



Washington
State Labor
Council,
AFL-CIO



Know Your Rights

All workers have the right to be safe and protected on the job. All workers have the right to organize. These rights apply to ALL workers, regardless of immigrant status.

All essential workers should have protections during the coronavirus pandemic and in any future health crisis. Protective measures include access to hot water and soap for handwashing, space for 6 feet of social distancing, face masks and other personal protective equipment, regular disinfecting of surfaces and other safeguards to ensure the health and safety of all workers.

If your rights are not being respected, **ORGANIZE!** Your health and safety is a priority. This page gives a basic overview of how you can organize to protect yourself, your coworkers, and your families.

Find out more about your rights from workers' rights organizations, immigrant rights organizations and government agencies that regulate workplaces. If you are in a union, start by talking to your union representative. Here is a list of organizations to contact:

[Labor and industry \(Spanish\)](#)
1-800-547-8367

[Fair Work Center of Washington](#)
1-844-485-1195

[Washington State Labor and Education Research Center Workers Rights Manual](#)

[Washington State Labor Council](#)
wslc@wslc.org

[WA Immigrant Solidarity Network](#)
1-844-724-3737

[National Employment Law Project Toolkit for Worker Safety and Health](#)

Talk and Plan with Your Co-Workers

- ⇒ Identify common concerns by sharing yours and listening to theirs. You have a right to talk about organizing during your breaks. If there is no privacy at work, get contact information so you can reach out to them after work.
- ⇒ Build a list of contacts who may be interested in organizing. If you work for a large employer, reach out to workers in different departments, locations, shifts and ethnic/cultural backgrounds.
- ⇒ Set up time for workers to talk outside of work. If you need to talk on the phone with a group of people you can use difference services.
- ⇒ Develop solutions together. Ask workers to commit to working together. Be clear about how their information will be kept private and who and when it will be shared.

Take Action Together

- ⇒ Share demands with your coworkers.
- ⇒ Ask for a clear commitment of support through voting as a group or signing a commitment card.
- ⇒ After a majority of workers agree with concerns and demands, decide how you will bring your concerns to your employer as a group. There is power in numbers. The more unity you have the stronger you will be.
- ⇒ Some ideas for how to present your demands: present a written petition signed by a majority of workers to the boss.
- ⇒ Write a letter to be signed by both workers and community supporters.
- ⇒ Make complaints to government agencies such as the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries.
- ⇒ Retaliation is possible, stay united and honest about risks.

NEXT STEPS AFTER TAKING ACTION

If your demands are not met, escalate!

- Stay unified! Don't let employers single out individual or divide up the group by offering special benefits to those who stop organizing or share information.
- Work together to decide what actions all workers can take together to show strength and unity.
- Protect individual workers who may be targeted. Contact workers' rights organizations for legal resources. Document any communications or actions by the company.

If your demands are met, celebrate!

- Document the commitments made to workers. Get commitment in writing whenever possible.
- Get a clear timeline for when demands will be met.
- Share information among all workers.
- Inform supporters of your success and thank them.
- Make a plan for workers to stay in contact, to ensure the boss follows through on commitments.