North West Disputes Team

The Critical Role of Branch Treasurers in Disputes & Industrial Action

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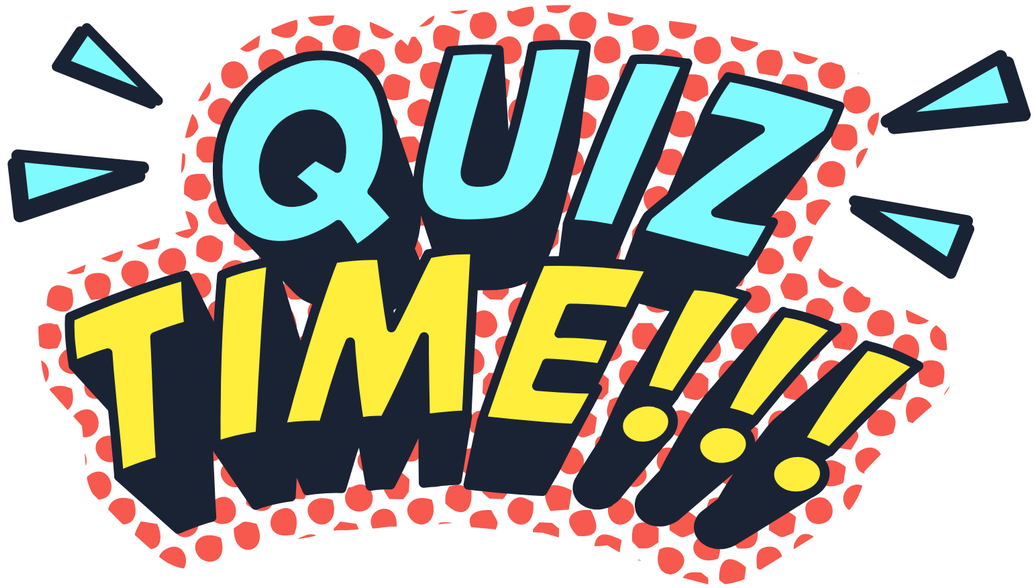
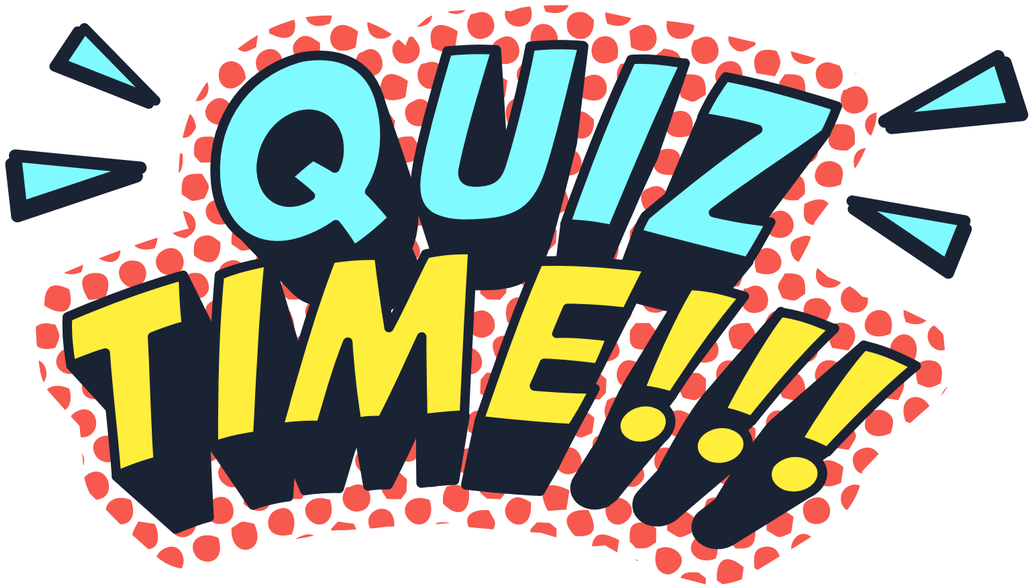


How much is UNISON strike pay?

