

The Campus Workers Bill of Rights

Our universities, colleges, and higher education systems, like all our public services, should be bedrock democratic institutions in our communities. These institutions are threatened by an economic and political consensus that prioritizes profits before people, and by an agenda that would privatize all public services. This agenda sees workers as just another cost, and diplomas as just another commodity. It is a vision that has led to underfunding, layoffs, and privatization, and it is winning out.

But we know that without campus workers, our campuses don't work—and ours is a different vision. We see our higher education system as important community and statewide institutions that should model the best democratic values and provide powerful education to all those who want it for the betterment of our communities and our state. We believe that at the heart of this vision is a commitment to the dignity and rights of those who make our institutions work, and those who seek to learn—regardless of how much money they make, the color of their skin, their gender identity or their sexual orientation, or where they come from. We know this is something worth fighting for today and for the long haul.

In accordance with our vision, all campus workers have human rights to:

A Living Wage and Just Compensation

We have the right to a base salary high enough to provide for our families to live a decent life without reliance on governmental assistance or private charity, and to salaries that are equitable with wages paid at peer institutions and in private employment.

Job Protection

We have the right to jobs protected from the threat of privatization, outsourcing, and subcontracting.

We have the right to employment that is not “at will,” and to not be terminated except for just cause.

A Right to Organize

We have the right to organize labor unions; to official recognition of our union; and to the ability to “meet and confer” with officials at the departmental, institutional, and state levels on all issues of concern. We have the right to freely conduct meetings on non-working hours; to petition for redress of grievances; to deduct dues from paychecks; and ultimately to bargain collectively in order to protect and advance our collective interests.

Due Process

We have the right to a grievance procedure that includes the right to grieve all matters that can impact safety, evaluations, raises, transfers, layoffs, promotions, and disciplinary actions, and we have the right to representation of our choice at all levels.

Non-Discrimination

We have the right to a workplace free from harassment, exploitation, and discrimination. We have the right to receive fair and equal treatment, opportunities, pay, and benefits regardless of our religion, race, nationality, immigration history, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, disabilities, or political orientation. We have the right to equal pay for equal work.

Adequate Benefits

We have the right to guaranteed comprehensive health care; to an adequate retirement; to paid vacations and/or sabbaticals; to paid parental leave; and to tuition remission or adequate funding for educational opportunities for us and our families, including partner benefits.

Safe Workplaces

We have the right to a safe and secure working environment with adequate training and the proper safety equipment necessary to perform our duties; to timely and effective corrective measures to our health and safety concerns; and to refuse dangerous work when proper safety precautions are not adequately met.

Governance

We have the right to participate in determining the content and direction of the institution, including freely elected representation on governing bodies, and without fear of retaliation for expressing our views.

Universal Inclusion

All higher education employees, regardless of status or job classification, have the right to be treated equally with regard to all of these rights. Adjunct and contingent faculty especially have the right to work without exploitation and to be transitioned to real employment.