

In an effort to keep you as informed as possible, we have addressed some commonly asked questions regarding the mediation process as it relates to our current negotiations. However, if you have further questions please do not hesitate to reply to this email.

1. What is the process for mediation?

The National Mediation Board (NMB) may become involved in mediation when the parties fail to reach an agreement in direct bargaining. Either party, the Company or the Union may request the NMB's services, or they may become involved on their own. Once the NMB has entered the process, negotiations continue until the board determines that its efforts to mediate have been unsuccessful, at which time it seeks to induce the parties to submit the dispute to Arbitration. If either party refuses arbitration, the board issues a notice stating that the parties have failed to resolve the dispute through mediation. The notice triggers a thirty-day cooling-off period, after which either side may avail itself of Self-Help, which may include an employee strike.

2. Was there a threat to strike made?

No, there are very strict legal guidelines and processes that employees governed under the Railway Labor Act must follow in order to strike or threaten to strike.

3. What does entering into mediation mean to our current negotiations?

It means the National Mediation Board has assigned an independent mediator to oversee our negotiations. That supervision includes setting dates and locations for negotiations sessions, actual mediation between the two parties and monitoring progress. However, the mediator has no authority to force an agreement upon the parties or to dictate the terms of settlement.

4. Who filed for mediation?

The Union made the decision to file for mediation based on membership feedback and the Company's response at the last negotiation session.

6. Can you file for mediation for just particular sections of the contract or is it for the entire contract?

No, once you file for mediation the NMB oversees contract negotiations until you have reached a tentative agreement or mediation is deemed unsuccessful as outlined above in question 1.

7. Has the committee tried to resolve the dispute?

Your negotiations committee has worked tirelessly to develop reasonable proposals based on membership feedback but unsupervised talks had come to an impasse. Therefore, the Union felt it was necessary to file for mediation and enter into supervision and have exercised our right to do so.

10. Did the entire negotiating committee agree that mediation was the best option at this point?

Yes, we agreed unanimously that we are doing the right thing by standing our ground in negotiations and pursuing our positions through the mediation process.

5. What happens next?

Now that the Union has filed for mediation, the NMB appointed Victoria Gray, as our mediator. She will set the locations and dates for the next sessions. We will send out updates as soon as we have information regarding negotiations.

It is now more important than ever that we stand together in solidarity. These negotiations will have a profound and lasting effect. It is our responsibility to defend our collective bargaining rights for our families and ourselves, so that we may maintain and improve our quality of life.