



Union Strong The Benefits of Union Membership



UNION RECOGNITION

- Workers whose job titles are represented by DC 37 have the right to join the union on their first day on the job.
- Nationally, only 7 percent of the private sector workforce has union representation. The union

membership rate for public sector employees is 34.4 percent. In New York, 93 percent of the public sector workforce is unionized.

THE WORKWEEK

- DC 37 has fought for a fixed workweek so members can enjoy more leisure time and time with their families. The typical workweek for full-time workers represented by the union is 35 hours.
- For non-union workers, the 40-hour workweek is a myth. Nearly 20 percent work 60 hours a week or longer—and less than 50 percent have overtime pay.

HOLIDAYS

- Most DC 37 members have 11 or 12 paid holidays, depending on when they were hired.
- The typical worker in the United States has eight paid holidays. Unfortunately, many workers without union representation have even fewer than that.

VACATION

- The typical DC 37 member with a 35-hour workweek gets 15 days of paid vacation (annual leave) per year during his or her first five years on the job. After five years of employment, additional days are added on certain anniversary dates.
- One in four non-union workers do not have any paid vacation days — or even holidays.



SICK DAYS

- DC 37 members earn 10 days of sick pay annually during their first five years on the job. Additional days — up to 12 — are added as they continue to work for the city.



- In the United States, 36 percent of the workforce — 41 million people — do not have paid sick days.

JOB SECURITY

- DC 37 members have due process rights that protect them from wrongful termination. In addition, the city must notify the union 30 days before layoffs. During that period, the city and union explore alternatives, such as reassignments.
- In the United States, workers lack job security unless they have a written employment contract. That means they can be fired without cause, notice or an independent hearing.

HEALTH INSURANCE

- DC 37 members do not have to make premium contributions for their health-care coverage. DC 37 fights to preserve benefits and adequate funding for health coverage.
- In 2016, the average annual premium contribution of a worker in the private sector was \$1,129 a year for an individual health-care plan and \$5,227 for a family plan, according to the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation.

RETIREMENT SECURITY

- DC 37 members and retirees enjoy a traditional pension, which guarantees them a steady income based on their years of service and salary. The New York State Constitution protects our retirees from benefit reductions.



DC 37 is about more than winning a raise. Through negotiations with the city over many years, the union built up a comprehensive benefits package, which serves as a model for unions around the country. Here we highlight many of the benefits and protections that DC 37 has won at the bargaining table or established on its own.

DC 37 trustees sit on the boards of the New York City Employees' Retirement System and the Board of Education Retirement System to monitor investments and look out for the interests of retirees and future retirees.

- Today, the most common employer-sponsored retirement plan is the 401(k) plan — which subjects account holders' savings to the volatility of the stock market — instead of a traditional pension. Forty percent of employees have only \$10,000 in their accounts — far below what is needed for a comfortable retirement.

About half of working-age households in the United States don't have a retirement savings account.

GRIEVANCES

- Our grievance system allows DC 37 members to fight workplace abuses, out-of-title work, improper disciplinary action and firings.
- Grievance systems are rare at non-unionized companies. Aggrieved workers must hire a lawyer to deal with cases of serious workplace abuse and wrongful termination.

EXTRA PAY

- DC 37 members earn extra pay through night-shift and assignment differentials, overtime pay, and pay increases based on years of service. Over time, these permanent payments can add thousands of dollars to a worker's salary.
- Non-unionized workers in the private sector are left on their own to negotiate additional pay.



DC 37 PROGRAMS AND BENEFITS

- DC 37 bargains with the city to provide funds for a number of benefits, including legal assistance, dental and drug coverage, and counseling. These benefits save members hundreds of dollars — even thousands, in the case of the drug benefit.
- Non-unionized companies generally do not offer such a comprehensive benefits packet.

Here are some of the union benefits:

LEGAL HELP

DC 37 offers free help for wills, real estate closings, Chapter 7 bankruptcy, citizenship, identify theft, uncontested divorces and housing court cases.

EDUCATION

The DC 37 Education Fund provides many courses for members, including prep classes for civil service exams. Members receive up to \$800 a year for college courses. Over the years, the union has helped thousands of members earn college degrees.

COUNSELING

DC 37 offers free short-term individual counseling and free group sessions on such matters as bereavement, anger management and stress management.

HOUSING

DC 37's Municipal Employees Housing Program provides members with affordable housing services. The program has helped hundreds of members with both rentals and purchases.

Through this program, members are eligible for a 5 percent preference for Dept. of Housing Preservation and Development rental apartments, which are available through a lottery.

- In the private sector, workers generally do not have such rich programs as DC 37 members enjoy.

WORKPLACE SAFETY AND PROTECTIONS

- DC 37 enforces the right of its members to clean, safe and sanitary working conditions.
- Workers assaulted on the job are entitled to up to 18 months of paid leave. Members working extensively with computers have the right to periodic breaks, eyeglasses and ergonomic equipment.

For additional information, go to www.dc37.net