

## Why are we talking about this?

During the last few years the media has been filled with reports of attempts by unions to modify our country's basic labor laws to make it easier for unions to be successful in organizing employees. As a result, a variety of questions have been asked about Best Buy and its views about unions.

We recognize that unions may have been necessary in the early part of the industrial revolution. They helped to bring about many things that all of us as employees take for granted and enjoy. Some of these include holidays, paid vacations and employer provided benefit plans. More recently, legislative changes have provided guidelines and rules for employees related to safety, health, break periods, meal periods, equal treatment and other legal initiatives.



## Additional Information

However, unions also implemented many work rules through negotiations that have been harmful to organizations making them less than fully competitive and less able to respond to customer needs. Just consider what has happened in the automotive, airline, steel and manufacturing industries. For example, compare financial condition of GM or Chrysler which are unionized, with the flexibility and profitability of the union-free automobile companies such as Hyundai, Honda, Nissan, Mercedes and others.

As you further your education on the subject of unions and the use of union authorization cards you may find many resources available to you on the internet. Some are not based upon facts but rather are opinions. Sources just reporting facts will give you the best guidance. Several sites are dedicated to ensuring an employee's rights and maintaining the freedoms you have to decide for yourself if getting involved with a union is right for you or not right for you. All sites will contain some opinion.



To ensure that you are aware of the facts.

To minimize potential harassment.

To help you make informed decisions.

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### **What additional information should I be aware of when considering the facts?**

Many organizations host websites that try to ensure that readers agree with a specific point of view. Data on these sites tends to be very biased. It is best to only trust sites that use factual data from the Department of Labor database or from other sources such as the Legal System.

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## **To minimize potential harassment or intimidation and the background you need when confronted with any unwanted activities.**

When a union organizing drive is occurring, there are occasionally reports from individuals of harassment or intimidation directed at some individuals. Best Buy has a corporate policy to ensure that no employees are harassed or intimidated. However, under Federal Law, any harassment or intimidation that occurs during a union organizing drive is not activity that we may ask you to report, unless the harassment or intimidation consists of violence or threats of violence. You may voluntarily report the harassment or intimidation either to your supervisor or to law enforcement authorities.

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### **Why should I trust you to give me impartial information?**

Our goal is to ensure that you make an educated and informed decision. It is your decision, but when any of us are exposed to a new topic or situation, we all make better decisions when we are educated on the subjects.

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decide for yourself if getting involved with a union is right for you or not right for you. All sites will contain  
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aware of the facts.

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informed decisions.

## Our Philosophy

We value our ability to directly interact with our employees without any outside interference or intervention. Our employees appreciate that relationship, as well knowing they can speak to Best Buy leaders and have their concerns heard.

Why doesn't Best Buy need a 3rd party to help negotiate on behalf of employees?

We are proud of the fact that without any 3rd party intervention we have established a program of competitive wages and benefits, as well as safe and healthy working conditions and stable employment with growth opportunities for all. Our ability to succeed as a company and for individuals to succeed in their careers depends on open and direct communications. Our competitive advantage has been built on professional relationships with employees and our ability to respond quickly to both employee concerns and changing market conditions, each of which may be inhibited by the presence of a union. x

Our philosophy is an open, direct exchange of ideas which provides full support of all of our employees. We are committed to keeping it that way!!

## Our Philosophy

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Why doesn't Best Buy need a 3rd party to help negotiate on behalf of employees?

Our national labor laws require that instead of direct dealings with employees in all situations establishing wages, hours and working conditions, Best Buy leaders have to bargain with and work through the leaders of the local union. That may slow the process for changes and make it highly impersonal. It may also introduce the union's or union leader's own interests, concerns and priorities which may not be the same as our your interests or that of the majority of employees.

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Why doesn't Best Buy need a 3rd party to help negotiate on behalf of employees?

