Translation from Finnish
Legally binding only in Finnish and Swedish
Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Finland

Act on Mediation in Labour Disputes and Conditions for Certain Forms of Industrial Action

(420/1962; amendments up to 307/2025 included)

By decision of Parliament, the following is enacted:

Chapter 1
National Conciliator, conciliators and conciliation boards (354/2009)

Section 1 (354/2009)
Purpose and scope of application (247/2024)

There shall be the office of a National Conciliator for the purpose of promoting the functioning of the labour market and providing mediation in labour disputes. In addition, a sufficient number of part-time conciliators may be appointed. Provisions concerning the appointment of the National Conciliator and the National Conciliator's deputies, qualification requirements for the National Conciliator, and the appointment of conciliators, requirements for appointment as a conciliator and conciliators' terms of office are laid down by government decree.

A conciliation board may be appointed for a particular conciliation duty. The conciliation board is chaired by the National Conciliator or a part-time conciliator. Provisions on appointment of the conciliation board are laid down by government decree. (816/2024)

Provisions are laid down in this Act on the mediation of labour disputes as well as on the conditions for certain forms of industrial action. The provisions of this Act concerning associations of employers also apply to other parties to collective agreements representing employers. (307/2025)

Section 2 (1198/1987)

Section 2 was repealed by Act 1198/1987.

Section 3 (354/2009)
Duties of the National Conciliator (247/2024)

The National Conciliator shall have an office attached to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. The office is headed by the National Conciliator. Provisions concerning the appointment and engagement of the National Conciliator's office staff are issued by government decree.

The National Conciliator shall:

1) in cooperation with the labour market organisations, endeavour to further the relationships between employers and employees, public officials and local government officials and their associations; (307/2025)

2) at the request of the parties, chair negotiations for the conclusion of a collective agreement or appoint a conciliator to chair such negotiations;

3) direct conciliation in labour disputes throughout the country and, when necessary, appoint a conciliator to discharge a particular conciliation duty either independently or as an assistant to the National Conciliator;

4) where necessary, chair the conciliation board or assign a conciliator to serve as chair; (816/2024)

5) carry out the other duties entrusted to the National Conciliator by the Government. (816/2024)

Section 4 (354/2009)

Section 4 was repealed by Act 354/2009.

Section 5 (354/2009)
Duties of conciliators (247/2024)

Conciliators shall discharge such duties as may be entrusted to them by the National Conciliator under section 3.

Section 6
Disqualification of conciliators (247/2024)

The provisions governing the disqualification of judges shall apply to the disqualification of conciliators.

Chapter 2
Implementation of work stoppages and conditions for certain forms of industrial action (247/2024)

Section 7 (354/2009)
Notice of work stoppage (247/2024)

It shall not be permissible for a work stoppage to be undertaken, commenced or extended in connection with a labour dispute unless the office of the National Conciliator and the other party to the dispute have been given written notice at least two weeks in advance indicating the causes of the intended stoppage or the extension of the stoppage, the date of its commencement and its scope. The party giving such notice may postpone the commencement or extension of the intended action until a later date than is stated in the notice or restrict such action to a more limited field only with the consent of the other party.

Solidarity action or political industrial action implemented as a work stoppage may not be undertaken or expanded unless the organiser of the work stoppage, no later than seven days prior to the commencement date of the work stoppage or its expansion, gives written notice of the information referred to in subsection 1 to the office of the National Conciliator and, when the obligation to maintain industrial peace is in force, also to the other party to the collective agreement and also, in respect of solidarity action, to the employer that is the target of the action, regardless of the obligation to maintain industrial peace. The party giving the notice may postpone or limit the industrial action, in the manner referred to in subsection 1, only with the consent of the employer or association of employees to which the notice of industrial action was given. (247/2024)

Section 8
Postponement of work stoppage (247/2024)

Where a labour dispute is intended to give rise to a work stoppage or the extension of the same that is considered, in the light of its scope or the nature of the sector involved, to affect essential functions of society or to prejudice the general interest to a considerable extent, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment may, at the proposal of the conciliator or conciliation board

involved, and with the object of reserving sufficient time for mediation, prohibit the intended stoppage or its extension or commencement for a maximum of fourteen days from the announced date of its commencement. In the case of a labour dispute over the terms of employment of public officials, the Ministry may, for special reasons, at the proposal of the conciliator or conciliation board involved, extend its prohibition of the industrial action for an additional seven days at most. The parties shall be notified of the prohibition at least three days prior to the date on which the industrial action was intended to commence, or, in the latter case, before the expiry of the prohibition period. (354/2009)

Neither party shall be permitted, without the consent of the other party, to commence an intended work stoppage or extend such a stoppage after more than three days have elapsed from the end of the prohibition period. The date of commencement of the industrial action shall always be notified to the conciliator and to the other party at least three days before the prohibition period ends.

