

LOCAL 73 WORKERS FIGHT BACK!

UIC SEIU 73 Employees
Membership Guide

Fall 2021



Celebrating the Anniversary of Our Strike

THIS SEPTEMBER, WE ARE CELEBRATING THE ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF OUR HISTORIC STRIKE AT UIC.

One year ago, thousands of UIC SEIU 73 workers took the streets demanding that UIC protect, respect, and pay us for the work we do. After over a year of contract negotiations that went nowhere, UIC clerical, technical, service, and professional workers came together to fight for the contract that we deserved.

As each day of the strike went on, we showed management that we refused to settle for less than we deserved. We picketed outside UIC buildings, from West Campus to Peoria, and took street corner after street corner. We stopped deliveries from going through. We stood with fellow union members in the Illinois Nurses Association (INA). We marched to UIC Chancellor Michael Amiridis' house. We even went downtown and took Michigan Avenue for the first time in recent 73 history!

After ten days on the picket line, [73 members successfully shut down the construction site across from the hospital.](#) That afternoon, the contracts were settled, and the strike was called off! Workers won significant across the board raises, annual market analysis of their titles, increases to hourly differentials, and established bilingual certification bonuses. Most importantly, we sent a message to UIC that from that day forward UIC employees were united.

After the strike, dozens of members stepped up to take on leadership roles in their workplace. Since then, over 50 stewards have been hard at work overseeing the implementation of the contract and responding to the myriad of issues that arise in the workplace. Here are some of the most significant victories we accomplished in the last year:



Celebrating the Anniversary of Our Strike

- Established regular meetings for our Stewards and appointed a committee of Chief Stewards to lead our union at UIC.
- Two-thirds of members in the Professionals bargaining unit (the only bargaining unit that does not have steps in the contract) saw significant market increases in addition to the Year 1 and Year 2 raises.
- Represented employees through grievance hearings, pre-disciplinary meetings, and coaching and counseling sessions.
- Put together a review process for us to systematically address equity issues that arise in the contract.
- Your stewards started meeting with management regularly through Labor Management Meetings to work through and address different concerns and issues in the workplace.



"Since the strike, we've seen stewards under different contracts come together and empower each other to help members resolve workplace issues. We have strong lines of communication with our committed Union Organizers who continuously structure the process so that our voices are heard and contracts are enforced. Management is seeing a new era of the union that will not allow violations to our contracts be swept under the rug."

**Mirella "Layla" Campos
Medical Assistant OCC**



Looking Ahead To Year 3 of the Contract

Next year, we have four priorities as a union.

- Enforce every word of the contract using every tool we have available, through grievances, worksite actions, and labor management meetings.
- Advocate for employees through the next stage of the COVID-19 pandemic. Whether that means bargaining over UIC policies, fighting for safe worksite conditions, or assisting employees in receiving fair accommodations.
- Turn ourselves towards the future and begin thinking about what we want our union to fight for in the next contract and beyond.
- Grow our committee of trained union stewards and activists who can work together to represent all UIC employees.

Upcoming Member Meetings

Fight Back Trainings: Enforcing your contract in the workplace: These short training sessions will cover employee's rights in the workplace, rights under the union contract, and the tools that you and your co-workers have to enforce those rights. Virtual and in person training sessions should be scheduled for your department or work area. Reach out to your steward or union staff representative to schedule a training and a time to distribute the contracts for your area.

Fall 2021 Membership Meetings: We are committed to transparency and open communication so that every member has the opportunity to be a part of our discussions and decisions regarding the direction of our union. Our goal is to hold mass membership meetings every Fall and Spring. Please save the date and RSVP now for one of the two Fall membership meetings via the [UIC Updates page](#) or below.

[Thursday, November 11 at 6:00pm](#)

[Saturday, November 13 at 10:00am](#)



Nominate yourself or someone else to be a steward: Fill out the [nomination form](#) to nominate yourself or someone else in your area to take on a leadership role in building your union! If you want to be involved, but you aren't ready to be a steward, you can volunteer to be a worksite activist. Worksite activists are invited into the same communication networks as stewards, but they are not expected to handle grievances. After filling out the nomination form, the first step towards becoming a steward is to get signatures from the majority of co-workers in your area by passing around the [Steward Election Petition](#). You can find a copy of both of these forms linked on the [UIC Updates page](#) under "Resources & Links."



Your Guide to Enforcing Your Rights as Union Members

As union represented employees, there are multiple avenues and routes you can take to enforce your contract and advocate for your rights in the workplace. Your stewards have been hard at work developing processes and practices to make it easier for members to fight back against problems that occur in the workplace.