Our rewards department frequently conducts competitive surveys and benchmarking with other major retail operations. x

Our future and foundation is our employees. Our belief is that we must take care of our employees and our employees will take care of their future with Best Buy.

We need our ability to respond in a flexible manner to our employee's needs.

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Why doesn't Best Buy need a 3rd party to help negotiate on behalf of employees?

All changes affecting any topic within a union contract must be negotiated with the union. It would not matter if the company were trying to modify or improve anything specific. We have all seen or heard about examples of contract negotiations that have taken weeks, months or longer. Generally, neither party is required to talk about changes in the contract until the contract expires, which may be months or years in the future. x

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Why doesn't Best Buy need a 3rd party to help negotiate on behalf of employees?

Do you remember the last time that you or a co-worker had a good idea? And remember that when you talked to your supervisor or manager that the idea was implemented and you got credit? Well, if your idea affected anything within a union contract, your idea might not be implemented - regardless of how good it was for you, your co-workers or the company. If your idea required a language change in a union contract, it could be a long time before the idea might get implemented, and only if the union and company agree during negotiations. x

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## Our Philosophy

We value our ability to directly interact with our employees without any outside interference or intervention. Our employees appreciate that relationship, as well knowing they can speak to Best Buy leaders and have their concerns heard.

Why doesn't Best Buy need a 3rd party to help negotiate on behalf of employees?

What would prevent Best Buy from directly interacting with employees if employees chose to join or form a union?

We respect our employees and know that our wages and benefits are competitive.

We need our ability to respond in a flexible manner to our employee's needs.

Our philosophy is an open, direct exchange of ideas which provides full support of all of our employees. We are committed to keeping it that way!!

## What is a Union Authorization Card?

Can a Union Authorization Card be a legally binding document?

Is there any way to get out of this obligation if I decide to change my mind at a later date?

It states that you want union representation.

It may authorize dues, fines, assessments and other monies to be deducted from your paycheck.

It may waive your right to vote for or against union representation.



## What is a Union Authorization Card?

Can a Union Authorization Card be a legally binding document?

Is there any way to get out of this obligation if I decide to change my mind at a later date?



Under the National Labor Relations Act, a union authorization card is considered a legally binding document. You are agreeing that you want the union to represent you in all matters related to wages, hours and working conditions. In a way, it is like giving a signed, blank check to a stranger. This may mean that eventually you will have to pay expensive monthly dues, fees, assessments, and union imposed fines. And what most organizers will not tell you is that you become bound to complying with the Constitution and By-Laws of the union. x

It may waive your right to vote for or against union representation.

## What is a Union Authorization Card?

Can a Union Authorization Card be a legally binding document?

Is there any way to get out of this obligation if I decide to change my mind at a later date?



Under the law you may request your signed card to be returned to you. It will depend upon the character<sup>x</sup> of the union organizer and union rules if your card will be returned.

Under current law, if you change your mind, you still have the opportunity to vote against the union in a secret ballot election. However, it is possible that a union could be recognized as your bargaining agent without a secret ballot election occurring. So, a signed authorization card may be the same as voting yes.

It may waive your right to vote for or against union representation.

## What is a Union Authorization Card?

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Is there any way to get out of this obligation if I decide to change my mind at a later date?



Is filling this card out all it takes to bring a union in to represent you? x

If over 30% of the employees in the group the union seeks to represent sign a card, whether or not they are truly interested in a union, the union can require that a secret ballot vote be conducted by the National Labor Relations Board. If over 50% of the employees sign a card, the current law does have provisions where you could be unionized without a vote. Completing the card is all it takes. If you are not 100% certain that you want to be in a union, then exercise your right not to sign the card.

It may waive your right to vote for or against union representation.

## What is a Union Authorization Card?

Can a Union Authorization Card be a legally binding document?

Is there any way to get out of this obligation if I decide to change my mind at a later date?



