
What is a Union?

A Union is an organization that represents employees and deals with management on all issues concerning wages, benefits and conditions of employment. **This gives you, the employees, the power of many ... not simply the power of one.**

The **United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW)**, affiliated with the AFL/CIO, is the largest private sector Union, with over 1.4 million members.



Okay, Now what?

You've got the basics. Still want to learn more? Call us with your questions or for any additional information. **Your calls are strictly confidential.**

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The **GOOD NEWS** on

FORMING A UNION



What is an authorization card?

It's a card that shows you want to be represented by a union, and authorizes the UFCW to represent you. It will also be used as proof to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), that a majority of employees wish to be represented for the purpose of collective bargaining.

How many signatures does it take to get an election?

The NLRB requires a minimum of 30% to file a request for an election. The UFCW normally requires 65% to 70% before we file a petition, since it takes a majority to win.

Who sees the cards and signature?

Only the UFCW and the NLRB will see the signatures.

How long does the process take?

The NLRB likes to schedule an election within 42 days after receiving the petition. The time it takes to file is up to you and your co-workers.

What is Collective Bargaining?

Basically, it's the process of negotiating a contract after you have voted to form a union. You, the employees, submit proposals based on what is important to you! You choose a negotiating committee of your peers and with the Union Representatives bargain with management on all working conditions. This includes wages, job descriptions, insurance and retirement benefits, etc. When your negotiating committee of peers has reached a tentative agreement, then all bargaining unit employees will vote to accept or reject the contract.

Would my Employer be bound by the contract?

Yes, once the contract has been voted on and accepted, this contract becomes a legal document and is protected by the Federal Government.

How do we form a Union?

After the UFCW has a majority of signatures on authorization cards, there are three ways employees can become unionized.

1. The UFCW will request a secret ballot election by filing a petition with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). The NLRB is an agency of the United States Federal Government. This is, by far, the most common way to become unionized.
2. Your Employer has the option of voluntarily recognizing the union. This is very unlikely.
3. Finally, if your Employer commits a large number of unfair labor practices, which would make it impossible to have a fair election, the NLRB can issue a "bargaining order" requiring your employer to recognize the union. This is the least common method of organizing.

Who will conduct our election?

An agent from the National Labor Relations Board will conduct your secret ballot election. No one, including the board agent, will ever know how you voted, unless you tell them!

How many votes does it take to win?

A simple majority of the votes cast, that is 50% plus one, on the people who vote. For example, if 100 employees vote, 51 are needed to win. Anything less and you lose.

Who is eligible to vote?

All full time and regular part time employees that are not working in management will be able to vote. The NLRB has specific criteria to determine who is a "true" manager and what makes up a bargaining unit.

How would a union contract affect my job?

A contract between your employer and you, the employee, would spell out the terms of your employment, what is expected from you, and what you can expect from them. Right now, your employer is under NO obligation to you. **Job description, wages, benefits, etc. can change at any moment with or without notice. With a union contract, these benefits would be guaranteed in writing!** This legally binding agreement provides for a fair work place, and a more secure lifestyle for you and your family.

Will we have the same contract as other workers the UFCW represents?

No! Your contract will be designed by you and tailored to you and your co-workers' specific needs.

Can my Employer harass or fire me for supporting the Union?

No! Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act protects your rights to form, join, or assist in forming a union at your work place. The law protects your rights and ensures that you will not be treated disparately for your union activity. You are allowed to discuss the union in non-working areas while you and the person or persons you are talking with are **on break or off the clock.**

What about strikes?

If, during the collective bargaining process, the UFCW and your employer do not reach an agreement, the employees have the option to accept the final offer, attempt to bargain more (usually with a Federal Mediator Involved) or vote to strike. The employees must vote to strike before any further action is taken.



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