Section 8a (247/2024)
Restrictions on solidarity action

Industrial action to support the demands made in another labour dispute (*solidarity action*) may not be implemented outside the obligation to maintain industrial peace when the industrial action supported seeks an objective other than a collective agreement and the solidarity action is to be considered disproportionate in the manner referred to in subsection 2 or 3.

Solidarity action is to be considered disproportionate when:

1) the employer's service or production activities are restricted beyond those activities that are in service of or benefit the employer subject to the main dispute; and

2) the restriction causes the employer whose employees take part in the solidarity action or its contractual partner harmful consequences that, given the circumstances, cannot be deemed reasonable.

When solidarity action is implemented in order to show support without such action having an immediate effect on the activities of the employer that is subject to the main dispute, the solidarity action may not cause harmful consequences that are disproportionate relative to the main dispute.

Solidarity action when the obligation to maintain industrial peace is in force is subject to section 8a of the Collective Agreements Act (436/1946).

Section 8b (247/2024)
Industrial action directed against political decision-making

Political industrial action refers to industrial action aimed at influencing political decision-making at the supranational, national, regional or local levels.

Political industrial action implemented as a work stoppage may not continue after 24 hours have elapsed from the commencement of the work stoppage. In addition, the work stoppage shall be arranged in such a way that it does not cause any disruption in production activities beforehand or afterwards, provided that such disruptions can reasonably be avoided by the means available to the party implementing the action. However, this obligation does not preclude the implementation of a political work stoppage.

Political industrial action implemented in a form other than a work stoppage may last no longer than two weeks.

Political industrial action may not be implemented when the implementing association, within 12 months, de facto continues political industrial action organised by it earlier in order to achieve the same objective.

Political industrial action when the obligation to maintain industrial peace is in force is subject to section 8b of the Collective Agreements Act.

Section 8c (307/2025)
Right to take industrial action in public-service employment relationships

The provisions laid down in section 7, subsection 2 and sections 8a and 8b above do not apply to public-service employment relationships. The right to take industrial action in public-service employment relationships is subject to the provisions of section 8 of the Act on Collective Agreements for Public Officials in Central Government (664/1970), section 8 of the Act on Collective Agreements for Municipal and Wellbeing Services County Officials (669/1970), section 50 of the Act on the Public Officials of Parliament (1197/2003), section 45 of the Act on the Public Officials of the Bank of Finland (1166/1998) and section 8 of the Act on Collective Agreements for Public Officials in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (968/1974). The provisions laid down in sections 8d–8g of this Act also apply.

Section 8d (307/2025)
Safeguarding essential functions during industrial action

When implementing industrial action, the associations of employees, public officials and local government officials shall, by means of essential work or limitation of the industrial action, ensure that the industrial action does not directly, concretely and seriously jeopardise:

1) intensive care and care in intensive monitoring units, emergency care, first-response care, deliveries and childbirth, treatment of illnesses, inpatient care, ongoing care or pharmacotherapy or any other care or treatment comparable to those referred to above that is vital to safeguarding the life or health of persons, or related examinations, sample collection, supply and provision of medicinal products and the performance of necessary support functions without which the aforementioned care and treatment essential to life and health cannot be provided in a patient-safe manner;

2) home care, housing services, the functioning of child protective services and emergency social services as well as any other social welfare service comparable to those referred to above that is vital to safeguarding the life or health of persons;

3) tasks of the police, rescue services, maritime rescue or the Emergency Response Centre relating to urgent emergency response calls, maintenance of public order and safety, patient transport or the prevention of accidents that are vital to safeguarding the life or health of persons or the performance of tasks necessary to the life or health of persons in closed facilities;

4) the necessary maintenance, repair or monitoring of machinery, equipment and other tangible property essential to the conditions for continued pursuit of economic activity in order to prevent damage to these or to ensure the safe shutdown and ramp-up of facilities;