Do I have any say in these fees? What are some common fees that are collected on behalf of unions? **x**

Typically, any fees that are collected by the union are set by the union Constitution and By-Laws. Some of the amounts are set by the local union and you will have no impact or say in the amounts deducted. If you are not familiar with the union's Constitution and By-Laws, ask the organizer for a copy of the documents so that you can read for yourself how the union operates. As a union member, you will be required to comply with the union's Constitution and By-Laws and all the rules they impose. Dues are the most common deduction. Depending upon the union, a good guide is between 2-4 hours of pay per month for dues. Other possibilities are fines for violating the Union Constitution or By-Laws, special assessments such as contributing to a strike fund, political action contributions, etc.



## What is a Union Authorization Card?

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If I decide to fill out a card, how can I find out if there will be a vote, or if this card is my vote? How exactly does this system work? x

Under current law, the signing of a card indicates your interest in union representation. If enough people sign cards, then the union has two options of gaining representation status and collecting dues from you. The most common is for the union to request a secret ballot election conducted by the National Labor Relations Board. But, the union could also DEMAND recognition without a vote. If the company would agree with the demand - you will be denied your right to vote.

# Union Card Example 1

Click each hotspot to learn more.

**Organizing**

- Organizing in Food
- Guide to Organizing a Union
- Your Local Right to Organize
- Help Us Grow
- Print Authorization Card

**1459 Member**  
Doug Bedford  
Asst. Sr. Custodian  
Chicago Schools  
Chicago, Ill.

**Home**  
Members  
News  
Organizing

**Home**  
**Print an Authorization Card**

When you and your coworkers sign authorization cards, you are expressing your desire to become a member of UFCW Local 1459. It's important to understand that when you sign an authorization card, you are **not joining the UFCW**. You are only **expressing your desire** to join the UFCW. You will not become a member of the UFCW until a) the company decides to recognize the union or b) a majority of the workers vote to join the UFCW in a secret ballot election.

**Interested in joining a Union?**  
Call us toll free:  
1-800-333-9999 ext. 14

**X** the United Food & Commercial Workers International Union, AFL-CIO  
for the purpose of collective bargaining.

Signature		
City, State, Zip		
Your Hire Date		
Type of Work Performed	Department	Hourly Rate
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full-time	I work: <input type="checkbox"/> Day Shift <input type="checkbox"/> Night Shift <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time <input type="checkbox"/> Full-time	Would you participate in an organizing committee? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Email address		List your days off:

Mail this authorization form to UFCW Local 1459 at:

**UFCW Local 1459, AFL-CIO**  
33 Eastland Street  
Springfield, Massachusetts 01109

**Guard your privacy. Ask yourself if you want to share the personal information that is requested.**

## Union Card Example 2

Click each hotspot to learn more

**If You Don't Look Out For Your Interests Who Will**  
**TAKE THE FIRST STEP - FILL OUT - seal and mail this TODAY**  
(Your Confidence Will Be Respected.)

1-800.292-7293  
**UNITED FOOD AND COMMERCIAL WORKERS DISTRICT LOCAL UNION, LOCAL 431**  
Affiliated with AFL-CIO-CLC  
1401 WEST 3RD ST., DAVENPORT, IA 52802

**AUTHORIZATION FOR REPRESENTATION**  
I hereby authorize the United Food and Commercial Workers District Local Union, Local 431 AFL-CIO-CLC, to represent me for the purposes of collective bargaining.

Check out the small print "I hereby authorize..."

EMPLOYERS NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

HIRE DATE \_\_\_\_\_ TYPE OF WORK PERFORMED \_\_\_\_\_ DEPARTMENT \_\_\_\_\_

HOURLY RATE \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OFF \_\_\_\_\_ DAY SHIFT \_\_\_\_\_ NIGHT SHIFT \_\_\_\_\_ FULL TIME \_\_\_\_\_ PART TIME \_\_\_\_\_

Would you participate in an organizing committee? \_\_\_\_\_

**NO INITIATION FEE**

# Union Card Example 3

## (Sign-in Sheets)

Sometimes you may be asked to sign a "sign-in sheet" or similar document. Look over the documents closely. Sometimes there will be small print that most people will not read. Read it and understand it. If you believe that others may not have read the small print and yet signed the paper, then draw the content of the small print to their attention.

