

***For workers, now more than ever...***

# **We're All In This Together!**

## ***Find out:***

- **What do unions do? How could a union help me?**
- **How much does a union cost? What are dues for?**
- **How do I join?**
- **About SEIU Local 888.**

## **What do unions do?**

By uniting with others who do the same type of work, employees have a stronger voice on the job and in your community--and you can help create a better future for yourself and all Americans.

*Here are five good reasons to join your co-workers in a union:*

1. Working together, union members have the strength to win better wages, affordable health care, a secure retirement, and safer workplaces.
2. The "union advantage" is substantial. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, union members are much more likely to have health benefits and pensions.
3. For people of color and women workers, the union impact is even greater. Women workers who are union members earn nearly \$9,000 a year more than their non-union counterparts. For African-American workers, the union differential is also about \$9,000, and for Latino workers the yearly advantage is more than \$11,000.
4. In addition to helping employees win better wages and benefits, unions help all workers by giving working families a stronger voice in our communities, in the political arena, and in the global economy.
5. By joining together, we can build strength to hold our elected officials accountable, stop the "race to the bottom" by employers who cut wages and benefits in favor of bigger profits, and win improvements such as affordable, quality health care for all.



## **How could a union help me?**

*Without a union,* workers are "employees at will." That means your boss makes all of the decisions about how people are treated. Management is free to let you go or change your working conditions at any time or for just about any reason.

*With a union,* you gain the right to bargain as a group over your pay and working conditions. The right to negotiate with your employer gives everyone a meaningful voice -- not only in your terms and conditions of employment -- but in your day-to-day work life.

Once you negotiate a contract with your employer, your pay, benefits, promotions, holidays and vacations, etc. will be spelled out in writing. The union contract has job security and grievance provisions. It is enforceable in a court of law.

Unions are every working person's best defense against employer excesses and mistakes, and they are the way our collective voice is heard. Belonging to a union also means that membership in a shared community of interest where people support each other and make lifelong friendships.

## How much does a union cost? What are dues for?

A union is a workplace organization that is of, by and for its members. Members pay dues to support and sustain the mission of the union. Dues pay for support staff who assist members to negotiate their union contract and make sure the employer abides by it. SEIU Local 888's dues are 1.6 percent of your base pay. Members don't pay dues until the first contract is negotiated and ratified by a majority of the membership. If you value your job and want a career with job security, dues are a small price to pay.

### ***Dues provide members with:***

- **Representation and legal services**

Winning good union contracts requires skilled negotiators and union reps who assist your negotiating team. Making the employer live up to the terms of a contract requires well-trained stewards and support from Local 888's reps and legal team.

- **Internal and external communications**

Local 888 members may need media campaigns, public relations and opinion surveys to support collective bargaining. Dues also pay for materials for rallies and events; publications for various union programs, including Local 888's newsletter, "*The Spark*."

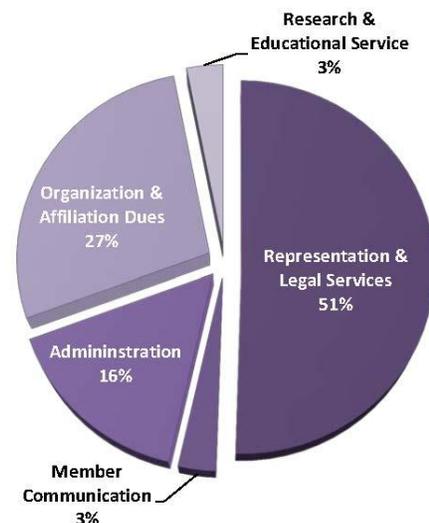
Mobilizing Local 888 members to campaign for better legislation and improved public services at the local, state and federal level.

- **Defending job standards by uniting more public service workers**

SEIU Local 888 members can't defend their job standards without new organizing. Towards that end, the Organizing Department is focused on assisting workers in public and private units to unite to improve job quality through collective bargaining. Successful organizing is done best by Local 888 members who are trained to become volunteer member organizers.

- **Training and research services**

Training for union leaders and stewards; programs on civil and human rights, equal opportunity; Union initiatives supported by smart financial and statistical research.



- **Administration**

Rent for SEIU Local 888 union hall and three field offices, information technology, human resources, and general overhead; insurance, accounting, legal and audit services and organizational and affiliation dues.

- **Affiliations**

SEIU Local 888 is affiliated with the Service Employees International Union and the AFL-CIO. More info on left panel.

## How do I join?

Massachusetts has "majority sign up recognition" for public employees. That means if a majority of your co-workers sign a petition or cards clearly indicating that you desire collective bargaining on wages and working conditions, your employer is obligated to recognize your union.

But forming a union isn't just "signing up." Forming a union means sticking together for the betterment of all and building an on-the-job organization with chapter chairs and stewards to make sure that everyone is respected and the contract is followed.

## Is it safe to organize a union? Could I lose my job?

It is against the law for an employer to retaliate or discriminate against any employee who promotes or organizes for a union.

In the rare case where an employee is discriminated against, the employee or the union can file charges with the state's Department of Labor Relations or with the National Labor Relations Board.

## About SEIU Local 888



Founded in 2003, SEIU Local 888 unites more than 8,500 public service and higher education workers. Union members provide vital support and services in cities and towns and colleges and universities throughout the Commonwealth. Local 888 believes in the dignity and worth of the services our members provide. Local 888 is dedicated to improving the lives of our members, their families and the communities we serve.

### *Every day, Local 888 members provide important and vital public services; we:*

- Maintain public streets, plow snow, fix potholes, water/sewer lines and tend bridges;
- Provide support for staff at local colleges and universities;
- Dispatch emergency services;
- Inspect elevators and escalators for public safety;
- Provide safe passage on Steamship ferries;
- Care for veterans;
- Provide school children with nutritious meals;
- Implement public health programs; run housing authorities;
- Process permits, coordinate services, and administer payrolls;
- Support teachers, implement IEP's, teach preschool-aged children;
- Make nutritious meals, maintain public schools and drive school buses;
- Operate an effective and efficient state lottery system.

## Service Employees International Union

Local 888 is part of the [Service Employees International Union](#), an organization of 2.1 million members. SEIU is the fastest-growing union in North America. Focused on uniting workers in public, property, and health care services to improve their lives and the services they provide.

### SEIU State Council

Local 888 is part of a state council that represents all SEIU locals in the Massachusetts, uniting over 75,000 members. The council works to coordinate and unify the locals' programs and campaigns, such as those that are legislative and political in nature, to meet members' shared goals.

Local 888 is also affiliated to the [Massachusetts AFL-CIO](#), four regional labor councils, [Jobs with Justice](#) (a statewide coalition for workers' rights) and the Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety & Health ([MassCOSH](#))

**For more information about SEIU Local 888  
and how union membership makes us strong!**

### SEIU Local 888 offices and contact info:

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