5) the performance of tasks necessary in order to prevent environmental damage in industrial facilities, power plants, waterworks or waste processing plants, wastewater treatment plants, agricultural production units or transports of dangerous goods or the performance of other tasks necessary in order to prevent environmental damage;

6) animal welfare in such a way that animals would be caused pain or suffering due to the prevention of their necessary care, veterinary services organised by the municipality, farm relief services, transports or the appropriate killing of animals;

7) the performance of the tasks of the Defence Forces, the Border Guard, the police or other actors responsible for similar tasks that are necessary in order to safeguard Finland’s territorial integrity and to maintain border security;

8) the performance of tasks relating to preparations for decision-making, access to information and security that are necessary to the functioning of the State's highest decision-making;

9) the performance of production, distribution or transport tasks or traffic control tasks that are needed in order to ensure the availability of the energy, heat, water, medicines and medical devices, foodstuffs or fuels that are necessary to the life or health of persons;

10) the activities of the police in investigating or preventing very serious criminal offences;

11) the performance of the tasks of the court system or prosecution service that are by law to be attended to as a matter of urgency and the related enforcement;

12) the performance of maintenance or servicing or transports of cash and valuables that are necessary to safeguard the functioning of digital payments or the availability of cash;

13) the functioning of security networks, radar installations and other electronic surveillance systems, authentication services or other ICT services or information systems that are necessary to the work of the police, Defence Forces, Border Guard, rescue services, maritime rescue, the Emergency Services Centre or other authorities responsible for the safety and security of society or other work referred to in paragraphs 1–12.

Industrial action implemented in violation of the obligation laid down in subsection 1 above is prohibited unless the consequences referred to in subsection 1 can reasonably be avoided by the means available to the employer. Having been informed of the industrial action, the employer shall without delay attempt to discuss and clarify with the association of employees, public officials or local government officials any uncertainties relating to the limits of the action or to essential work.

Where, in the employer's estimation, the means referred to in subsection 2 are not available, the employer and the association of employees, public officials or local government officials shall discuss how to avoid the consequences referred to in subsection 1 during the industrial action. In order to initiate these discussions, the employer shall inform the association without delay that a necessary function will be jeopardised. In the discussions, the employer shall provide the association with sufficient information on the need for essential personnel and the grounds for the need as well as on the means available to the employer to avoid the consequences.

Section 8e (307/2025)
Interim order of prohibition of industrial action in violation of duty of care

On the application of the employer that is the target of the industrial action, the court may issue to an association of employees, public officials or local government officials an interim order prohibiting the commencement or continuation of an industrial action on pain of a fine when the employer, having first sought to discuss or discussed limitation of the industrial action or essential work with the association of employees, public officials or local government officials, demonstrates that it is probable that:

1) the industrial action will have consequences referred to in section 8d, subsection 1, which cannot reasonably be avoided by the means available to the employer.

2) the urgency of the matter requires the issuance of an interim prohibition in order to prevent the consequences referred to in paragraph 1.

The application may not be granted without reserving the opposing party an opportunity to be heard.

At the request of the applicant, the court may, when necessary, immediately when the application for an interim order of prohibition has become pending, without hearing the opposing party postpone or suspend the industrial action, on pain of a fine, until the matter concerning the interim order of prohibition has been resolved. Such decisions shall not be subject to requests for judicial review.

The interim order of prohibition may only concern the kinds of tasks or functions subject to the industrial action, the performance of which, based on the evidence put forward in the case, shall be considered necessary in order to prevent consequences referred to in section 8d, subsection 1.

The interim order of prohibition may also be issued before the action for order of prohibition referred to in section 8f becomes pending.

The provisions of chapter 7, section 4, subsection 1; section 5, subsections 1 and 3; section 6, subsections 1 and 3; and sections 8–14 of the Code of Judicial Procedure as well as those of chapter 8, sections 4, 9 and 12 of the Enforcement Code (705/2007) concerning applications for and issuance and enforcement of precautionary measures shall apply to applications for, issuance and enforcement of interim orders of prohibition.

Section 8f (307/2025)
Order of prohibition of industrial action in violation of duty of care

Following an action brought by the employer that is the target of the industrial action, the court may issue an order prohibiting an association of employees, public officials or local government officials from implementing or continuing industrial action in violation of section 8d. The court shall consider the action as a matter of urgency.

