

What is organizing?

Simply stated, it is the formation of an organization. In the workplace, it is the formation of a committee that is willing to fight for workplace standards. Eventually, the committee would pick its leaders and challenge other employees to vote as to whether or not they would like a union to represent them as a bargaining unit. One person is an individual, 2 people make an organization; this is organizing.

When a “community of interest” of 1 or more employees band together to stand up or fight for safety standards, better workplace conditions, fairer pay or hiring structure, etc. they are by law engaging in “protected concerted activity” or put another way, activity that is protected by The Constitution of the United States. When a boss treats you like you’re less-than-human, you have rights. Unionization of the workplace is considered to be protected concerted activity under the 1st Amendment.

If you would like more information on forming an organizing committee in your workplace or have questions about how we can help, please contact us through this website and we will respond. All information that you provide to us about your work place or personal information will be kept confidential.

Why form or join a union?

People these days spend more of their lives working than they do enjoying a hobby, raising a family, or the pursuit of happiness. Worker’s rights in construction fields are among the most disregarded in all of the professional fields. It is also among the most dangerous work that a person can do to earn a living. When workers do not stand up for each other in the field and the bosses put employees in harm’s way the resulting death or injury can be devastating to entire families. When a worker dies or gets permanently injured on a building site, no one talks about how heroic that person was for doing their job. Having a union represent you on a worksite creates an environment that is less hostile to the worker’s safety and hold employers accountable to the laws and standards that govern safety, pay, and compensation for injury. If your boss doesn’t pay you what you agreed to, or pays you behind schedule, or claims no responsibility for you if you are injured, what do you do? Leave and find another job? Sue them for your money? Having representation holds bosses and owners accountable to the law and to the Agreement without the threat of intimidation.

Membership Benefits

Retirement plan, Health care, & Professional development training: Being in the union and working under a collective bargaining agreement gives access to all of these things along with the feeling that your team members or coworkers have your back.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2015-2016, union wage earners had a weekly wage that was \$356 dollars higher than non-union workers. $\$356 \times 52$ weeks adds up to more than \$18,000.00 per year and this does not include the non-taxed benefits you also earn.

Union people stand up for each other in times of distress at work. With a union, you can address worksite injustice without the fear of losing your job. If you do lose your job you will have opportunity for other work through our hiring hall.

You become part of a legacy of training through apprenticeship classes and on-the-job training. If you become a journeyman, you then become part of the legacy of training the next generation of painter or glazier. The IUPAT has a history that goes back the late 19th century; we are over 100 years old!

If you would like to talk to a representative about benefits, training programs, or organizing your workplace please call our main office (404)366-1144 or fill out the contact card below and an organizer will contact you. Hablamos Español.

Your employer cannot do the following:

1. Attend any union meeting, park across the street from a union meeting, or engage in undercover activity which would indicate that the employees are being kept under surveillance to determine who is and who is not participating in the organizing committee.
2. Tell employees that the company will fire or punish them if they engage in union activity.
3. Lay-off, discharge, or discipline any employee for union activity.
4. Grant employees wage increases, special concessions, or benefits in order to keep the union out.
5. Bar employee-union representatives from soliciting employees' memberships on or off the company property during non-working hours.
6. Ask employees how they intend to vote.
7. Threaten employees with reprisal for participating in union activities. For example, threaten to close the business, curtail operations, or reduce employee benefits.
8. Promise benefits to employees if they reject the union.
9. Announce that the company will not deal with the union.
10. Threaten to close, in fact close, or move the company in order to avoid dealing with the union.
11. Ask employees whether or not they belong to a union, or have signed up for union representation.
12. Make anti-union statements or act in a way that might show preference for non-union employees.
13. Make distinctions between union and non-union employees when assigning overtime work or desirable work.
14. Purposely team up non-union employees and keep them apart from those supporting the union.
15. Transfer workers on the basis of union affiliates or activities.
16. Choose employees to be laid off in order to weaken the union's strength or discourage union membership.
17. Discriminate against union people when disciplining employees.
18. By nature of work assignments, create conditions intended to get rid of an employee because of union activity.
19. Fail to grant a scheduled benefit or wage increase because of union activity.
20. Take action that adversely affects an employee's job or pay rate because of union activity.
21. Threaten workers or coerce them in an attempt to influence their vote.
22. Threaten a union member through a third party.
23. Promise employees a reward or a future benefit if they decide "No union."
24. Tell employees overtime work (and premium pay) will be discontinued if the company is unionized.

25. Say unionization will do away with vacations or other benefits and privileges in effect.
26. Say that unionization will force the company to lay off employees.
27. Promise employees promotions, raises, or other benefits if they get out of the union or refrain from joining the union.
28. Start a petition or circular against the union or encourage or take part in its circulation if started by employees.
29. Urge employees to try induce others to oppose the union or keep out of it.
30. Deviate from company policy for the purposes of getting rid of a union supporter.

These rights are guaranteed under the National Labor Relations Act. Violations of the Act could result in penalties to an employer and back payments of wages lost due to Unfair labor Practices as defined by the NLRA to any employee that is a victim of these practices. Please contact us for more information and what to do if you feel like your rights have been violated.