

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS IN THE BUILD UP TO THE BALLOT FOR INDUSTRIAL ACTION

WHY ARE WE BALLOTING FOR INDUSTRIAL ACTION?

- Dunnes Stores senior management have refused to engage with your union and with the state's industrial relations bodies, including the Labour Relations Commission and the Labour Court, to deal with the issues and grievances that our members in Dunnes have raised.
- The main issues being raised include guaranteed sufficient weekly hours (banded hour contracts), fair pay, more permanent contracts and the right to be represented by your union both individually and collectively.
- The Labour Court issued a recommendation in November of last year stating that the company should honour their obligations and meet the union in order to deal with these issues of concern. The Company have rejected that recommendation.
- All we are asking is for union members in Dunnes to be treated no less favourably than their counterparts who are employed in the likes of Tesco, Penneys and Marks and Spencer to name but a few.
- Taking a decision to conduct a ballot for industrial action is not easy or taken lightly. The Company have left the members with no other alternative to have their grievances heard and resolved.
- Before sanctioning strike or industrial action the Union is required to hold secret ballots and adhere to strict procedures.

WHO DECIDED TO BALLOT FOR INDUSTRIAL ACTION?

- On the 14th of January, Mandate shop stewards from all over Ireland in Dunnes Stores voted "To commence a process of balloting for industrial action to achieve implementation of the terms of the Labour Court recommendation LCR20874 issued on the 14th November 2014."
- The Labour Court's recommendation stated the company have an obligation to sit down with the Union to discuss all of the issues in dispute.

WHEN IS THE BALLOT IN DUNNES?

- Over the month of February arrangements will be made to conduct a secret ballot of all of our members employed in Dunnes.
- The balloting process will be done through local meetings, notice of which will be sent in due course to you and your fellow members. It is expected that balloting will finish by the beginning of March.
- Mandate members will be given the chance over the coming weeks to send out a clear message to the owners and senior management of the company that their dismissive attitude towards the Union and its members must be brought to an end.

WHO CAN BALLOT?

- Secret balloting is open only to workers who are members of Mandate Trade Union working in Dunnes Stores.
- All non-members are encouraged to join before the balloting process to have a vote.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AFTER THE BALLOT? WHEN ARE WE GOING ON STRIKE?

- What happens after the ballot depends largely on how workers vote and how Dunnes management responds.
- If workers vote in favour of taking industrial action, the Union will convene a national dispute committee made up of our members in Dunnes all across Ireland. The committee will

decide the type of industrial action and when it will occur. The national committee will carefully consider that any industrial action agreed has minimum impact on the workers involved.

- Members in each store will be informed of the details and each store will be expected to organise a committee to co-ordinate industrial action in their store with the assistance of Union officials and organisers.

I CAN'T AFFORD TO GO ON STRIKE.

- Disputes are never easy. There may be some difficult short term sacrifices to achieve long term permanent gains. By building strength we can bring about positive change which will benefit all our members employed in Dunnes for many years to come.
- The type of action has not been determined and depending on what action is taken there may be nominal strike pay for Union members actively involved in the picket to be determined by the Union's national executive. You should attend local meetings organised in the coming weeks to discuss the possible industrial action.
- As has been the case in the past, the general public and local communities have been very supportive and generous to workers when they have had to make a difficult decision to take industrial action. We are confident this will continue to be the case.

WILL I BE PUNISHED OR DISMISSED BY THE COMPANY FOR JOINING THE UNION OR GOING ON STRIKE?

- By uniting together members protect each other. We have strength in numbers!
- Employment law offers protections to members of trade unions participating in trade union activities – including strike action.
- Over the last year many workers in Dunnes have spoken out publically at the national level regarding the campaign. Many others have been active in their stores. Dunnes have not responded by taking disciplinary action.

IF I AM A UNION MEMBER AND I CROSS THE PICKET LINE WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES?

- If a decision is made in favour of industrial action all members are fully expected to unite and support the action when it is taken. Members who do not support the action i.e. cross the picket will be reported to the union's national executive which may result in expulsion from their Union.

WHAT DO I DO IF I AM NOT ROSTERED TO WORK ON THE DAY OF A PICKET?

- All Mandate members are expected to picket whether or not they are rostered to work the day a picket is called.

IF I AM NOT A MEMBER AND I DON'T CROSS THE PICKET LINE CAN I BE DISCIPLINED BY THE COMPANY?

- We hope you would choose to join with your colleagues in Dunnes. Together in this campaign we are trying to make positive and long lasting changes including improvements to terms and conditions of employment. When everyone unites together it increases the power we all have to make these changes.
- Workers who are not members are not protected by legislation and will not receive assistance or support from the Union.
- Also, workers who are not members and who do not appear for work if they are rostered on can be disciplined by the Company.