

# LEADERS

STEWARDS | LEADERS | ACTIVISTS

# IN ACTION



**THIS BOOK BELONGS TO:**

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**NAME**

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**STORE**

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**CONTACT INFO**

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# YOUR UNION — UFCW 367

## HOW MY UNION WORKS

You are the union. The UFCW 367 Executive Board are all elected members from different stores and locations. The Executive Board meets every month to discuss policies and budgets and has the final say over the direction and resources of UFCW 367. In addition to the Executive Board, there are a President, Secretary-Treasurer and Recording Secretary that are elected by you every three years.

## THE UNION DIFFERENCE

Being in a union gives you a voice on the job. Union members earn about 20% more than non-union workers. They also get to bargain these wages and working conditions with their employer. Union workers have access to affordable health care. Union members earn more vacation, paid leave and retirement security. As a union member you have job security and protections that promote equal treatment in the workplace. A union worker has access to union representation in the event of discipline. UFCW 367 members also have access to a number of valuable member-only benefits including many discounts with our retail partners, scholarships, learning a second language for free, and entirely free college for themselves and their families.

## YOUR UNION CONTRACT

Your union contract is a legally binding document that is bargained between your employer and the union around wages, working conditions, health and retirement benefits, worker rights and much more. At every bargain, there is a Bargaining Team of members, union negotiators and your employer. This process is called collective bargaining. Make sure to read your union contract so you understand the rights and protections that you are entitled to.

## UNION REPRESENTATIVES

Every worksite has a Union Representative. Your Union Representative can help you with questions and problems in your workplace. Union Representatives visit worksites regularly to keep you informed on bargaining and union and worker issues. Your Rep helps to make sure your workplace is safe, and your rights are protected.

# STEWARDS, LEADERS & ACTIVISTS

## STEWARD

A Steward is a member like you, who has been trained to assist their co-workers in their workplace on contract violations, and disciplinary issues. They also update co-workers on bargaining and union issues and are the eyes and ears in the store to make sure the contract is being followed by the employer. Stewards also help co-workers in understanding the contract and member benefits.

## LEADER

A Leader is a member who keeps up-to-date on issues in the workplace. Leaders may also help inform and educate their co-workers on new worker legislation at the state and city levels. They are often the go-to person for advice, and are involved and help lead worker actions to fight for rights in the workplace.

## ACTIVIST

Activists are active members. They will participate in actions supporting worker rights. They will also inform and encourage their fellow co-workers to participate in standing up for their rights by helping them understand the issues and the power of collective action.