Sometimes the sign-in sheet will appear to have only a place for signatures. If there is more than one sheet, look at the sheets under the cover page you are signing. There may be language or small print on the sheets under what you are signing. The result is that it appears that you are signing a document even though you did not see the document.

Sometimes you may be asked to complete a small card for a "drawing" or "raffle" for a prize. You complete all the information and you receive a ticket or receipt with your "lucky number". It all appears fine. However, you may have just completed a union authorization card to get your "lucky number" for the prize. **READ ALL SMALL PRINT CAREFULLY.**

**TEAMSTERS LOCAL NO. 63**  
**Authorization for Representation Form**  
Authorization for Representation Form  
**Authorization for Representation**  
I, the undersigned employee of

COMPANY \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
authorize Teamsters Local No. 63 to represent me in negotiations for better wages, benefits and working conditions.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

PRESENT WAGE RATE: \_\_\_\_\_

KIND OF WORK: \_\_\_\_\_

SHIFT: \_\_\_\_\_ day \_\_\_\_\_ evening \_\_\_\_\_ graveyard \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

**This information is strictly confidential**  
All information is kept confidential by the Teamsters Union and the U.S. Government. All information shall be kept in absolute confidence by the Union and the National Labor Relations Board.

**The National Labor Relations Act of 1947 reads as follows:**  
"Rights of Employees - Sec. 7. Employees shall have the right to self-organization to form, join, or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representation of their own choosing, and to engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection..."

**"UNFAIR LABOR PRACTICES - Sec.8(a) It shall be an unfair labor practice for an employer -**  
"(1) to interfere with, restrain, or coerce employees in the exercise of the rights guaranteed in Section 7;"  
"(2) to dominate or interfere with the formation or administration of any labor organization..."

**THE FEDERAL LAW UPHOLDS YOUR RIGHT TO ORGANIZE - PLEASE SIGN NOW!**  
Print out and mail or fax to: 845 Oak Park Road., Covina, CA 91724 (626) 859-4004 Fax or  
379 W. Valley Blvd. Rialto, CA 92376 (909) 877-2432 Fax

# Union Card Example 3

## (Sign-in Sheets)

Sometimes you may be asked to sign a "sign-in sheet" or similar document. Look over the documents closely. Sometimes there will be small print that most people will not read. Read it and understand it. If you believe that others may not have read the small print and yet signed the paper, then draw the content of the small print to their attention.

**TEAMSTERS LOCAL NO. 63**  
**Authorization for Representation Form**  
Authorization for Representation Form  
**Authorization for Representation**  
I, the undersigned employee of

COMPANY \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
authorize Teamsters Local 63 to represent me in negotiations for better wages, benefits and working conditions.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

PRESENT WAGE RATE: \_\_\_\_\_

KIND OF WORK: \_\_\_\_\_

SHIFT: \_\_\_\_\_ day \_\_\_\_\_ evening \_\_\_\_\_ graveyard \_\_\_\_\_

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379 W. Valley Blvd. Bldg. CA 92376 (909) 677-2432 Fax

The card claims to state the employees' rights under the National Labor Relations Act. However, it is not accurate as it omits information. The Act, in the same paragraph, states "employees shall also have the right to refrain from any and all such activity". That is something that the unions do not want employees to know and so many times will exclude your right to refrain from any and all such activity.

Sometimes you may be asked to complete a small card for a "drawing" or "raffle" for a prize. You complete all the information and you receive a ticket or receipt with your "lucky number". It all appears fine. However, you may have just completed a union authorization card to get your "lucky number" for the prize. **READ ALL SMALL PRINT CAREFULLY.**

# Implications to You

Should I be concerned about signing an authorization card?

