



What's New in HR Law

Over 10,000 US Hotel Workers Strike Against Major Hotel Chains

September 6, 2024 | By [Naomi Santesteban](#)

Bottom Line

Over 10,000 hotel workers across the United States participated in a large-scale multi-city strike against major hotel chains over Labour Day weekend. The strikes began after Unite Here (the “Union”) failed to reach an agreement in contract negotiations with the hotel chains. While the hotel strikes are currently limited to workers within the United States, they may spill over into Canada or affect unionized Canadian hotel business operations in other ways, including in the collective bargaining process.

Contractual Negotiations Breakdown

Unite Here represents hospitality workers in hotels, casinos, and airports across the United States and Canada. While approximately 40,000 Unite Here workers across 20 American cities are facing the expiry of their collective agreements in 2024, around 15,000 of those workers at a number of major hotel chains voted to strike after negotiations for new four-year contracts reached an impasse.

At the bargaining table, the hotel employers faced Union demands for higher wages, better work conditions, and an increase in job positions. The Union pointed to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic that led many hotels to reduce guest services and other staffing to levels that have not been fully restored. Canadian employers in the hospitality industry may face similar kinds of demands from unions.

This article is for the purposes of only general information and does not constitute legal advice or opinion.

Hotel Workers' Strikes Concluded in Some Cities, While Continued in Others

While the strikes concluded in Baltimore and Seattle on Tuesday, September 3, 2024, over 9,000 workers remained on strike in 7 cities as of September 4, 2024. Each city's strike is set to last between one to three days. Hotel workers in multiple other cities have voted to strike but not yet started. Those strikes may begin at any time. In 2023, Unite Here engaged in rolling strikes over several months, some of which were tied to peak seasons in tourism.

Takeaways

Although there are no hotel workers' strikes currently taking place in Canada, it remains possible that the Union's strike activity will spill over into Canada and affect our hospitality businesses. The hotel workers' strikes in America may also affect other Canadian businesses in the tourism and hospitality industry who are nearing the expiry of their collective agreements.

Hospitality employers may wish to consult experienced counsel about bargaining strategies in light of the ongoing pressures resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Counsel can also assist employers in setting up contingency plans to minimize the impact of potential strikes.

Need More Information?

Our legal team can assist on all aspects of labour relations including collective bargaining, drafting collective agreement language, and navigating employers through the conciliation and strike process where necessary.

For more information or assistance with labour relations, contact [Naomi Santesteban](mailto:Naomi.Santesteban@filiation.on.ca) at nsantesteban@filiation.on.ca or your [regular lawyer](#) at the firm.



Toronto
416.408.3221
toronto@filiation.on.ca

London
519.433.7270
london@filiation.on.ca

Hamilton
905.526.8904
hamilton@filiation.on.ca

Kitchener-Waterloo
519.433.7270
kitchener-waterloo@filiation.on.ca