

Advanced Picket Line Organisation

For BMA Regional Junior Doctors' Committees officers and local leaders



This guide is for elected officers of the BMA Regional Junior Doctor's Committees (RJDCs) across England, to assist them in their deliberations and considerations when organising and planning strike action in their regions.

This guide is intended to be supplementary to both the *Preparing for strike action: a checklist for activists* document available [here](#), and your pre-existing knowledge and experience as BMA representatives, activists and local leaders.

ARE YOUR HOSPITALS STRIKE READY?

1) Identify local strike leaders and structures

In some hospitals these structures and leaders may already exist, possibly in the form of the LNC. In other hospitals it may be better to make new structures. Junior doctors' forums tend to have management presence, so cannot be used as a strike organising group, but may be able to feed into the strike organising group structure.

- Who are the local strike leaders in your department/specialty/programmes? (1 strike leader per 20 staff, may need multiple strike leaders for large staff groups)
- Which departments/specialties/training programmes in your hospital are still in need of strike leaders? What is your plan for recruiting leaders from these groups
- Who is leading the strike at your hospital? This is your local strike organising group! (group of 5-10 key strike leaders depending on size of hospital)
- Strike leaders organise a meeting for doctors at the hospital to talk through the plans for balloting and industrial action

2) Setting up communication channels

A communication channel is most likely to be a WhatsApp group, however it could take a different format such as email, telegram or Microsoft teams.

- Each department/specialty/rotation should set up a communication channel. Make this separate from any group which is used for clinical work.
- There should be a communication channel for all the strike leaders at your hospital
- There should be a whole hospital comms channel for communicating info about the strike. This will have announcements from strike leaders only, not chat with the whole hospital!
- There should be a comms channel between the hospital strike leaders and the leaders of other trade unions at the hospital

3) Picket practicalities

- Identify all the entrances to the hospital and choose where the picket lines will be
- For each picket line identify where you will be able to store placards, banners, armbands, leaflets, camping chairs (this may be the union offices of other unions, of the private office of a sympathetic consultant. Don't leave the materials in a common office where they could be confiscated by managers.
- Identify colleagues who will be able to bring placards, camping chairs, sustenance, leaflets and any other material resources you might need to the picket lines

4) Organising support

- Allocate one of the hospital strike leaders to be the med student liaison + contact the local med students support the strikes and create a comms channel
- Allocate one of the hospital strike leaders to be the intertrade unions liaison + contact the local trades union council and create a comms channel

WHAT CAN I DO TO SUPPORT PICKETS AS AN EITHER AN ACCREDITED LNC REPRESENTATIVE OR AN ELECTED OFFICER OF RJDC?

As either an accredited LNC representative at your Trust, or an elected officer of an RJDC, under the laws relevant to picketing, you qualify as a *trade union official*.

The law provides that it is lawful for a trade union official to picket at any place of work provided that:

- They are accompanying members of their trade union who are picketing lawfully at or near their own place of work; and
- They personally represent those members.

For accredited LNC representatives, who represent their colleagues who work for the same employer as you, this means they can attend and take part in the official picketing at any of the picket lines at their employer's locations, but no sites beyond their employer's.

For elected officers of RJDC, who represent their colleagues who work across the geographical footprint the RJDC covers, this means they can attend and take part in the official picketing at any of the picket lines at any official picket sites within the geographical footprint the RJDC covers.

Both accredited LNC representatives and elected officers of RJDC can volunteer for the role of picket supervisor at any picket site, so long as they're familiar with the *Code of Practice on Picketing* available [here](#).
