

Security officers strike today

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Just after 4:00 a.m. this morning, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 26 security officers reached a tentative agreement with American Security, one of seven firms whose security officer workers are represented by the union. The remaining six employers would not agree to the tentative deal, however, precipitating a one day strike today from 6am to 2pm. American Security is the market leader in the Twin Cities. Due to the tentative agreement, security officers will not be striking against American Security.

Security officers allege unfair labor practices by their employers. Contractors providing security services to Wells Fargo, U.S. Bank and Target, and other large corporate businesses walked away from negotiations before reaching an agreement with 2,000 security officers that would create stable, full-time jobs, labor representatives said.

"Going on strike is a huge sacrifice – none of us want to do this," said Kevin Chavis, a security officer subcontracted by AlliedBarton for Wells Fargo Center. "But it feels like if we don't act, there's not going to be any middle class left. All Minnesotans need fair wages and affordable health care for our families. As a Minnesota company, American Security was able to step up and take care of Minnesotans – the others should follow their lead."

SEIU Local 26 security officers and janitors voted on February 9 to authorize a strike. After negotiations that lasted more than 31 hours this weekend, 4,000 Local 26 janitors came to a tentative agreement with their employers. Employers came back to the table with security officers Tuesday afternoon; after 14 hours, security officers now have a tentative agreement with American Security; the remaining employers – G4S, AlliedBarton, Securitas, Viking Security, ABM Security, Whelan – have yet to reach an agreement with security officers. The members have been working without a contract since December 31.

A public picket line will be in place at Wells Fargo Center, 90 South 7th Street, Minneapolis. Security officers will picket at additional locations throughout the Twin Cities metro at various points during the day.