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STEWARDS UPDATE

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Health and Safety Program Kicked Off at Meijer Local Unions, Company Work Together to Improve Workplace Safety

UFCW 951 has joined forces with other UFCW local unions and Meijer to achieve a common goal -- safe workplaces.

"Making sure UFCW members are safe at work is a top priority for the union, and a goal that is shared by the Meijer company who lists a safe workplace as one of their core values," John Cakmakci, UFCW 951 president, said. "However, just calling something a priority doesn't make it happen. It takes work and follow through, which is why the four UFCW local unions representing Meijer workers decided to kick off a coordinated health and safety campaign at the company in September."

FACT: In 2014, 4,679 U.S. workers died on the job.

Working with the UFCW International's health and safety expert, the locals divided a typical Meijer store into several major areas and developed a health and safety audit for each area. A different area of the store is audited by the union for health and safety issues every month.

Areas that need attention or correction from Meijer are noted on the audit form which is then forwarded to

Stewards Play Important Role in the New Safety Program

UFCW 951 expects union stewards at Meijer to help make this health and safety program a success. Stewards are needed to assist with audits, sit on safety committees, confirm that corrections have been made, and talk to members about health and safety issues. If you are not involved in the safety program in at least one of these ways, contact your union representative. Together, we can create safer workplaces.

the store's health and safety committee. Using their internal process, the committee works with store leadership to correct the issues. Each week, union representatives follow up on their audit making note of when corrections are made and/or scheduled.

"Meijer has a good system in place for dealing with these issues with their safety committees," Cakmakci said. "Thus far, the committees have been able to fix the bulk of the issues that needed correction; very few grievances have been filed."

To date, health and safety audits have been conducted in the parking lot, service area, back room and loading dock areas. Additional audits will take place in the bakery, deli, meat department, and other parts of the store.

"We have seen many positive changes as a result of the audits. Burned out lights in the employee parking lot, frayed electrical cords and anti-fatigue mats have been replaced. Broken

FACT: 75% of all workplace injuries occur in the service industry.

roller systems in receiving areas and malfunctioning check lane swing arms have been repaired. Many potentially harmful situations in Meijer stores in Michigan, Ohio and Kentucky are being fixed as a result of the union's audits," Cakmakci said. "This makes the stores safer for all Meijer workers as well as the store's customers."

The coordinated effort by the four local unions representing Meijer workers has been beneficial.

"Working together, the locals can ensure that issues are handled consistently -- from Petoskey to Dayton and Benton Harbor to Louisville," Cakmakci said. "Together we are stronger."

Help Spread the Word

Come join us at the UFCW 951 Holiday Parties!



Join UFCW 951 for its annual holiday parties. The parties will feature food, door prizes, children's activities and photos with Santa. The celebrations are open to all members and their family and friends. Tickets are \$2 per person with all proceeds being donated to the UFCW 951 Foundation. All parties are from 5 - 8 p.m. Volunteers are needed at all locations. If you are interested in helping at the parties or purchasing tickets, please contact your union representative at 1.800.999.0951.

Grand Rapids	Lansing	Jackson	Saginaw
December 1	December 9	December 10	December 15
UFCW 951	UAW 652	Commonwealth	Pulaski Hall
3270 Evergreen Drive NE	426 Clare St.	Commerce Center	6525 Weiss St.
		209 E. Washington Ave.	



You've Read the Update

Now take the quiz at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NovemberStewardQuiz>

UFCW 951 has incorporated online quizzes to its steward training program. Be sure to take this month's quiz. It's short and will let your union representative know you've read the November Steward Update.

Steward Spotlight: Cynthia Clave, Ready to Lend a Helping Hand

Cynthia Clave, from Meijer #57 in Rochester Hills, has been a steward since 2011. However, even before Clave became a steward, she was already helping her fellow UFCW 951 members.

"I had a lot of people ask me questions about the union. I would go find the answers and get back to them,"

giving person who is the first to volunteer her time to help members. Most recently, she volunteered at the UFCW 951 sponsored food truck in Pontiac and delivered food to members who couldn't make it to the event. Clave also brought along her grandchildren to the food truck, using it as an opportunity

sure to stay and help until the fundraiser is over.

"I'm glad that when people are sick and need help, the union is there for them. I hate to see people struggle, and I'm glad I can help them," Clave said.

Clave's vocal, proactive approach to being a steward allows her to help both new and long-term members, according to Schulz.

"Cindy has helped numerous members understand the point system and how to access it on the computer. She has guided people whose careers at Meijer were uncertain and helped mold them into productive long-term employees, which is not only sustainable for the union but for Meijer as well," he said. "In a right to work environment, it is necessary to foster and grow membership. Cindy's efforts aid this by allowing the local to retain quality, long-term members who see first hand the strength of solidarity."

"I want to help people beyond their hours at Meijer. That's what stewards are supposed to do. We're supposed to go above and beyond. I feel it's important to help people as best as possible with what they need. I help people if they are having problems with their family, transportation back and forth to work, and other issues. I want to help them out as a steward and as a person." Cynthia Clave, Meijer #57



Clave said. "Now I can do it better."

