

Toronto on strike: City caves on bankable sick day reforms

Posted: July 29, 2009, 12:30 PM by Karen Hawthorne

[Toronto on strike](#)

Update 12:30 p.m.: The city appears to have caved on its bid to reform striking workers' bank of sick days and replacing it with a short-term leave plan.

According to information distributed to indoor employees voting on Wednesday on a tentative contract, they can keep their bank of sick days and continue to collect more.

[Read CUPE Local 79's settlement summary document \(PDF\)](#)

"There will be no changes or reductions to your entitlements," states the leaflet from Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 79 to its members. "You will continue to accrue sick days."

They will, however be given the option of switching to a "new illness and injury plan" and continue to draw on their bank of sick days, which will be frozen.

It is a stark departure from the city's bargaining position that it wanted to do away with banked sick days, buy out employees and move them to a sick leave program.

The deal also contains wage hikes of 1.75% in 2009, 2% in 2010 and 2.25% in 2011.

By Allison Hanes, National Post

The union representing Toronto's striking outdoor workers has put the brakes on a ratification vote, scheduled for today, pending the ironing out of the last details in its tentative contract with the city.

Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 416 announced this morning it is holding last-minute meetings with the city and would only release details about a planned vote on the labour deal afterwards.

"I said on Monday that we had the basis of a deal, but there were still final pieces to put into place," said Local 416 president Mark Ferguson. "That is what we have been trying to do. There are still outstanding issues that the city has yet to address. We hope to resolve those issues in a meeting with the city this morning."

Local 416, representing 6,000 outside workers, was the first of Toronto's two striking civic unions to clinch a deal after an ultimatum Friday from Mr. Ferguson and a marathon weekend bargaining session.

But Local 79, representing 24,000 inside civic employees, is holding a ratification vote today on its tentative



(Photo: Jim Smith, a management employee with the TTC, tosses trash from a puddle at the base of a large garbage pile at a temporary dump site near Leslie Street and Eglinton Avenue in Toronto, July 26, 2009. Tyler Anderson/National Post)

settlement between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. today.

However Local 79 president Ann Dembinski complained last night that the city was delaying her members' return to work. She said they expect to resume their normal duties Thursday in the event of approval, but city plans had suggested it wouldn't happen until the weekend.

If both locals vote for their contracts, city council will sit to ratify the deal Friday.

[Toronto on strike: Union chief decries return-to-work timeline](#)

[Toronto on strike Q & A: Why is there still garbage piling up?](#)