

# Home daycare workers vote 97.5% in favour of general strike April 1 <sup>[1]</sup>

Unionized home daycare workers in Quebec have voted overwhelmingly in favour of a general strike as of April 1.

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## EXCERPTS

Unionized home daycare workers in Quebec have voted overwhelmingly in favour of a general strike as of April 1.

The Fédération des intervenantes en petite enfance du Québec (FIEPQ), representing about 10,000 workers said Sunday its members voted 97.5 per cent in favour of the strike that would touch all regions of the province. The unions says 60,000 families would be affected by its pressure tactics, which already include late openings of daycares on Fridays.

“For all the parents who feel they are being taken hostage, we are sincerely sorry,” said FIEPQ president Valérie Grenon. “If they must be mad, the person who takes them hostage is the minister of families, Mathieu Lacombe.”

Lacombe’s office said it acknowledges the vote and is disappointed in the inconvenience this will cause parents, but “we will not negotiate in public.”

The union says pay is the main point of contention between the workers and Quebec’s family department. The daycare educators are not paid by the hour, but rather receive a subsidy from the government to provide the service at home. The union estimates that based on hours worked and expenses, the workers bring home the equivalent of \$12.42 per hour, which they want to rise to \$16.75.

It says it wants to reach an agreement before the strike is set to begin. “If we have to negotiate every day, nights, weekends, we’ll be there,” Gagnon said. A negotiation blitz is planned for March 27-29.

FIEPQ notes 99 per cent of its members are women.

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