

“ Several years ago we attempted to organize the facility where I worked. There was a lot of excitement amongst us; we thought finally we would have a voice and a vote. But our hopes and dreams were crushed by the boss, and we were dragged off our units to watch anti-union movies while our patients were left unattended. I know now that things can be different. I currently work at South Boston Community Health Center, where our employer respects the right of caregivers to join together. That’s the union difference: it creates an environment that works for the most important people – our patients.”

- Anestine Bentick, 1199SEIU member



“ This campaign is about ensuring the long-term sustainability and prosperity of our city. The healthcare sector is the backbone of Boston’s economy...but it’s important that you and your family have good healthcare and good benefits. We’ve already done this at Boston Medical Center. They have 1199SEIU – why can’t every hospital in the city of Boston have 1199SEIU?”

- Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino

Who is 1199SEIU?

Representing more than 300,000 members and retirees in New York, Maryland, the District of Columbia and Massachusetts, 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East is the largest local union in the world. We have members in every facet of the hospital, nursing home and home care industries throughout New York State, Massachusetts, Maryland and Washington D.C., with 34,000 members in Massachusetts. We are part of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), which has 1.8 million healthcare members and is the leading voice for healthcare professionals at the federal level.

1199SEIU
United Healthcare Workers East

**For more information, call
617-284-1142**

1199SEIU • 150 Mt. Vernon Street, Suite 300, Dorchester MA
www.FairUnionElections.org

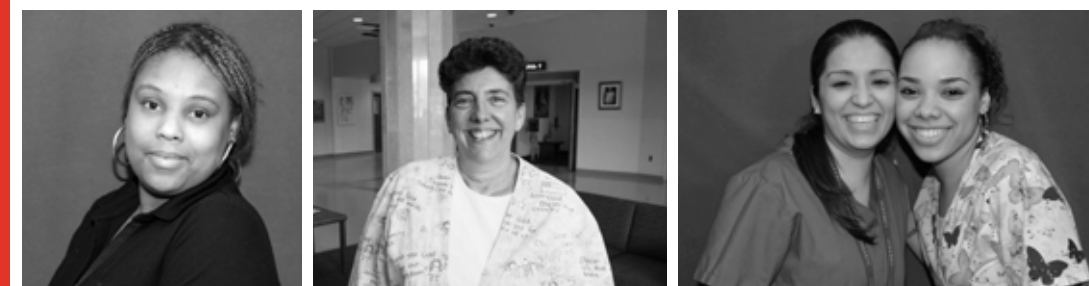
THE UNION DIFFERENCE

Below are examples of the rights we have won in our 1199SEIU contracts at places like Boston Medical Center, Cape Cod Healthcare, Whidden Memorial Hospital, Cambridge Health Alliance and others. No one can make any promises about what we’ll win when we negotiate a contract at your hospital, except these: we are stronger together, and when we vote to unionize, management by law must negotiate with us as a union. It’s up to all of us!

Issue	At a non-union hospital...	At hospitals with 1199SEIU contracts...
Wages	Management isn’t required to bargain with employees; often “merit raises” are given or denied based on favoritism, and some years there are no raises; new workers can be hired in at higher wages than existing employees.	Management must negotiate with all of us as a union; annual wage increases and step increases are based on years of service, not favoritism; as an employee’s seniority increases and they move to a higher skilled position, their pay increases based on the steps of a wage scale.
Job postings, promotions, etc.	Often based on favoritism.	Open shifts and jobs have to be posted. Among the qualified applicants, the employee with the most seniority gets the position.
Discipline & fair treatment	Management’s decision; few if any rights for workers to challenge and clear their name.	Discipline can only be for “just cause,” with an arbitration process to determine whether discipline is appropriate.
Promises	Management can make promises that things will improve, but they don’t have to keep them.	When we win management’s commitment to improve wages and benefits, it’s in a legally binding CONTRACT.
Vacations, shifts	Often based on favoritism.	Awarded fairly based on rules that we negotiate with management.
Respect at work	It is what it is...	Management must negotiate with all of us as a union, and our contract spells out rules for fair treatment among workers and managers.

“ It is crucial that hospital workers in Boston have a say about their workplace, their wages, and working conditions. Hospital workers should be able to work to live, not live to work. Free and fair union elections will guarantee democracy in the workplace and give hospital workers an opportunity to have a voice to improve their lives and advocate for their patients. The current labor laws are a disgrace. Free and fair union elections are about equity and fairness, and that is why I support free and fair elections for all hospital workers.”

- Father Kennedy, St. Monica’s Catholic Church, South Boston



Hospital workers are uniting for change!