Read ahead to find answers to common questions that come up regarding issues and concerns in the workplace. For a complete understanding of your rights, you need to read and review your union contract.



Enforcing the contract is about power.

Reverend Martin Luther King described power as “the ability to achieve purpose” and “the strength required to bring about social, political and economic change.” Our strength as a union comes from the unity and organization of our membership. When workers stand together to fight, we have power in numbers. The more power we have, the more effective we are as a union. No matter how we enforce the contract, it's an exercise in power.

Know your rights as a union member.

- **Right to the Collective Bargaining Process.** As a union member, you have the right to collective bargaining, which results in a Collective Bargaining Agreement, also known as a CBA, which you are represented by. Every few years, the contract expires and we have the right to return to the bargaining table to fight for what is already in the contract and improve on it. If the employer makes any changes to the terms and conditions of your employment prior to the next contract being open, then the union has the right to partake in “impact bargaining” over that change.
- **The right to concerted collective activity.** That means that you cannot be retaliated against for coordinating with your coworkers to circulate a petition, demand a meeting with your supervisor, or wearing purple clothes, stickers or buttons.
- **Right to file a grievance.** If you believe that a violation of the contract has occurred, then you have the right to file a grievance on the violation.
- **Weingarten Rights.** If you are called into a meeting with your supervisor that could lead to discipline, you have the right to union representation.



Understanding the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) and Other Relevant Documents

The most important tool for you to have is your CBA. You should have a paper copy of your CBA, but you can also find PDFs of your CBA on the [SEIU 73 website contracts page](#). All union employees should feel comfortable and confident showing the contract language to your manager and pointing out potential contract violations in the worksite. However, the CBA is not the only document that you may use to enforce your rights in the workplace.

The [UIC Labor Agreements Web Page](#) is a helpful resource if you want to review the individual wage scales and appendixes for each contract. Refer to the “Resources” section of the [UIC Updates page](#) for a complete list of helpful links and resources. Please review the contract prior to contacting a steward or union staff representative. Some issues may have to do with UIC policies, which can vary from department to department. Please try to identify which policy you have concerns with prior to reaching out for assistance.



Filing Grievances to Address Worksite Issues

After consulting the CBA and other relevant documents, you may determine that a contract violation has occurred. If that is the case, then you have the right to file a grievance about that violation. Grievance goes through 3 different steps. Most grievances start at Step 1, which is when the grievance is filed directly with your supervisor. If the grievance is not resolved there, then it will go to Step 2, which is filed with Labor Relations. The final step of a grievance is Step 3, which is filed with the Office of the President at UIC. If a grievance is still not resolved, then it may go to Arbitration, which is when the university and the union take the issue to a third party to make a ruling. Contact your steward or union staff representative in filing a grievance for assistance in filing a grievance. You can also contact the [Member Action Center](#) at (312) 787-5868 or mac@seiu73.org.



Invoking your Weingarten rights for a Pre-Disciplinary Meeting and/or a Coaching and Counseling Meeting

If you find yourself in a situation where you are scheduled to meet with a supervisor for any discussion that could potentially lead to discipline, you should directly ask the supervisor "Could this meeting result in discipline?" If they said "yes," then you can invoke your Weingarten Rights and request union representation prior to the meeting taking place. Reach out to your steward or union staff representative for assistance.



Requesting Labor Management Meetings

Under the contract, you and your coworkers have the right to request Labor Management Meetings. These meetings are opportunities for employees to discuss ongoing worksite issues and concerns outside of the grievance process. The union requests these meetings, writes the agenda, and requests attendees. Your stewards are committed to holding these meetings regularly so we can sit across the table from management and work through our concerns. If you think that requesting a Labor Management meeting is the appropriate way to address your concern, reach out to your steward or union staff representative.

Mobilizing Your Coworkers to Address Worksite Issues

At the end of day, if there is an issue in your department, you have the right to mobilize your coworkers and fight back - no matter what the contract says. Consider circulating petitions, collecting statements from your coworkers, or demanding a meeting with your supervisor. When you and your coworkers are united in fighting back against management, you have power in numbers. Ask your coworkers, “what are we willing to do to address our concerns?” and then make a plan from there!

General Pay Concerns

Prior to reaching out to the union, please attempt to figure out the issue directly with HR and Payroll at UIC. The union doesn't cut your paychecks, so we don't have immediate access to all the information and documents about your pay. You can use this contact email for everyday questions or concerns about your pay: uichrscivilservice@uillinois.edu. If the issue does not get resolved through HR and Payroll, then reach out to your steward or union staff representative.