# ABOUT UFCW 367

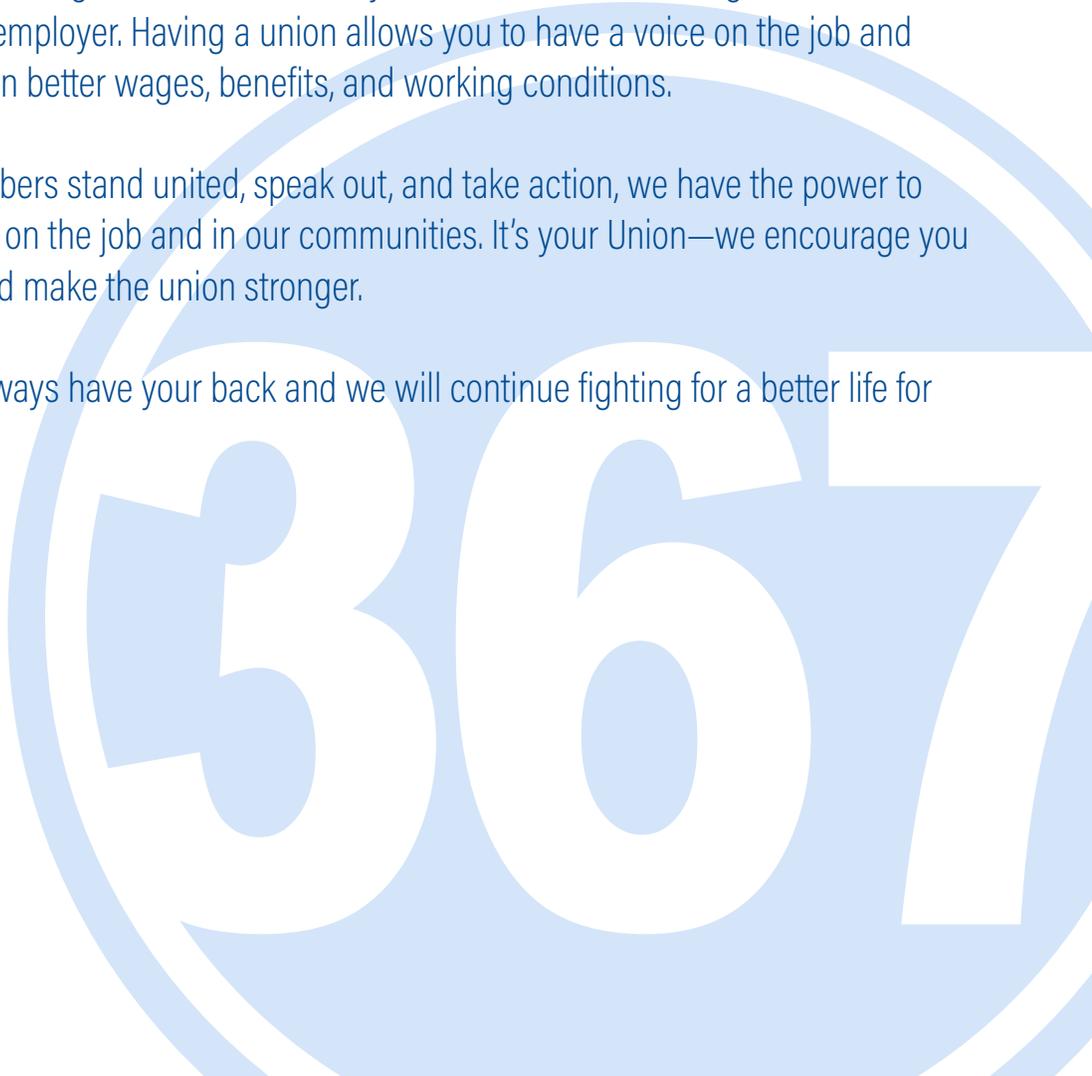
We are a diverse member driven union fighting for economic and social justice. Our mission is to empower through respect, integrity, and dignity. Our strength comes from standing in solidarity with our communities to build a better life. We bargain with the employer and push politicians to create laws to help workers. This raises standards in our industries which benefits all workers and the communities we live in.

As a UFCW 367 member you are part of a local union family of over 8,000 members in Washington covering the South Puget Sound region. UFCW 367 is part of UFCW International, the largest private sector union in the United States, representing 1.3 million professionals and their families in grocery stores, meatpacking, food processing, retail shops, healthcare, and other industries. Our members serve our communities in all 50 states, Canada, and Puerto Rico.

When workers come together as a union, they have the collective strength to meet as equals with their employer. Having a union allows you to have a voice on the job and collectively bargain better wages, benefits, and working conditions.

When union members stand united, speak out, and take action, we have the power to make a difference on the job and in our communities. It's your Union—we encourage you to get involved and make the union stronger.

Your Union will always have your back and we will continue fighting for a better life for working families.



# LEADERS MAKE OUR UNION STRONGER

Stewards, Leaders and Activists help build stronger unions and workplaces. Strong leaders create strong contracts. You are taking the first step to building a stronger union for you and your co-workers. You will receive training so you can make sure you and your co-workers rights are protected. After this training you will be able to explain the union and the benefits of a union to your co-workers and new hires. As your knowledge grows, you will be able to provide representation in disciplinary meetings.

As a Leader, you are the perfect person to build a large network creating more power in our workplaces by encouraging co-workers to participate in building a stronger union, gaining better contracts and moving our legislators to action for worker rights and protections.



