



RATIFICATION FAQ

Below is a comprehensive ratification-related FAQ that we hope is helpful to our members. If you have additional questions after reviewing this information, please ask in the comments on our blog.

Q: What is a tentative agreement? A: A tentative agreement is contract language that an employer and union have agreed to that hasn't been finalized. We reached TAs on individual sections of the contract throughout bargaining, and at the end of bargaining we got a TA on the entire contract. Getting to a TA on the entire contract is sometimes referred to as reaching a settlement. The TA needs to be ratified before the contract can take effect.

Q: What is ratification? A: Ratification is the approval/acceptance of a TA by a vote of a union's membership.

Q: Does the bargaining team recommend ratification of this TA? A: Yes, we do!

Q: Do I have to be a dues-paying member to vote to ratify a contract? A: Yes — decisions like this will always only be made by our dues-paying membership.

Q: How can I learn more about the tentative agreement that I'll be voting on? A: We have a post on the blog that includes resources such as highlights of the TA, links to all previous bargaining updates and a wages calculator. Members will also be able to read an annotated review copy of the entire TA prior to voting.

Q: How many votes are needed to ratify the contract? A: A simple majority of yes votes.

Q: What happens if the contract is ratified? A: The terms of the contract take effect and bargaining ends.

Q: Will I receive a ratification bonus if I'm a new employee on vacation? If I'm on FMLA? If I'm leaving OHSU soon? A: Yes, yes, and it depends. You need to be a current OHSU employee at the time any bonus is paid out in order to receive it.

Q: What happens if the contract is not ratified? A: A strike date would be set and we'd go back to the bargaining table in the meantime. We'd be at risk of losing anything we negotiated between the time we submitted our final offers to the Oregon Employment Relations Board and the time we reached a settlement. Management could, and most likely would, return to their previous economic positions, including around ATB raises.

Q: Would we hold another strike vote if the contract isn't ratified? A: No — we already have a valid strike authorization.

Q: Why does it take a while for some of the new contract language to take effect? A: Both parties need time to educate their constituents about the new contract. In addition, new contract language sometimes requires the employer to reprogram existing systems (e.g., changes to anniversary dates), add new Kronos timekeeping codes, develop new programs and reporting mechanisms (e.g., exit interviews), etc. It isn't feasible for all of this work to happen immediately or all at once, so new changes can take between 30 and 120 days to go into effect.

Q: What if I'm unhappy with our new contract? A: Observe a board meeting, submit an article for our blog, become a steward or run for an executive-board seat (all of our board positions will be up for election in the fall of 2023). Start thinking about our next contract's issues now and start talking to your coworkers now. Consider running for the 2025 bargaining team when the time comes.