The order of prohibition may only concern the kinds of tasks or functions subject to the industrial action, the performance of which, based on the evidence put forward in the case, shall be considered necessary in order to prevent consequences referred to in section 8d, subsection 1.

Section 8g (307/2025)
Deviation from notice of industrial action

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 7, subsection 1 and section 8, subsection 2, an association of employees, public officials or local government officials may, without the other party's consent, postpone the commencement of an intended work stoppage, limit it from the notice of work stoppage given or cancel the work stoppage when the employer has applied for the interim order of prohibition referred to in section 8e or such an order has been issued by the court or the employer has brought an action referred to in section 8f for an order prohibiting the industrial action or the court, pursuant to that section, has issued on order prohibiting the implementation or continuation of the industrial action.

The association of employees, public officials or local government officials shall inform the employer three days prior to the commencement of the work stoppage of any postponement or limitation of the work stoppage. However, in such a case the work stoppage may not commence before the expiration of the time limit laid down in section 7 and section 8, subsection 1. The time limit laid down in section 7, subsection 2, shall not apply to public-service employment relationships, however.

Chapter 3
Conciliation

Section 9 (354/2009)
Commencement of conciliation

Having received the notice under section 7, the National Conciliator or a conciliator appointed by the National Conciliator shall take such measures as deemed appropriate to mediate the dispute.

The National Conciliator may also take appropriate action at other times when learning of a labour dispute that endangers industrial peace.

Section 9a (109/2023)
Voluntary conciliation (247/2024)

In addition to the provisions laid down in section 9, the National Conciliator or a conciliator appointed by the National Conciliator may, at the request of a party or parties to the labour dispute, initiate voluntary conciliation when all parties agree to it.

The conciliator shall, without delay, communicate the request referred to in subsection 1 to the parties that have not requested conciliation. The parties shall be asked to give their consent to the initiation of the conciliation proceedings and they shall be given an opportunity to submit a written statement in consequence of the request.

The conciliator shall consider, on the basis of the request and statements of the parties, whether to initiate conciliation proceedings.

With the exception of the provisions of section 10, subsection 3, the provisions of sections 10–12 on conciliation shall also apply to voluntary conciliation.

Section 10 (109/2023)
Conciliation procedure (247/2024)

When the conciliator deems it appropriate or when a party requests it or when the conciliator has decided to initiate voluntary conciliation in accordance with section 9a and the parties have consented to it, the conciliator shall invite the parties to negotiate. The conciliator shall chair the negotiations and determine the manner and order in which the disputes are to be discussed.

A party shall attend or send its representative to the negotiating session convened by the conciliator and, before the negotiations begin, submit to the conciliator, within a reasonable time limit set by the conciliator, a written account of the subject of the dispute, its content, the demands made in the case and any other information considered necessary by the conciliator. A party may impose the condition that the information provided may not be disclosed to others without its consent.

Before or during the negotiations, the conciliator may ask the parties to consider whether the commencement of the intended industrial action should be postponed until the outcome of the conciliation has been determined.

The conciliator may decide to end voluntary conciliation under section 9a if it becomes evident during the negotiations that it will not be possible to reach a settlement.

Voluntary conciliation ends if a party gives a notice referred to in section 7 on the implementation of a work stoppage.

Section 11 (816/2024)
Achieving a settlement

In the discharge of conciliation duties the conciliator, having thoroughly reviewed the dispute and the factors materially impacting on its assessment as well the demands of the parties, shall endeavour to induce the parties to determine the precise matters in dispute and to limit them to as few as possible, and shall seek to bring about a settlement mainly on the basis of the parties' own proposals and offers, suggesting such concessions and adjustments as appropriateness and fairness seem to require.

In order to safeguard the overall interests of the national economy, the conciliator shall discharge the conciliation duties in a way that ensures the wage formation process operates effectively and the functioning of the labour market is not jeopardised.

Section 12
Consultation in conciliation (247/2024)

In connection with the conciliation proceedings, conciliators may, on their own initiative, consult experts or other persons whom the conciliator may require for the purpose of obtaining information; if they so request, the consulted persons shall be paid such compensation from state funds as the conciliator considers reasonable.

The expenses incurred by the parties in connection with the conciliation shall be borne by the parties themselves.