LEADER MILA WILLIS, BETHEL FRED MEYER



STEWARD MIKE SOLEBURG & MISA MIMS, GRAHAM SAFEWAY



Stewards are crucial because they act as a connection between workers and Union Reps. Many people aren't comfortable sharing their problems with someone they don't really know, so Stewards can bridge this gap by being a friend to both workers and the Union Reps. They are also able to take quick action when things happen during their shift. Personally, I became a Steward to help keep my co-workers informed, while also taking steps to improve conditions that I see as unfair. —SIERRA TURNER, STEWARD & COURTESY CLERK, OLYMPIA HAGGEN

# WHAT DO STEWARDS, LEADERS & ACTIVISTS DO?

- Meet and greet new hires
- Help co-workers solve workplace problems
- Be the eyes and ears looking for workplace issues
- Help inform co-workers during contract negotiations
- Get co-workers active during contract negotiations and issue fights
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Stewards are important to improve workplace safety. I became a Steward to help get my co-workers information they need.

—MICHAEL WHALEN, STEWARD,  
UNIVERSITY PLACE FRED MEYER



# THE 4 WAYS A UNION BUILDS POWER



I love talking to my co-workers about our union and our rights under our union contract. Once I became more involved, I realized the strength of our union is based in an active and informed membership. I am so glad I stepped up to help my co-workers.

—CARLI PUGH, STEWARD & SALES ASSOCIATE, TACOMA MACY'S



# UNION POLITICS

## ISSUE

## LAW

WAGES/HOURS

FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT

HOLIDAYS & VACATION

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING  
AGREEMENT

HEALTH CARE

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT (ACA)

UNION RIGHTS (RIGHT TO  
ORGANIZE, DEFEND WORKERS)

NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT

PENSION/RETIREMENT

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME  
(SSI)/EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT  
INCOME SECURITY ACT (ERISA)

SAFETY & HEALTH

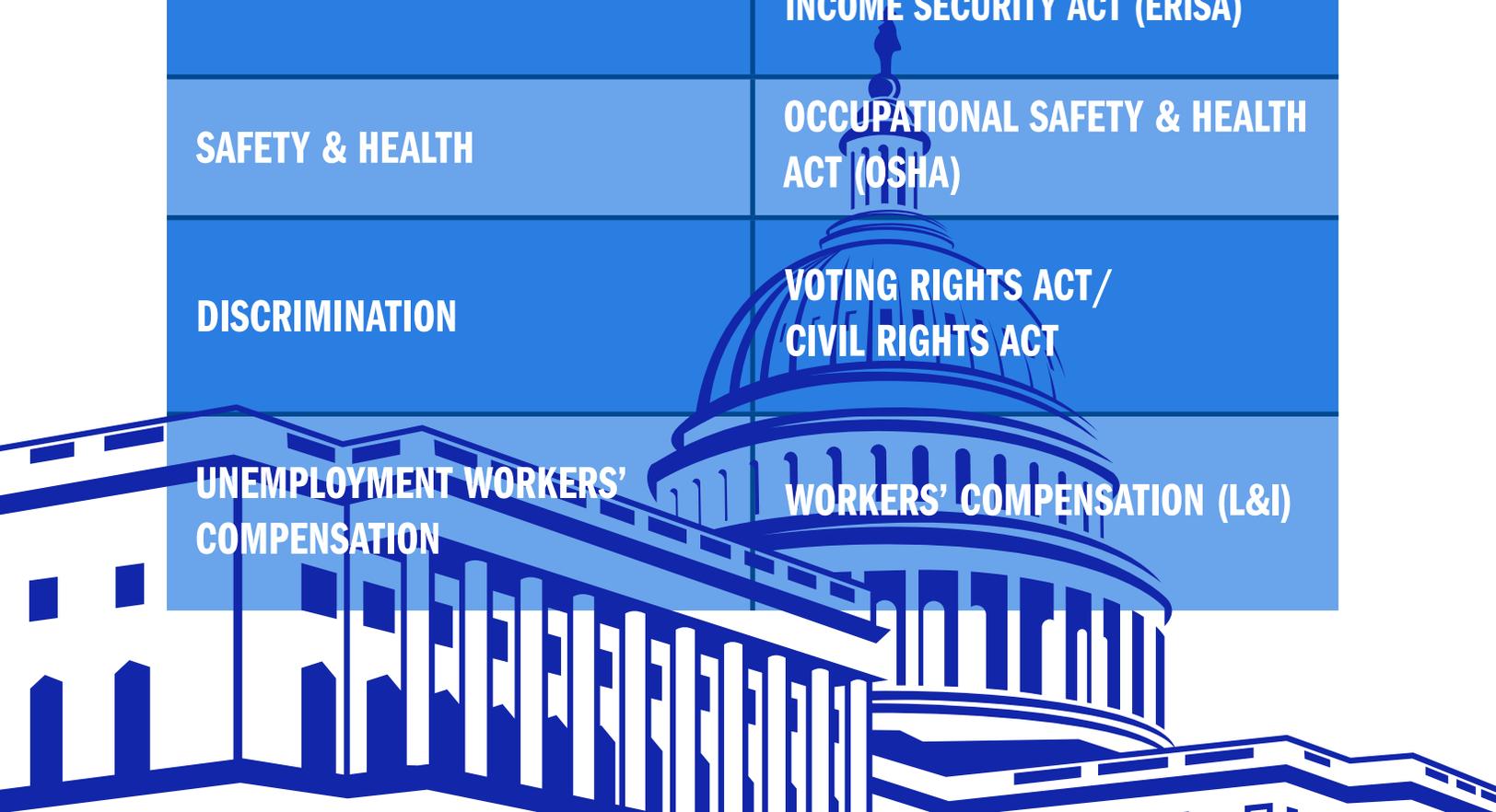
OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH  
ACT (OSHA)

