on the picket line until Kaiser agrees to a fair contract, we are hoping the strike will last 1-5 days. We expect that the burden Kaiser will face in trying to replace all of you with temporary contract employees for those days will be far too costly for them, not to mention the bad press they'll face, and they'll agree to bargain in good faith.

Will I be fired if I go on strike?

No, since this is a *lawful strike*, your employer cannot fire, threaten, or discipline you in any manner for going on strike. You are entitled to exercising your rights on the picket line. If your manager or someone else threatens discipline or retaliates against you for striking, record what they say and let your shop steward know immediately.

Since we are protesting an unfair labor practice, this is a lawful strike during which the employer cannot discharge nor permanently replace you. You are entitled to the same job when you return to work. If you are not granted the right to return to your same job following the strike, the union will file a charge on your behalf and request reinstatement backpay.

For more information about your right to strike, please visit www.nlr.gov/strikes.

Can I continue to work during the strike?

All good-standing members of OPEIU Local 2 are expected to support our fellow Union members by engaging in a legal work stoppage and legal picket line in this labor dispute when called to do so by your elected Local 2 leaders. If you remain a Local 2 member and decide to cross the picket line and keep working while your Brothers and Sisters are collectively

sacrificing their income to provide a better collective bargaining agreement for our members at KP-MAS, these members are authorized to bring a charge against you under the provisions of the Local 2 and OPEIU International Constitutions. Any internal discipline for Local 2 members crossing such a picket line will be administered fairly under federal law in order to help maintain the solidarity of our Union.

For more information on your rights as a union member, please visit our Local 2 website, or follow the link: <http://www.opeiu-local2.org/rights-of-union-members.html>

Please also get to know the bylaws of the Local 2 and International Constitutions to learn more about the union rights to discipline members who work against the best interest of the union.

OPEIU Local 2 Constitution: http://www.opeiu-local2.org/uploads/4/3/3/5/43355477/opeiu_local_2_constitution_2013.pdf

OPEIU International Constitution: http://www.opeiu-local2.org/uploads/4/3/3/5/43355477/opeiu_international_constitution_2016_09_20.pdf

Will I have health care coverage during the strike?

Yes, although you should be aware of the details. Kaiser pays its employees' healthcare coverage at the beginning of the month, and it lasts the remainder of the month. Since we're planning on striking the first week of October, Kaiser will have already paid out your health care for the month. Should they decide to retaliate and take away that coverage while you're on the picket line, Local 2 will pay another insurance company to cover members out on strike.

Will I continue to earn my paycheck?

While you will not earn your normal wages, you are entitled to strike benefit pay if you stand on the picket line during the strike. This amounts to \$62/day, or \$310/week. If the strike stretches longer than eight days, you will be entitled to unemployment benefits.

Please note that you will not earn the strike benefit if you do not check in at the picket line. If you chose to stay home, you will not earn the \$62/day.

Will every facility have its own picket line?

While we are still determining which facilities will have picket lines, we can tell you now that not every Kaiser facility in the DMV will have a picket line every day of the strike. Members at every facility will be asked to walk out on strike, but the actual picket line will likely be at five different locations everyday. We will determine which locations will have a picket line and where each of you should report in the coming months, depending on your home addresses and where we can get the best visibility and press coverage.

Who can I go to for more information?

Your Shop Stewards and Strike Captains should be able to answer questions or at least point you in the right direction if you have questions. Strike Captains are member volunteers who will be increasingly involved with the planning and execution of the strike: getting members signed up for picket line shifts, recruiting volunteers to pick up food and water, coordinating childcare, signing members in at the picket line, etc.

The role of a Strike Captain is incredibly valuable. If you can commit to helping out with the strike planning and logistics, please contact Local 2 Organizer Grace Reckers at greckers@opeiu-local2.org.