Section 13
Draft settlement and suspension of conciliation proceedings (247/2024)

Where the conciliator is unable to settle the labour dispute by means of negotiation or otherwise, the conciliator may, in compliance with the provisions of section 11, submit to the parties a written draft settlement and invite them to accept it within a short time limit set by the conciliator. The draft settlement shall not be made public without the conciliator's consent until the conciliation proceedings are successfully completed or suspended. (816/2024)

Where the parties do not accept the draft settlement, the conciliator shall consider whether the proceedings should be continued or suspended.

When the conciliator decides that the necessary conditions for submitting the draft settlement mentioned in subsection 1 above are not present, the conciliator may suspend the conciliation proceedings.

The provisions of this section also apply to draft settlements submitted by conciliation boards. (816/2024)

Section 14
Recording settlement terms (247/2024)

If a settlement is reached, the terms shall be entered in the record kept by the conciliator.

Section 15 (354/2009)
Mediation and settlement of labour disputes by specific bodies (247/2024)

Where the parties have set up a specific body for the purpose of mediating or settling a labour dispute, this shall be communicated to the Office of the National Conciliator. No steps to conciliate such a dispute may be taken unless the body has failed in its efforts to settle the matter or the circumstances indicate that it will not undertake or succeed in its task.

Chapter 4
Miscellaneous provisions

Section 16 (109/2023)
Legal disputes (247/2024)

This Act shall not apply to any dispute concerning a collective agreement that calls for consideration by the Labour Court or which, under the terms of the agreement, shall be submitted to arbitration, with the exception of disputes considered in voluntary conciliation under section 9a.

Having received evidence that this Act does not apply to a dispute on the basis of the provisions of this section, the conciliator shall inform the parties of this.

Section 17 (354/2009)
Penal provisions (247/2024)

A person who violates the prohibition laid down in section 7 or section 8, subsection 2 or issued under section 8, subsection 1, shall be sentenced to a fine for *breach of the Act on Mediation in Labour Disputes and Conditions for Certain Forms of Industrial Action*. (247/2024)

The prosecutor may only bring charges for violation of the prohibition laid down in section 7 of this Act when the injured party prefers the matter for criminal charges. (477/2011)

Section 18 (799/1989)
Non-disclosure obligation (247/2024)

Conciliators shall make no unauthorised disclosure of any trade secret that they have learned in their office or discharge of duties, nor of any matter communicated to the conciliator subject to the condition mentioned in the section 10, subsection 2. (609/2018)

Provisions on the penalty for breach of the non-disclosure obligation of public officials and employees of public-sector entities are laid down in chapter 40, section 5 of the Criminal Code.

Section 18a (247/2024)
Compensation

Associations of employees or employers that implement industrial action in violation of section 8a or 8b shall pay compensation instead of damages. The amount of the compensation shall be not less than EUR 10,000 and not more than EUR 150,000.

The party entitled to claim the compensation is the employer or the employee that is the target of the industrial action. Where there is more than one party claiming compensation on the basis of the same industrial action, the total amount of the compensation ordered shall be not less than EUR 10,000 and not more than EUR 150,000.

When determining the amount of the compensation, account shall be taken of all factors and circumstances of the matter coming to light, such as the magnitude of the harm, the degree of blameworthiness, any cause for the violation attributable to the other party, and the size of the

association and undertaking concerned. For special reasons, the compensation may be adjusted or waived.

The action to claim the compensation shall be filed with the district court that has jurisdiction over the respondent's domicile.

The right to compensation expires if no action is brought within six months of the end of the calendar month in which the right to compensation arose.

Compensation when the obligation to maintain industrial peace is in force is subject to the Collective Agreements Act.

Section 18b (247/2024)
Adjustment of compensation

The minimum and maximum amount of the compensation provided for in section 18a, subsection 1 above shall be adjusted in accordance with the changes in the value of money every three years by government decree.

Section 19
Executive assistance (247/2024)

The authorities shall be obliged, when so requested by a conciliator, to provide the conciliator with any executive assistance needed for the discharge of the duties under this Act.

Section 20 (354/2009)
Fees, expenses and exemption from fees

The remuneration payable to a conciliator and to the chairperson and members of a conciliation board and any expenses incurred in connection with conciliation proceedings shall be paid from state funds in accordance with the grounds for remuneration specified by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.

All documents drawn up or given by a conciliator shall be exempt from any fees.

Section 21 (354/2009)

Section 21 was repealed by Act 354/2009.

Section 22

Entry into force (247/2024)

This Act enters into force on 1 October 1962 and repeals the Act on respecting conciliation in labour disputes (570/1946).