DISCRIMINATION

VOTING RIGHTS ACT/  
CIVIL RIGHTS ACT

UNEMPLOYMENT WORKERS'  
COMPENSATION

WORKERS' COMPENSATION (L&I)



# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS KNOW YOUR CONTRACT

## JUST CAUSE

Where do you find your rights to “Just Cause” in cases of discipline or discharge?

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## GRIEVANCES

Where do you find the timelines for filing a grievance?

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## UNION RECOGNITION

Where does the contract give you the right to be a Union Shop, and what kind of issues can you bargain over?

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## WAGES

Wages and Commissions are defined in which article?

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## SENIORITY

What article defines how seniority shall be applied?

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## UNION STEWARD RIGHTS

What article and clause defines the rights of Union Stewards?

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Member leaders are important because the union is us - workers of all kinds standing together for our rights.

—ISAAC WAGNITZ, STEWARD & CHECKER,  
TUMWATER FRED MEYER



# IT'S THE LAW

## PROTECTED UNION ACTIVITY

### THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD STATES:

**You have the right to act with co-workers to address work-related issues in many ways.**

Examples include: talking with one or more co-workers about your wages and benefits or other working conditions, circulating a petition asking for better hours, participating in a concerted refusal to work in unsafe conditions, openly talking about your pay and benefits, and joining with co-workers to talk directly to your employer, to a government agency, or to the media about problems in your workplace.

- *Your employer cannot discharge, discipline, or threaten you for, or coercively question you about, this “protected concerted” union activity. However, you can lose protection by saying or doing something egregiously offensive or knowingly and maliciously false, or by publicly disparaging your employer’s products or services without relating your complaints to any labor controversy.*
- *Your employer cannot prohibit you from talking about the union during working time if it permits you to talk about other non-work-related matters like sports, movies or family during working time.*
- *If you are allowed to distribute non-work-related material like party invitations and Avon booklets then your employer cannot prohibit union newsletters or petitions.*
- *Your employer cannot prohibit you from talking about or soliciting for a union during non-work time, such as before or after work or during break times; or from distributing union literature during non-work time, in non-work areas, such as parking lots or break rooms.*

**If a Manager attempts to prohibit union activity on the job, please document the date, time, place, and other details and call your Union Steward or Union Representative. Unfair Labor Practice charges may be filed with the National Labor Relations Board.**

*The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) is backed by the Federal Courts to order an employer to stop interfering with employees’ rights, to pay back wages, and to reverse any action taken against workers for union activity.*

# 2 TYPES OF GRIEVANCES

## 1. DISCIPLINE/JUST CAUSE

**Article 2.4** No employee shall be disciplined or discharged except for just cause. The Employer shall be the judge of the competency and qualifications of their employees and shall make such judgement fairly. The Employer's judgment is subject to review by an Arbitrator.

