

People First Northumberland speaks out against Community Living strikers

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PEOPLE FIRST
NORTHUMBERLAND
STAND UP FOR INCLUSION

Campbellford/Brighton — “Picketing in front of people’s homes is so wrong, these are people’s homes. This is a safety, privacy issue, and much more.”

That is one of many statements made in a press release issued by People First of Ontario, People First of Canada with statements as well from People First of Northumberland in response to the action of strikers from Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) Local 316.

The union called a strike at 12:01 a.m. on Wednesday, March 22 and picketers have attracted a lot of attention on the streets of the towns the strikers have walked with placards to voice their concerns.

They have gathered in front of homes of people supported by Community Living Campbellford/Brighton.

People First of Northumberland, which covers Campbellford/Brighton, has denounced the strike as has its umbrella organizations stating: “Picketing is morally wrong ... people are people, this strike has affected so many persons’ homes.”

President of People First Northumberland Jennifer Grol said: “We would like to see them get back to work. Picketing should not be happening in front of people’s homes, this is disrespectful; the union should picket the main offices.”

In fact, the strikers have been doing that as well, marching with placards in front of the offices at 65 Bridget St. East. Campbellford.

President of People First of Canada Kory Earle stated: “Just because a person has a disability does not mean they should be treated differently than anyone else in the community. I get that there may be issues between staff and management, but it’s completely unfair that people receiving supports are in the middle of this. Please show respect for the people you work for and take your disagreement away from their homes.”

President of People First of Ontario Richard Ruston, said: “I believe that the picketing is morally wrong, people are people, this strike has affected so many persons’ in the homes. This is an emotional time for the person’s who rely on support from their workers. This is plain wrong and the picketing must stop. People First will continue to be on the side of the persons.

“For someone labelled with an intellectual disability, these kinds of actions can have a lasting effect. Labour issues that result in a strike are between an employer and an employee. Eventually, an agreement will be made, and everyone will go back to business as usual.”

by [Sue Dickens](#)