1199SEIU: We make healthcare better.

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STRONGER TOGETHER

The members of 1199SEIU have achieved some of the best wages, health coverage, pensions, job protections, child care benefits and educational opportunities for hospital workers in the nation. Why? Because we have the strength of over 300,000 members united throughout all areas of the healthcare industry, and we work together to get results. 1199SEIU is a truly democratic union run by members, for members. Our mission is to empower healthcare workers and achieve affordable, quality healthcare for all.

“My hospital doesn't recognize seniority and only gives promotions based on favoritism – I've been at my job nine years and I'm still in the same position. As a union, we could get together and resolve these issues.”

- Yolanda Mays, Clinical Lab Assistant, Mass. General Hospital



Know your rights!

What's to prevent my employer from punishing me or other pro-union workers before we have free and fair elections at my hospital? Good question. The first thing to understand is that it's illegal under federal law to threaten or punish a worker for being pro-union.

Excerpts from the National Labor Relations Act:

“Employees shall have the right to self-organization, to form, join, or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and to engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection...”

“...It shall be an unfair labor practice for an employer to interfere with, restrain, or coerce employees in the exercise of the rights guaranteed in [this law], [or] by discrimination in regard to hire or tenure of employment or any term or condition of employment to encourage or discourage membership in any labor organization.”



“After working 40 hours a week for almost 10 years at my hospital, they cut my hours without reason, and now as a part-time employee I can't afford the higher rate of my health insurance. My supervisor told me if I don't like it, I can leave. I want a union for respect and dignity at work.”

- Millicent Grant, Patient Care Assistant, Brigham & Women's Hospital

What's in a FREE & FAIR election code of conduct?

A free and fair union election code of conduct means that as employees we 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 these principles:

- As hospital workers, we would be allowed to make our own decision to join together as a union;
- Hospital executives would not devote patient care funds to run an anti-union campaign;
- Hospital workers would not be forced into meetings and taken away from patient care duties to be persuaded not to join 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 fairly, and the election results would be honored, whatever the outcome;
- Management and the union agree not to violate any labor laws;
- This code of conduct would be agreed to in writing, so that it is legally enforceable.



“My co-workers and I got tired of being mistreated.”

My old director used to remind me that my children wouldn't have insurance if I lost my job. I left the Beth Israel Deaconess because no one needs to be treated like that. Now, I am happy to be a member of 1199SEIU at another hospital, where workers can count on being treated with dignity and respect, and where we have a union.”

- Anthony Patti, former skilled maintenance worker at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, now an 1199SEIU member at Cambridge Health Alliance

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

for non-union hospital workers

Q: What are we asking the hospital CEOs to agree to?

A: A written commitment for free and fair union elections: free for workers to make up their own minds, free of management intimidation, under fair secret ballot voting conditions.

Q: Why should hospital workers unionize?

A: What would you change in your workplace if you could change anything? Too many hospital workers can't afford health insurance for their families or pay their rent. **We want to be able to bargain for the kinds of improvements in our hospitals that we've won elsewhere: better pay and benefits, better staffing levels, a voice in how care is delivered to our patients, and basic respect and fair treatment.**

Q: How can unionizing improve patient care?

A: It can help us, as the people closest to the patients (along with doctors and RNs), to advocate for our patients; unionized healthcare workers have won safer staffing levels.

Q: Why do you think they'll agree to it?

A: We have the support of the public and elected officials, including the Boston City Council, Mayor Menino, community organizations, religious organizations, members of the state legislature and thousands of members from our union and other unions.

Q: Don't we have to pay dues when we vote to unionize?

A: Actually no, although managers often describe it that way, incorrectly. Once we vote to unionize, by law management must bargain with us over wages, benefits and working conditions. Later, you'll elect a bargaining committee of your most respected co-workers. After they have bargained the best contract they believe we can negotiate, all workers will *then* vote to approve the contract and will not pay dues until that vote.

Q: Have other hospitals signed these kinds of agreements?

A: Yes, several hospitals in Massachusetts:

- Boston Medical Center: three elections were held under accords (1996, 1997, 2005)
- Trustees of Boston City Hospital in 1993
- Whidden Memorial Hospital had two elections between 2000 and 2002
- UMass Medical Center, Worcester had an election in 1999

Elsewhere in the country, many health systems have negotiated free and fair election codes of conduct, including The New York League of Voluntary Hospitals, Kaiser Permanente (largest U.S. private non-profit healthcare provider), HCA (world's largest for-profit healthcare corporation), Tenet, Catholic Healthcare West, Allina Health, Daughters of Charity and many other hospitals throughout the United States.