

## What Are “Free & Fair” Elections?

A Free and Fair union election means that employees are *Free* to decide whether we want to join together as a union, *Free* from management intimidation in a *Fair* secret ballot vote. **Free and fair election agreements often include the following principles:**

- ◆ Hospital workers would be allowed to make our own decision to join together as a union in an environment free from coercion;
- ◆ Hospital executives would not waste patient care funds to run an anti-union campaign;
- ◆ Hospital workers would not be forced into meetings, taken away from patient care duties, to dissuade us from joining together as a union;
- ◆ Union supporters would run a positive campaign without personal attacks against the administration;
- ◆ The election would be done quickly, any disputes resolved promptly and fairly, and the election results would be honored, whatever the outcome;
- ◆ Management and the union agree to not to violate any labor laws;
- ◆ This Code of Conduct would be agreed to in writing, so that it’s legally enforceable.

## What Does an “Anti-Worker Campaign” look like?



“When we tried to form a union, the administration hired a firm to fight us, and spent hundreds of thousands of dollars. We started getting pulled off the floor, away from our patient care duties, for mandatory one-on-one meetings with our supervisors. It was really intimidating. Then they started giving out raises, but told people if the union comes in they’d have to take the raises back. Whenever people had information about the union, management would snatch it out of their hands and rip it apart. They went after people who were most vulnerable, who could be easily intimidated. I’m proud to say we won our union election and life has been so much better. I’m committed to making sure none of my co-workers are ever treated badly. A free and fair agreement will do that.”

—Barbara Cook, Good Samaritan, Brockton, Respiratory Therapist for 27 years

## Who Is 1199SEIU?

1199SEIU is the biggest union for healthcare workers in the country. We represent 300,000 members throughout the hospital, nursing home and homecare industries in Massachusetts, Maryland, Washington D.C. and New York State.



## Hospital Workers Speak About the Union Difference

“Being a part of our union has given me a voice on the job. It feels great knowing you do not stand alone when you have a concern at work. Dealing with your employer can be intimidating when you don’t know your rights. Talking to not-yet union hospital workers has made me realize all of the advantages I have as a union member. As a member of 1199SEIU, I have had many opportunities and the privilege of participating in groundbreaking work with my union family. Unity in the work place is the only thing that can help us make a difference for our families and each other.”

—Damicka Johnson, Lab/Medical Assistant & 1199 Member Organizer

# Hospital Worker Voice

Nov. 2007



For Our Families, For Our Patients, For Each Other

## Labor, Religious, and Community Groups Support Hospital Workers



Read More Inside

# Hospital Workers Everywhere Say “It is time for a union. Let us vote, Free & Fair.”

## Why do we need a union?

“I’ve been a CNA at Faulkner for 28 years. I want to form our union because right now we get no respect. The wages are poor. We get no breaks. There aren’t enough of us, and we’re ordered around by everyone with no respect. We do our best, but we can’t be everywhere at once.”

“I’ve been a Patient Care Aide at Brigham and Women’s Hospital for 9 years. I want a Union so we can win job security, respect and more staff. I work in the ICU step down unit, and I’m the only PCA for 16 patients. The people above us PCAs are so rude. They will say to us in front of patients and their families ‘I am your boss. You will do what I tell you,’ right after another supervisor just ordered us to do something else “right this instant” for another patient. They talk to us like we are children. We are short staffed, but they don’t fix it. Instead they just yell louder, and get more rude. If we do a good job, you know what they do? They don’t give us a pay raise. They give us a \$5 gift certificate... to their own cafeteria, and they call it a ‘present.’”

“I’m a lab tech at Mass General. We’re overburdened with work. Not too long ago, they consolidated into our department many categories of tests that used to be sent to an outside lab. We took on many new categories of work without an increase in staffing or an increase in pay. We tried to get raises after they increased our scope of procedures and our volume. We didn’t get a pay raise at all for two years, and then we got just a 2% increase. All we’re saying is, give us more people and pay and we can handle the workload and demands on our proficiency.”

“I work in the Dietary department at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. I believe that every person who works in our hospital does an important job but we do not all get treated equally. Every year, my rent and health insurance go up and my wages don’t keep up. I know that talking to my supervisor will change nothing and that I need a union to gain the respect I deserve. I know that a lot of people in my department want the union but we are too afraid to talk about it and be public about it. The only way we will ever be able to form a union is if the hospital stays out of it and away from us.”

## Unanimous Support from City Council

On October 24, the council unanimously passed a resolution calling on hospital CEOs to agree to Free & Fair elections for us. The resolution declares that we should be Free to make up our own minds in Fair secret ballot votes.

## Hundreds Rally for Free & Fair

Hours after we testified at the city council hearing, nearly 800 hospital workers, religious leaders, elected officials, community leaders and patient advocates rallied in the Longwood Medical Area. Rally speakers included Mayor Menino, members of the state legislature such as Marie St. Fleur, and local hospital workers.

## Big Names Line Up to Support Us

We’re getting support from some big names with a lot of clout. Recently, scores of reporters, photographers and news cameras jammed the room at Boston city hall, as actor/director Ben Affleck and Mayor Thomas M. Menino stood side by side with us to call for Free & Fair union elections.

Ben Affleck said Free & Fair elections are “basic and reasonable.” He went on to say that he wants us to have a voice and feel respected if he ever needed to seek medical care.

## Senator Kerry Makes His Position Clear

To top it all off, Senator John Kerry sent a letter to all hospital CEOs in the greater Boston area, expressing his support for Free & Fair elections.

To get involved, call Corey Leaffer at 617-284-1142

## The Boston Globe

### Home health assistants vote to join union

On Nov. 9, the Globe reported that 22,000 homecare workers joined 1199SEIU after a landslide vote. Now homecare workers will have a voice to improve their lives and the quality of care for their clients. AND many of these new union members have vowed to help hospital workers in our efforts to win fair union elections!



To see all the newspaper coverage, the City Council resolution, and our ads in the Globe and Herald, go to

[www.FairUnionElections.org](http://www.FairUnionElections.org)