

OPPORTUNITY & PROSPERITY FOR ALL

Workers' Rights

THE WORKERS' RIGHTS PROJECT wants to ensure all jobs in North Carolina are good jobs, that everyone can take time off from work when they need it, and that they have dignity when out of work.



OUR WORK, OUR IMPACT:

During the ongoing pandemic, low-wage workers in North Carolina faced financial strain because they had lost work or were still working in unsafe environments. Our work pivoted to respond to the crisis quickly.

- We hosted workshops and created new community education materials to educate workers about their rights in the workplace, including how to challenge unfair practices through concerted action and the right to protect themselves from unsafe working conditions.
- We did outreach to migrant seafood processing workers to educate them about their rights under the H-2B temporary work visa program.
- We educated workers across the state about how the election could impact workplace policies through the We Work We Vote campaign.
- We filed complaints and litigated cases on behalf of farmworkers who were victims of human trafficking, sexual assault, and wage theft.
- We petitioned the NC Department of Labor to adopt new rules to protect workers from airborne infectious disease in their workplaces and migrant housing.
- We published [State of Working North Carolina](#), a

Our work involves THREE MAJOR AREAS: (1) ensuring that workers' existing rights and workplace protections are recognized and enforced; (2) promoting better jobs that pay living wages, are safe, allow workers to have a healthy work-family balance, and provide adequate benefits to support workers while they are employed as well as unemployed; and (3) building worker power by equipping low-wage essential workers with information and resources needed to enforce their rights, improve their workplaces, and influence policy makers.





comprehensive report offering data to illustrate challenges and trends for working people in North Carolina, as well as their personal stories of advocacy.

MOVING FORWARD

Enforce existing workplace protections.

- Litigate on behalf of contingent workers and other low-wage workers results to expand protections for contingent workers and deter bad actor employers from avoiding legal protections for contingent workers.
- Litigate against bad actor agricultural employers to win pro-worker legal decisions, damages for farmworkers, and changed employer practices.
- Protect workers from exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace and associated negative consequences through administrative advocacy and litigation, if appropriate.
- Ensure the NCDOL enforces OSHA and Wage and Hour rules.
- Ensure workers' rights are addressed before, during, and after natural disasters and pandemics.
- Defend H-2B regulations from efforts by the USDOL and employers to weaken them through rulemaking, administrative guidance, or judicial interpretation.
- Monitor and respond to changes to federal policies impacting low-wage workers and coordinate with partners to push for expanded protections for workers.

Advocate for family-friendly workplaces

- Collaborate with the NC Families Care coalition to advocate for work-family balance policy agenda that includes paid sick days, paid family medical leave, and nondiscrimination for pregnant workers.
- Encourage local communities to adopt policies that promote paid parental leave.
- Support efforts to combat preemption related to living wage, wage theft, and enforcement.
- Expand right to parental leave to more North Carolinians.
- Grow support for an increase to the state minimum wage.
- Build public awareness and legislative support for legislation to protect migrant farmworkers and improve housing conditions.
- Protect workers from exposure to communicable diseases at work.

- Engage businesses (including NC Chambers of Commerce) in our work on pregnancy accommodations, paid leave, minimum wage, caregiving, work-sharing, and other issues.

Improve unemployment insurance and promote work-sharing

- Help increase support to repair the damage made to the state's unemployment benefits program, enacted by policymakers in 2013, and promote adoption of work-sharing short time compensation.
- Ensure administration of unemployment insurance is more accessible, particularly for women, people of color and limited English proficiency claimants.
- Support efforts of national partners to impact unemployment insurance changes at federal level.

Keep workers informed about their rights

- Ensure North Carolina workers are informed about their legal rights and will be referred to appropriate resources to help enforce their rights.
- Help amplify partners' organizing efforts, including unionization campaigns and efforts to expand collective bargaining rights in North Carolina.
- Ensure immigrant workers have access to accurate information about changes in laws or policies that may impact them as workers, and how to be prepared for those changes.



LET'S WORK TOGETHER to end poverty, build power, and share prosperity across North Carolina!



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