

# Your Rights on the Job

SEIU Healthcare Wisconsin seeks to make our lives better in our society and at work. Everyone wants smooth working relationships on the job. But problems arise in every workplace. Our Union helps you resolve workplace problems. As an SEIU member, you have the right to Union protection and representation – rights guaranteed by your contract.

## ***When Problems Arise– Talk to Your Worksite Leader***

### **Contract Violations**

If you think that management has violated your rights or you have questions about work, talk with your Worksite Leader. You have the right to file a formal complaint seeking justice if your boss has violated one of your contractual rights. The complaint is called a “*grievance*” and 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 and your Worksite Leader determine that a contract violation has occurred, together you will fill out a “*grievance form*.” If management refuses to settle the grievance, our Union 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.

Remember, grievance procedures have strict time limits. File promptly.

### **Grievance Tips**

- Not all workplace complaints are grievances. Winning a grievance depends on the facts and collected evidence. Working closely with your Worksite Leader will improve your chances of success.
- The key question that decides grievances involving discipline is: Did management have “just cause” for imposing the discipline?

## ***When in Need – Request Union Representation***

You have the right to representation by your Work Site Leader or Staff Representative during conversations with your boss that 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 –sometimes referred to as your ...

**“Weingarten Rights” Demand Union representation.** You must ask for Union representation before or during the interview. Management does not have to inform you of this right.

*Refuse to proceed without Union representation.* A questioner 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 or simply state “I will respond when my Union Representative is present”.

*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 have waived your right to representation and any statement can be used against you.

The Weingarten Rights do not apply to everyday conversations between members and supervisors regarding regular job duties or work performance.

# Your Rights and Responsibilities In our Union

## **Rights**

- The right to have opinions heard and respected, to be informed of union activity, to be educated in union values and union skills.
- The right to choose the leaders of our union in a fair and democratic manner.
- The right to a full accounting of union dues and the proper stewardship over union resources.
- The right to participate in our union’s bargaining efforts and to approve union contracts.
- The right to have members’ concerns resolved in a fair and expeditious manner.

## **Responsibilities**

- The responsibility to help build a strong and more effective labor movement, to support the organizing of unorganized workers, to help build a political voice for working people and to stand up for one’s co-workers and all workers.
- The responsibility to be informed about the internal governance of our union and to participate in the conduct of our union’s affairs.
- The responsibility to contribute to the support of our union.
- The responsibility to treat all workers and members fairly.
- The responsibility to offer constructive criticism of our union.