

# 7 WAYS YOUR BOSS IS TAKING ADVANTAGE OF YOU

## 1. You're not getting enough hours or your schedule is different every week

Many of us are working too few hours to make ends meet, and we don't have a say on our schedules. We juggle the demand for constant availability and unpredictable changes to our hours. It becomes impossible to find or maintain a second job without knowing when we're going to be working week to week, and it is impossible to make ends meet on just one part-time job. It doesn't have to be this way.

We are fighting for fair workweek laws that will give working people a say on our hours, adequate rest between shifts, the right to say no to a shift without penalty, and additional pay for last-minute changes to our schedules. We've already won these laws in Oregon, Seattle, San Francisco, Emeryville, San Jose, New York City, Philadelphia, and Chicago. Are you ready to win a fair workweek for all working people in your city or state? Sign up at [united4respect.org/fairworkweek](https://united4respect.org/fairworkweek).



"Many of our employers treat us like numbers not like humans. They are driven by profit and greed, not by compassion or humanity. In Chicago, we came together to advocate for stable schedules and hours we can count on. We won! We shared our stories and testified at hearings to help pass a law that will improve stability in the lives of hundreds of thousands of people in the entire city."

– LORONZO WARREN JR., CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

## 2. Your manager asks you to do work before clocking in or after clocking out

Whether it's taking out the trash, collecting carts in the parking lot, or asking you to help a customer, managers shouldn't ask you to do them "a favor" after you've clocked out. That's not a favor – it's unpaid work. It's also called wage theft. In fact, far more people are victims of wage theft than robbery.

Be sure to document everything. It's also a good idea to keep your own records of the hours you are working even before any kind of problem arises.

You can file a complaint with the Department of Labor's Wage & Hour Division. Call 1-866-4-USWAGE

(1-866-487-9243) or go to [dol.gov/whd](https://www.dol.gov/whd) to find a local office near you. Filing a complaint is free and confidential. In some states, there is also a state agency where you can file a complaint. Every state's wage theft reporting requirements are a little different... and in some states, employers have to pay you back THREE TIMES the amount they owe you. Let us know if you need support and we'll gladly help you file a claim.

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### 3. **You're being discriminated against at work**

In a recent survey, 1 in 5 Walmart associates said they had been discriminated against at work. Discrimination can occur because of your race, gender, age, disability, or many other factors. If you have been discriminated against you can file a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission at [eeoc.gov](https://www.eeoc.gov) or by phone at 1-800-669-4000. This federal agency enforces civil rights laws against workplace discrimination. In some states, there is also a state agency where you can file a complaint.

*There are some incredible national and local organizations addressing racial discrimination and job crisis at work. We're a proud partner of the National Black Worker Center. Check out the Working While Black initiative to read more about how they are changing the narrative about the causes and solutions to the Black job crisis. Learn more at [nationalblackworkercenters.org](https://nationalblackworkercenters.org).*



"When I asked my manager why another black coworker and myself were paid less than our white counterparts, I was told that I'm too 'rough around the edges.'"

– ALECIA MEYERS, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

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### 4. **You're being sexually harassed at work**

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, assault, and comments like "women can't do this work." Women, particularly women of color, and LGBTQ people are disproportionately affected because sexual harassment is an attempt to control people who are perceived to have less power or status. It can be scary to speak up – that's why we've been working with the National Women's Law Center and Time's Up to help working people fight back. The Time's Up Legal Defense Fund can provide financial assistance for workplace sexual harassment legal cases in all stages. You can learn more at [timesupnow.com](https://timesupnow.com).

## 5. Your manager told you not to discuss your pay with your coworkers

Many employers try to get away with underpaying employees to keep us in the dark and more profit for themselves. You have the legal right to discuss your pay with anyone you want, including your coworkers.

You can talk about wages with your coworkers to uncover pay gaps based on gender and race in your store. According to the Economic Policy Institute, black women make only 66 cents compared to every dollar made by white men and 88 cents for every dollar made by white women.

We need to pressure our employers to release information on racial and gender pay gaps (in fact, we filed a shareholder resolution this past year to get this information from Walmart!) and in the meantime, we can uncover these pay gaps by talking to each other. Asking for a raise on your own can be daunting, but you can use the power of numbers to collectively ask for better pay for everyone. Remember, you have the right to talk about your pay and you have the right to organize – but be mindful because your manager won't be happy about it!

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## 6. You get laid off or your hours are cut

If you get laid off at work and your manager says you're not eligible for unemployment, you should still file for unemployment anyway and let the state determine your eligibility. If your hours are reduced, you can apply for partial unemployment.

If your store is closing or there are mass layoffs, your employer must give you sixty days written notice to all affected employees for companies with more than 100 employees (or 50 employees in California, New York, and some other states). If written notice is not given, your employer will likely owe you back pay plus benefits. In the last decade, more than 597,000 people working retail at companies owned by private equity firms have lost their jobs. Last summer when Toys R Us closed, thousands of working people who were laid off fought back and won \$20 million in severance pay. Find out more at [united4respect.org/campaigns/wall-street](https://united4respect.org/campaigns/wall-street).



“When we came together to fight for the severance pay we were promised from Toys R Us when it went into bankruptcy and liquidation, I didn't think we could win. We made calls to our elected officials, gave testimony at hearings, shared our stories with reporters, marched on Wall Street, and we won! Thanks to everyone who spoke out, we brought two major private equity investment firms to the table and won a historic \$20 million fund for severance pay for tens of thousands of laid off Toys R Us employees.”

- GIOVANNA DE LA ROSA, CHULA VISTA, CALIFORNIA

## 7. You're not sure about your workplace policies or labor laws

Sometimes, it can be impossible to get a straight answer from a manager about your workplace policies. Now, there's an app where you can get FREE and ANONYMOUS answers to questions about workplace policies as well as state and federal laws. You can ask peer experts questions about your rights and any workplace to get clear, reliable advice. Download the app at [workitapp.org](https://workitapp.org).

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## NOW WHAT?

We hope you found this guide useful. Just remember – there is power in numbers.

These corporations often make decisions at the very top without giving a platform or a voice to those of us who are doing the work. That's why we're building a community of support of working people all over the country – and we are demanding a say in what happens at the top because it impacts us at the bottom.

We're a nonprofit organization called *United for Respect*. We are made up of people just like you working together to change corporate policies and our laws to improve our economy and our futures for our families.

We believe in advancing a vision of an economy where corporations respect our work and recognize our humanity. We are building an economy that allows us to live and work in dignity.

If these issues affect you and your family – and you are ready to do something about it – text or call Mauricio at (562) 356-8067.