



MEDIA RELEASE

MAHCP SETS ALLIED HEALTH STRIKE DEADLINE FOR 8 A.M., JUNE 15, 2023

Strike deadline follows over five years without contract; 99% strike mandate.

June 1, 2023 | *Winnipeg, MB* – The Manitoba Association of Health Care Professionals (MAHCP) has issued a strike deadline for 6,500 allied health professionals working in public health care who have been without a collective agreement for over five years. Job action is slated to begin at 8 a.m., June 15th, 2023 unless parties are able to reach an agreement before then. Negotiations began in March 2022 and entered mediation six weeks ago following a 99% strike mandate by MAHCP members.

“A strike is a last resort for us, but at this point we feel like we have no other option.” said MAHCP President Jason Linklater. “The staffing crisis gets worse every day. Allied health professionals have gone over five years without a contract, Manitoba can’t retain them, and we are out of time.”

Allied health professionals work in health care settings across Manitoba. They include diagnostic imaging and laboratory technologists; scientists and pharmacists, rural paramedics and emergency medical dispatch; mental health and addictions counsellors, respiratory therapists, midwives and over 40 other specialized professions that are critical to delivering health care for Manitobans.

Agreements are in place to enable employers to schedule a minimum number of employees in each service area to ensure essential services continue in the event of a strike. However, MAHCP anticipates that strike action will cause significant delays and service disruptions to multiple health care services at over 200 sites across the province where MAHCP members work. Wait times are likely to increase and cancellations could occur for a wide range of health care services, including but not limited to:

- Non-emergent surgical and diagnostic procedures
- Routine or non-emergent laboratory results
- Non-crisis mental health and addictions services
- Therapeutic/rehabilitation services (e.g., physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech language pathology)
- Midwifery appointments, with the exception of late-term or immediate post-natal

The unprecedented length of time since allied health has been without a contract – the longest for any health-care sector in Canada – continues to cause increasing challenges for staff retention and recruitment, with a significant net loss of professionals and rising vacancy rates reported by the union. The wages of 6,500 health care professionals have been frozen since 2017 while the cost of living has risen over 20%. During that period other provinces, including neighbouring Saskatchewan, have provided raises and other significant hiring and retention incentives for skilled allied health professions.

“We continue to lose highly specialized allied health professionals to other sectors and other provinces that are way ahead of us in wages and benefits,” said Linklater. “Manitoba has to start fixing this by giving them a reason to stay.”

MAHCP’s Bargaining Committee called for a strike vote last month, with 99% voting in favour of a strike mandate. MAHCP represents 7000 allied health professionals across Manitoba. For more information, visit www.mahcp.ca.

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