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Court security officers vote to strike across England and Wales

PCS members working for the private contractor OCS have voted overwhelmingly in favour of strike action, which could close courts across England and Wales.

About 500 Public Services and Commercial Services (PCS) union members working for OCS as court security officers on the HM Courts & Tribunals Service estate have rejected an insulting pay offer and voted for industrial action on a margin of 91.34%.

OCS had threatened to challenge the last ballot result but despite their obstructive approach, PCS members have voted with an even stronger mandate to take strike action.

The latest pay offer tabled by OCS would give court security officers a mere 38p per hour above the minimum wage, despite OCS being an accredited Real Living Wage employer.

The strike action could affect all HMCTS courts in England and Wales where OCS hold the security contract. The timing and duration, however, are yet to be determined and will be announced soon.

Mark Serwotka, PCS General Secretary, says:

"It is completely unacceptable that the vast majority of our members working for OCS are experiencing serious financial hardship.

"Yet attempts by the employer to frustrate the balloting process have not weakened the resolve of these hard-working, dedicated security officers to fight for a reasonable pay offer that addresses poverty pay."

"This strike action will be a powerful reminder of how fundamental their work is to keeping courts open and safe for the public across England and Wales."