The burden of proof is on the Employer.

## 2. CONTRACT LANGUAGE VIOLATIONS

Language grievances are a violation of a particular Article in the union contract.

The burden of proof is on the Union.



I became a Steward because I believe in unions and what they stand for.

—RENEE BUSHNELL, STEWARD & CHECKER, BONNEY LAKE FRED MEYER

I became a Steward to try to make a difference.

—DEANNA MOONEY, STEWARD & DRUG TECH, MONTESANO VALU DRUG



**One simple question provides you with the same protection as reciting your full Weingarten Rights.**

**Should I call my Union Rep?**

## **WEINGARTEN RIGHTS**

**If this discussion could in any way lead to me being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I request my Union Representative or Steward be present at this meeting. Without representation, I choose not to answer any questions.**

**Weingarten rights were won in a 1975 Supreme Court decision with these basic guidelines:**

- You must make a clear request for union representation either before or during the interview. Managers do not have to inform employees of their rights.
- Management cannot retaliate against an employee requesting representation.
- Management must delay questioning until the union Steward arrives.
- It is against Federal Law for management to deny an employee's request for a Union Representative or Steward and continue with an interrogation. In this case, an employee can refuse to answer management's questions.

# DISCIPLINE MEETING & WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

*\*Requires additional training*

## THE UNION STEWARD'S ROLE IN A WEINGARTEN MEETING

- **Ask management to explain** the nature of the investigation before the meeting begins.
- **Exercise your right to speak privately** to the employee before the questioning begins.
- **Act as a witness** in this meeting, not necessarily as a defense attorney.
- **Take notes** for future reference. Your notes can be invaluable.
- **Ask clarifying questions** to make sure the employee understands what is being asked, or if you think management didn't understand the answer.
- **Ask for a break** if the employee is emotionally distressed.
- **Ask management to stop** if they are badgering the employee.
- **Object to improper questioning** by management.

### TIPS FOR STEWARDS REPRESENTING CO-WORKERS BEING DISCIPLINED

**Advise the employee** on how the grievance process works, the time limits involved, and the 7 steps of "just cause" language in the contract.

**Contact the Union Representative immediately.** Do not wait until the time limits are almost up as it takes time to process the paperwork.

**Respect the employee's confidentiality** regarding the discipline; do not discuss it with other employees without the employee's permission.

**Provide the Union Representative with a copy of notes** from the investigatory meeting and any other useful information. Retain a copy of your notes in case you are called as a witness in the grievance process.

**Assist the Union Representative with any other investigation** that will help the employee.

**Help the employee write a rebuttal** if they disagree with the discipline.

# BULLYING VS HARASSMENT/DISCRIMINATION

## What's the difference between Bullying and Harassment?

Harassment is a legal term that describes behaviors and/or actions that threaten an employee or colleague based on their protected class. Protected Classes include: Age, Race, Gender, National Origin, Marital Status, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, Disability, HIV Status, Military Status; even the use of Guide Dogs is protected.

Workplace actions or behaviors that impact one or more of the protected classes and involve a material change to someone's working conditions is harassment and/or discrimination.

Stewards should seek help from the Union Representative in discerning the difference. While the Union can certainly help, those who are being actively discriminated against have other, more effective avenues to pursue including the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Civil Rights Complaints, L & I, as well as potential civil suits.



I have always been passionate about championing for those who can't, a rule follower, and a peace keeper. I was raised being taught that politics and activism were duties. Becoming a Steward was a natural step, now being a board member helps me magnify the voice of my peers 10 fold. I am excited to learn and grow, but mostly be a champion for those who need it.

—HEATHER HERNESS, STEWARD & PERSONAL SHOPPER, MILTON SAFEWAY



# 10 Tips for Stewards

## 1 SHOW CONFIDENCE.

It's natural to be concerned that you won't do the job right: There's a lot to learn and you may not yet be comfortable being in a position where you deal with management from a position of authority. Keep in mind that millions of other Stewards have gone through the same thing, and no one expects you to be Supersteward. If you approach it honestly and consult with other stewards and union officers when you're not sure how to handle something, you'll do just fine.

