

Workers' Rights

The WORKERS' RIGHTS PROJECT empowers, advocates for and defends the rights of workers so that all jobs in North Carolina are good jobs, North Carolinians can take time off from work when they need it, and have dignity when out of work.



OUR WORK, OUR IMPACT:

Despite a hostile landscape, in 2023 we kept the drumbeat going on workers' rights litigation and workplace policy advocacy. We collaborated with grassroots worker organizations to ensure lawmakers heard from the low-wage workers impacted by their decisions.

- 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 supported state level legislation on paid leave, paid sick and safe days, a livable minimum wage, unemployment insurance reform, and other pro-worker bills through media work, coalition-building, and grassroots lobbying.
- We filed complaints and litigated cases on behalf of farmworkers who were victims of human trafficking, sexual assault, and wage theft.
- We published the **State of Working Women**, a comprehensive report on the challenges, trends, and policy gaps impacting working women in North Carolina, as well as stories of women's workplace experiences and organizing successes.

Our 3 major focus areas are:

- ▶ *Ensuring workers' existing rights and workplace protections are enforced and unlawful employment practices are deterred through litigation;*
- ▶ *Promoting policies that lead to 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;*
- ▶ *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.*

MOVING FORWARD

Enforce existing workplace protections

- Litigate on behalf of agricultural, contingent, and other low-wage workers to expand rights and protections, win compensation for employees whose rights were violated, and deter bad actor employers.
- Ensure that labor agencies, including NCDOL, USDOL, the EEOC, NLRB, aggressively enforce workers' rights through strong investigations and accountability to workers.
- Protect immigrant workers from retaliation by assisting with securing statements of interest from labor agencies and filing deferred action applications.



- Ensure administration of unemployment insurance is more equitable, particularly for women, people of color, and limited English proficiency claimants.

- Support efforts of national partners to impact unemployment insurance changes at federal level.

Advocate for safer and healthier workplaces

- Push for enforceable protections against exposure to airborne infectious diseases at work.
- Demand common-sense heat stress protections so that there are no more avoidable deaths due to heat on the job.
- Build public awareness and legislative support for legislation to protect migrant farmworkers and improve housing conditions.



- Educate workers on existing protections regarding wages, workplace safety, and discrimination, and train workers on their right to engage in concerted activity.

Advocate for pro-worker policies

- Coordinate coalition work to build public support and momentum for a family-friendly workplace policy agenda that includes paid sick and safe days, paid family medical leave, and a livable minimum wage.
- Encourage local governments to adopt policies that ensure access to paid leave and living wages to municipal employees.
- Support efforts to combat preemption related to living wage, wage theft, and enforcement.
- Grow public support to repair the damage to the state's unemployment benefits program by policymakers in 2013 and promote adoption of work-sharing policy.

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

SCAN HERE to support the rights of workers -

Or visit:

ncjustice.org/workers



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