

# **YOUR RIGHTS ON THE JOB**

Everyone wants smooth working relationships on the job. But, problems arise in every workplace. As an SEIU member, you have the right to Union protection and representation – rights guaranteed by your contract.

## **When problems arise – talk to your steward**

### **Contract Violation**

If you think that management has violated your rights, or you have questions about work, talk with your steward. You may not be the only one with the problem. Other members may also be experiencing the problem. If this is the case, you and the steward might discuss solutions such as a worksite action or meeting with management to resolve the problem.

If the problems persists, and you or your co-workers' contractual rights have been violated by your boss, you have the right to file a "grievance", which formally addresses your concern. The system used to process it is referred to as the "grievance procedure". Read your contract to find out what the exact procedure and timelines are for your workplace.

If you, your co-workers, and your steward determine that a contract violation has occurred, together you will fill out a "grievance form". If management refuses to settle the grievance, the Local may argue your case before an impartial arbitrator who will make the final ruling. Arbitrators have the power to order an employer to correct the situation

## **Grievance Procedures Have Strict Time Limits. File Promptly.**

### **Grievance Tips**

Not all workplace problems are grievances. Winning a grievance depends on the facts and evidence your Union can collect. Working closely with your co-workers and your steward will improve your chances of success.

An Injury to One is an Injury to All. If it looks like an individual problem, we must ask: Is anyone else affected by this? Collective action will often bring better and more effective results.



## **When In Trouble – Demand Union Representation**

You have the right to representation by your steward or Union Representative during conversations with your boss, which could potentially lead to discipline or termination – a protection enjoyed only by Union members. If you think the conversation is disciplinary in nature, follow these important steps:

***Demand Union Representation.*** You must ask for Union representation before or during the interview. Management does not have to inform you of this right unless your contract requires they inform you.

***Refuse to proceed without Union Representation.*** A Management Representative must be told of your desire for representation. Refusal to cooperate on your part can be viewed as insubordination. If management refuses to allow you representation, stay in the room, but remain silent. Remember, cooperate but do not incriminate.

***Do not make any written or verbal statement of guilt or innocence.*** You cannot be forced to make a statement. The most appropriate response in this situation is to make NO statement – claiming innocence is considered to be a statement.

***Do not waive your right to representation.*** If you proceed in questioning without representation, you may be found to have waived your right to representation and any statement or comment made by you can be used against you.

These important steps do not apply to everyday conversation between members and supervisors regarding regular job duties or work performance.