## 2 LET OTHERS KNOW.

You don't want to get on a bullhorn and brag about your new role as Steward, but you don't want to keep mum about it either. You can't be an effective Steward unless the co-workers you serve, and the management people you'll have to deal with on a day-to-day basis, know who and what you are and how to find you if they need you.

## 3 LISTEN.

A good rule of thumb is the 80/20 Rule: Good communication requires 80% listening and 20% talking. Make sure you pay attention and keep good eye contact when co-workers or managers are speaking. It is impossible to listen when you interrupt. Make sure you understand what is being said, and ask clarifying questions if you are unclear of what is being said.

## 4 BE HONEST.

Just because you're a Steward doesn't mean you know everything. If a question comes up that you can't answer, don't try: Say you'll find the answer and get back to the person. There's no such thing as a Steward smart pill. It will take you a while to get familiar with the union contract and with the labor laws that affect your workplace. All it takes on a Steward's part is to give a few wrong answers before everyone avoids you altogether and seeks out a more knowledgeable union official.

## 5 TREAT CO-WORKERS EQUALLY.

It can be a big temptation to focus your energies on your friends and immediate co-workers. Big mistake. Just one reason it's a big mistake is that, by law, the union – and that includes the Steward – must provide equal representation to every worker. It makes no difference whether you like the worker or hate him; whether she's the strongest union member around or the biggest union-hater; whether they are your ex-spouse or your current lover. You have to let all the workers you're responsible for know that you're there for them.

## 6 GREET NEW HIRES.

It's a Steward's job to greet every new worker who comes on the job, to welcome the worker and explain the Steward's role. Just because you made the rounds when you became Steward and made sure everyone knew about it doesn't mean that the person who starts work today knows you.

## 7 DON'T LET MANAGEMENT RUN OVER YOU.

Some supervisors or managers get a thrill out of trying to make a new Steward feel uncomfortable, un knowledgeable, and unwelcome. You don't have to take it. By law – the Steward is the equal of management when conducting union business. Remember, if you're not sure of how to handle a problem, call in a veteran steward or seek help from a union officer, but don't allow management to treat you poorly.

## 8 KEEP UNION & EMPLOYEE ROLES SEPARATE.

While as a Steward you are equal with management when doing union business, when you're not conducting union business you have to follow the same rules and requirements that apply to everyone else. Just because you're the Steward doesn't mean you can wander off and take a nap.

## 9 ASK FOR HELP.

Depending on the workplace, new Stewards can feel overwhelmed by their responsibilities. An important thing to remember is that the most effective Stewards are those who get their co-workers involved in the union's work. Your job isn't to make everyone's life better, your job is to work with your co-workers toward that goal. You might even think of yourself as an organizer more than a Steward, because you should organize the people around you to help move the union forward.

## 10 DON'T BE HARD ON YOURSELF.

As a new Steward you're likely to mess up on occasion. Everyone does. Just do the best you can, and seek out help from the union when you think you're in over your head. If you make a mistake, deal with it as soon as you can before it gets worse and then look ahead. Remember that you're doing an important job for your co-workers, one that a lot of people probably don't have the guts, energy and dedication to take on. Don't get mad at yourself, be proud of yourself for caring enough to accept the responsibility.







# LEADERS

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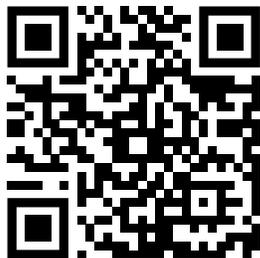
# IN ACTION

*UFCW 367 is a diverse member driven Union fighting for economic and social justice. We empower through respect, integrity and dignity. Our strength comes from standing in solidarity with our communities to build a better life.*

UFCW367.org  @UFCW367  @UFCWLocal367

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SCAN TO  
FIND YOUR  
UNION REP



SCAN TO  
FIND YOUR  
UNION CONTRACT