Dues

Fees

Fines

Assessments

Strikes

Constitution  
and By-Laws

Dues are the monthly membership costs of belonging to a union.

The amount varies but is typically 2-4 hours of work per month.

You can not back out of a contract. The contract applies to all employees. If you live in a "right to work" state, you can elect not to pay union dues but you may still be required to pay something to the union depending upon state law - and you are still subjected to the union contract.

Dues are normally automatically taken out of your check through a payroll deduction. Dues may be raised at any time by the international union.

## Implications to You

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Fees are generally one time payments, such as initiation fees and there is no specific amount. Some unions may charge fees as little as \$5 for initiation and others may charge up to \$200, or more. Many will waive initiation fees under certain circumstances.

## Implications to You

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Fines are levied by a union when a member violates the Union Constitution or By-Laws or chooses to exercise his or her right to come to work during a strike and crosses a picket line established by the union.

The amount can vary from a few dollars up to reports of as much as \$10,000.

The assessment of fines is determined by the local and may at times be assessed by the International Union.



# Implications to You

Should I be concerned about signing an authorization card?

Dues	Fees	Fines	<b>Assessments</b>	Strikes	Constitution and By-Laws
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Assessments can occur for a variety of reasons. One examples would be if another local of the same union went on strike and did not have a very large strike fund. If the funds run short, you may receive an assessment to contribute to their strike fund for the duration of the strike.

## Implications to You

Should I be concerned about signing an authorization card?

Dues

Fees

Fines

Assessments

Strikes

Constitution  
and By-Laws

It is your choice to participate or not participate in a strike. But by striking you give up your pay and any benefits dependent on continuing to work.

If you walk across a picket line during a strike you may be in violation of the union Constitution and By-Laws and may be subject to fines or expulsion from the union. If you are expelled from the union in a Non-Right to Work state, you could lose your job for not being a member of the union in good standing.

# Implications to You

Should I be concerned about signing an authorization card?

Dues	Fees	Fines	Assessments	Strikes	<b>Constitution and By-Laws</b>
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A union Constitution is the document that governs how the union will operate.

By-Laws establish union operating procedures at the on a local level.

As a union member you would have to abide by both the Constitution and the By-laws even if you do not agree with them.

## Legal Implications

You could sign a card today due to an emotional situation. Over the next few days, weeks or months the situation may be resolved and you no longer have an interest in a union. However, since there is no expiration date, your card is still valid, and, under the law, generally remains valid for at least a year. You could make a request to the union that the card be returned, but there is no guarantee that you will get it back.

Once a union is in, it is very difficult to get a union out. The process is called decertification. Under the law, an employee must conduct the decertification without advice or support of management. That means management may not allow use of copy machines or any company materials or equipment in support of decertification. You must know the current laws on decertification. In general, the law requires that you secure a petition indicating that over 30% of the employees want to get rid of the union and you can only do it during the final 60-90 day time period prior to the contract expiration or after contract expiration before agreement on a new contract. One day outside of the 60-90 day period or after agreement on a new contract and the petition for decertifying the union is not considered legally valid and the government will not process it. When you decide to try for decertification the procedure is a legal procedure that you must follow 100%. If you do not, the National Labor Relations Board may not allow a vote to take place to decertify the union. If you have done everything 100% correct, then the National Labor Relations Board will determine whether to allow a vote to decertify the union. Even if you do everything right, unions will frequently file "blocking charges" to prevent an election from going forward.



## Workers Centers or Community Group

You may be approached to join a Worker Center or Community Group. Frequently, the request is to support a community event or initiative and many of these initiatives may appear to be a positive for the residents of the community. Many unions are using Workers Centers or Community Groups as a means to gather personal information for use in organizing drives in the future. As with anything that you do on a personal basis, you should read the small print and understand exactly what you are signing and exactly how your information may be used.

### Additional Resources

To view a video titled "Former Union Organizing Director Discusses Card Check" click [HERE](#).

