



Frequently Asked Questions: Solidarity Breaks

The CAPS Solidarity Breaks are a new action for State Scientists to participate in. The action will be to utilize your regular break period with other State Scientist colleagues on Tuesdays. You are entitled to a regular break period every shift, pursuant to California Labor Law.

These breaks are meant to be taken together with other State Scientist colleagues on Tuesdays to stand in solidarity with the CAPS Bargaining Team who are meeting with the State on Tuesdays to help us win a better contract.

Coordination of CAPS Solidarity Breaks can be easy. See the materials CAPS has produced [here](#) to help you get a group together to stand together!

Below are some frequently asked questions to get you started in organizing and participating in this CAPS Action.

- 1. What is it?**
 - a. Solidarity Breaks are being used as an action to help CAPS win a better contract with the State of California.

- 2. Why is CAPS encouraging Solidarity Breaks?**
 - a. Solidarity Breaks will bring a visual aspect to worksites of the important work that State Scientists do day in and day out. Additionally, the visual impact makes noise all on its own to management and the Administration.

- 3. What CAPS Solidarity Breaks are NOT?**
 - a. Solidarity Breaks are not disruptive to the normal business of your colleagues, nor should they supersede your normal duties on a weekly basis. Solidarity breaks are not personal time, you do not have to take leave to participate in these short breaks.

- 4. Can I get in trouble for participating?**
 - a. As long as you follow the Best Practices on Solidarity Breaks found [here](#), you should not find that you receive any kind of counseling or corrective action.

- 5. Where do I hold my break?**
 - a. CAPS encourages you to hold your break on-site in the breakroom, out front of your building, or other appropriate location where you are not hidden, but are also not disruptive to the work taking place on site. Taking a break at your desk doesn't have the same visual effect!



6. Who else should come with me?

- a. Encourage your other State Scientist colleagues to join you. Welcome folks from other bargaining units, but understand that this is meant to support CAPS at the bargaining table.

7. Do we hold signs?

- a. If you have a CAPS-provided sign, feel free to use it! Do not create signs with the official CAPS logo on them and post them yourselves. The CAPS logo can be used only on CAPS-approved signs.

8. What do I wear?

- a. Your CAPS Green T-shirt! Bring your CAPS Buttons and pins too.

9. When should I take a CAPS Solidarity Break?

- a. Anytime on Tuesday during your regularly provided for break period pursuant to State Law. Try to coordinate with your colleagues, but if you can't coordinate, still take your break! Again, do not use the Solidarity Break to miss pre-scheduled meetings or circumvent your duties, as this could lead to disciplinary action.

10. Who leads? Who do I talk to in order to organize my worksite?

- a. You are encouraged to organize solidarity breaks! If you need assistance coordinating, contact CAPS (CAPS@capsscienitists.org) and we can put you in contact with a CAT member in your area. If you don't have a CAT member at your worksite, then you are encouraged to [join the CAT!](#)

11. What if I have a meeting?

- a. Make sure to attend all meetings and complete responsibilities of your position before participating.

12. What if no one else wants to join me?

- a. That's ok! This is a new action – it may take time to gain steam. Continue to encourage your colleagues and take your CAPS Solidarity Break. You may find that by standing strong, others will join you! Also, CAPS created some colleague-to-colleague talking points you can use as a resource [here](#).

13. Can I place a CAPS Solidarity Break on my work calendar?

- a. Yes!



14. Do I request the time from my supervisor?

- a. Follow the typical process you would when taking your regular break on a daily basis. If you normally inform your supervisor that you are going on break, continue to do so. You do not need to take leave to use your break.

15. What do I say to inquiring management/supervisor(s)?

- a. “As you may know, the CAPS Bargaining Team is at the bargaining table with the State’s Team to win a better contract for rank-and-file scientists. I am taking a CAPS Solidarity Break to show that I support my Bargaining Team and am participating in actions to illustrate to the Administration that CAPS Scientists need to be valued via compensation that recognizes the important work that we do. I am taking this break during my normal break time, just with my colleagues so I can show my support!”

16. What if I’m remote on Tuesdays?

- a. Mark your breaks on your calendar to show you’re taking a remote Solidarity Break. Be sure to participate in other ways on days when you’re remote – wear your T-shirt, sport your [CAPS Virtual Background](#), and join your coworkers for a break on a virtual meeting platform. If you are using the State’s virtual meeting platform, remember that the State can view what is posted in the chat and files shared via the platform.