Clave was nominated for the Steward Spotlight by her union representative, Jeff Schulz, who calls Clave a kind and

to teach them the importance of service to others. UFCW 951 Foundation membership fundraisers are especially important to Clave, who always makes

Warn Members that Misuse of Coupons Can Cost them their Job

Members trying to save money by using a coupon they were not issued stand to lose something of much greater value -- their job. Members can and have been terminated for theft for using coupons that were given to them by a family member, friend or customer, or that they found. This includes a member who was given a pharmacy coupon by a friend to help with her medical bills.

Stewards need to educate members on the dangers of coupon fraud. Inform members at your store that unless they have received a coupon during a transaction in which they were the paying customer, THEY MUST NOT USE IT! Additionally, members should not give discarded coupons to other members or to customers. A member's seniority or excellent work record cannot save them from termination for this

type of coupon fraud.

"It's unfortunate, but some members who are terminated for misusing coupons didn't know they had done something wrong. They thought it was okay to use a coupon given to them by a well-meaning friend or customer who thought that they were helping them out by giving them the coupon instead of throwing it away," John Cakmakci, UFCW 951 president, said. "Make no mistake though, to the company these coupons are not valueless scraps of paper. They have actual financial value to retailers; when they are not used by the person they were meant for, this represents a loss for the company. So when employees misuse coupons, it is considered stealing."

Retailers monitor closely for coupon fraud, especially among employees.



Using a \$20 pharmacy coupon given to her by a customer who knew she had a medical condition that required costly prescriptions cost one member her job.

Technology has made it very easy for companies to catch employees who misuse coupons. They track which transactions generate coupons, as well as who uses those coupons.

UFCW 951 urges stewards to help protect members by educating them about the consequences of misusing coupons.

From the President

The Time Has Come for Predictable Scheduling

The most common complaints I hear from members, especially those who work in retail, concern the uncertainty of their schedules.

Week to week scheduling takes a serious toll on their personal lives as it makes it nearly impossible to plan anything, including doctor's appointments, care for family members and participating in children's events, more than a week in advance. This lack of notice also creates difficulties for workers who have more than one job or who need to make special arrangements to have others drive them to work.

Not only does week to week scheduling lead to job dissatisfaction, it is also a major contributor to the extremely high turnover experienced by employers still using this type of scheduling. Workers decide the personal sacrifices they have to make because of the uncertainty of their schedules just isn't worth it. As soon as they find a position with a more predictable schedule, they take it.

Yes, predictable scheduling does exist. It has been common in many industries for years. It is fairly typical for schedules to be written at least a month out in health care professions. Technology has

made it possible for employers in other industries, including retail, to implement predictable scheduling practices where workers know their schedules at least two weeks in advance.

Several states and municipalities outside of Michigan are pursuing legislation that would mandate predictable scheduling along with other scheduling requirements. These are going to be long, hard fights, and it will likely be years before any meaningful legislation is passed. However, UFCW 951 members have an opportunity to achieve predictable scheduling much sooner -- through their contract negotiations.

Next year, UFCW 951 will be negotiating several contracts and will be proposing predictable scheduling to employers where uncertain schedules are a problem. While we won't be able to achieve the year-in-advance scheduling rights unionized workers in Sweden enjoy, I do believe solid, predictable scheduling language is a realistic goal for our upcoming contract negotiations.

Predictable scheduling is universally supported by the membership. Employers however, need to see its value.

Fortunately, studies exist showing

predictable scheduling benefits employers as well as workers. Predictable scheduling has been proven to reduce turnover, which is an extremely costly problem for many employers. A high turnover rate can cost large employers millions, even billions, of dollars annually.

In addition to aiding in the retention of workers, predictable schedules also help employers attract quality workers. The inability of retailers to be fully staffed results in many problems including unstocked shelves, long check out lines, poor customer service and high overtime payments. All of which negatively impact their bottom line.

Studies have also shown that while they thought they would dislike predictable scheduling, store and department level management give the practice high marks after implementation. Managers actually found they spent less time writing schedules and dealing with scheduling issues after adopting predictable scheduling practices. They also like the positive impact predictable scheduling had on their hiring abilities and in creating a more stable and happier workforce.

I expect employers to tell the union they cannot afford to switch to predictable scheduling; our job is to convince them they can't afford not to.

Stewards can help us achieve this goal by talking to members about predictable scheduling and the union's goal to move employers toward this type of contract language in our upcoming contract negotiations.



John Cakmakci
President

Stewards Must Inform the Union After Filing a Grievance

After filing a grievance, stewards are required to complete the following two steps. **Failure to comply with this requirement is grounds for removal from the steward position.**

1. Immediately notify your union representative that the grievance was filed.

2. Forward the grievance to the UFCW 951 office within seven days of filing by one of the following means:

- Fax: 616.447.1000
- Email: grievance@ufcwlocal951.com
- Call the Grievance Hotline at

1.800.999.0951 ext. 168 and provide:

1. Your name and unit number
2. The grievant's full name and last four digits of his/her social security number
3. Nature of the grievance
4. Date of the infraction
5. Description of facts
6. Date the Step 1 was filed
7. The unit manager's name