a) £50 a day

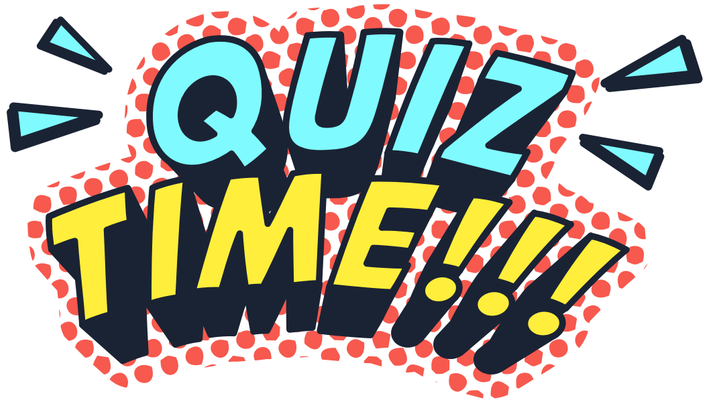
b) £70 a day

c) no more than take home pay



Who can get an automatic exemption from taking strike action for financial reasons?

a) someone who’s pregnant
b) someone that’s due to retire
c) someone who’s in receipt of benefits or income support



What's the difference between strike pay and hardship payment??

a) there's no difference - people just call the same thing different things.
b) member's can only claim one or the other - strike pay or hardship whichever suits their circumstances set out in the rule book.
c) All UNISON members can claim Strike Pay. Strike Hardship is for UNISON members in significant financial hardship.

What we’re going to cover

- The impact of getting it wrong
- Good Practice & getting it right
- Making Your Life Easier;
- Industrial Action Checklist
- Branch Industrial Action Funds
- Collecting Bank Details
- Strike Pay, Hardship & Documents
- Retrieving Strike Pay form National Finance
- Auditing

It’s not just someone somewhere pushing the “Industrial Action button” delivering industrial action is a team effort

When Treasurers get it right & MAKE a strike what do they do?

(Put your thoughts in the comments)

Treasurers can literally BREAK a strike

When IA is NOT budgeted or resourced properly;

- no branch industrial action fund
- no collections or fund raising
- no physical resources
- no allocated branch staff time
- no spare capacity of branch reps / branch officers
- no requests for donations to branch industrial action fund
- not paying out strike payments when you promise to

Treasurers MAKE a strike (1)

Industrial Action is fully budgeted & resourced;

1.Set up a Branch Industrial Action Fund

2.Minuted agreement from Branch Committee to support action

3.Minuted agreement of amount of money to move from general funds to Branch Industrial Action Fund

4.Ensure funds are available in Industrial Action Fund to pay out strike pay, hardship pay, welfare arrangements for picket lines ie; access to drinks, food, toilets & physical resources

Treasurers MAKE a strike (2)

5.Ensure Resources are costed and sent to the right people in good time before picket lines; Flags, Official Picket Line Placards, Blank Placards, UNISON Branch Bibs / Hi Vizs / Access to Community Room / Space for meetings / events.

6.Collect striking members bank details (do no under estimate how much time this will take - do it before first strike day)

7.Ensure picket line resources are ordered in good time to right people

8.Specific allocation of branch employed staff time

Treasurers can MAKE a strike (3)

9.What collections / fund raising will be done?

10.Consider if an advance payment of strike pay will be required

11.Consider if a request to put out a call for regional / national messages of solidarity / donations to branch industrial action fund

12. Give specific advice to all members that strike pay + any hardship pay can not exceed normal take home pay

13. Give advice to members in receipt of benefits / income support (that strike pay / hardship is a form of income)
Thursday, to land in Branch bank accounts on Friday)

Treasurers MAKE a strike (4)

14. Ensuring advice is given to members where there may be significant financial impact; those on benefits or UC - that strike pay / hardship pay is a form of income - ensuring it's paid out in equal amounts as back pay can cause differentions / sanctions.

15.Give automatic exemptions for those retiring (impact on pension)

16. Give automatic expemptions for those due to go on maternity leave (impact on mat pay)

Treasurers MAKE a strike (5)

15. Request a copy of the picket line register for paying out strike pay.

16.Input data into regional template ready for submitting to national finance (no later than the Tuesday, to be paid on the Thursday, to land in Branch bank accounts on Friday)

17.Collect wage slips showing deductions and any evidence (bills etc) to show the hardship

The NW Disputes Team and national are constantly reviewing and updating guidance with new legislation and lessons learnt on every dispute.

If you save advice / checklists locally ensure you check with your RO or the Disputes Team that you've got the current version before each time you use it.

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A Branch Treasurers' Industrial Action Checklist

A Branch Treasurer's Tool allowing Treasurers to collect strikers bank details as well as uploading payslips & bills etc to show hardship.

Questions