Annual Raises

The annual raises take effect the first day of full pay period after the end of the previous year for each respective agreement. Year 3 raise is 2%. Year 4 raise is 1.5% or campus wage, whichever is greater.

- Professional = effective first day of the first full pay period after August 16
- Clericals = effective first day of the first full pay period after August 27
- Service = effective first day of the first full pay period after October 4
- Technical = effective first day of the first full pay period after December 17

If you do not see your raise applied in the timeline above, reach out to your steward or union staff representative.

Understanding and Enforcing Pay Differentials

Make sure that your pay differentials are correct. The language in the contracts are vary so you need to look at your contract to know exactly what you are entitled to. Below is a brief summary of who is eligible for the various differentials.

- **Technical:** On Call, Evening, Night, Weekend, and Float differentials are posted on the [Appendix B portion of the contract](#), which can be found on the [UIC Labor Agreements page](#). The evening, weekend, and night differentials all increased by \$0.50 more than they were previously. Charge pay is \$2.00 an hour. Preceptor pay is \$1.00 an hour.
- **Service:** All service employees qualify for Evening & Weekend differentials of \$0.50 an hour and night differentials of \$0.75 an hour. Building Service Workers assigned to the hospital and clinics qualify for \$0.50 an hour.
- **Clerical:** Hourly employees at the hospital qualify for Evening & Weekend differentials of \$0.50 an hour, and night differentials of \$0.75 an hour.
- **Professional:** Hourly employees qualify for Evening & Weekend differentials of \$0.50 an hour, and night differentials of \$0.75 an hour.



Merit Increases

The contracts do not preclude anyone from receiving a merit increase, but they don't guarantee it either. It is up to the discretion of the department to award merit increases. If you have been told that you can't receive a merit increase due to the union, then contact your steward or union staff representative.

Understanding the Market Analysis

Every year, UIC will review each title and compare that title to the market. Each title is entitled to one market analysis of their title each year. To qualify for a market increase, the title must be 3% or below the market. However, even if the title is 3% or below the market, the contract allows the university the ability to determine increases based on the budgetary needs of the department. This means that not all market analyses will result in an increase. The union and the university are currently in a grievance dispute over the union's right to see the market survey data, which would make it much more feasible for the union to hold the university accountable to paying employees fairly according to the market. If you believe your title is below the market, the contract gives you the right to request a market analysis at any time during the year. To request a market analysis, reach out to your steward or union staff representative.

Receiving Your Bilingual Certification Bonuses

One of the big wins in our last contract was establishing a \$750 bonus for certified bilingual employees who work at UI Health and Division of Specialized Care for Children. In June, the university released a [policy for the bilingual certification bonuses](#). If you believe you are entitled to this bonus, but you have not yet received it, report your concern on the [Certification Tracking Form](#). You can find a copy of this policy and the tracking form linked on the [UIC Updates page](#) under "Resources & Links."



Receiving Your Professional Certification Bonus

In this last contract, the certification bonus for professionals increased to \$500. Each department is supposed to release a list of the eligible certifications for the bonus. If your department has not released that list or if you have questions or concerns with the list of certifications for whatever reason, please report your issues on the [Certification Tracking Form](#). You can find a copy of the tracking form linked on the [UIC Updates page](#) under “Resources & Links.”

Reporting & Addressing Management Misconduct at UIC

At UIC, Manager Misconduct is a common issue. There may be incidents where a manager has mistreated an employee, but their actions may not have violated the contract. If a contract violation has not occurred, then the issue cannot be resolved through the grievance process. In those cases If you believe that your manager has in any way targeted you in your department, we ask that you report it by filling out the [Manager Misconduct Form](#). All reports will first be reviewed by union stewards, who will reach out to you to discuss next steps for your situation. After consulting with a steward, the reports may also be filed with management directly to notify them of the concern. You can find a copy of this form linked on the [UIC Updates page](#) under “Resources & Links.”

Reporting & Addressing Concerns of a Pay Inequity

Inequities exist everywhere across UIC. In order to review these inequities in a systemic and fair manner, all employees who believe they have an inequity should first fill out the [Equity Concern Report Form](#). All reports will first be reviewed by union stewards, who will reach out to you to discuss next steps for your situation. After consulting with a steward, the reports may also be filed with management directly to notify them of the concern. You can find a copy of this form linked on the [UIC Updates page](#) under “Resources & Links”.



Reporting COVID19 Related Concerns

(Worksite Health & Safety Concerns, Abuse of Proof Status & Leave Policies, Abuse of the Mandatory Vaccination Policy, etc.)

If you feel that your department is mishandling the pandemic in any way, then we encourage you to fill out the [Tracking Form](#) for UIC COVID-19 Policy Related Issues. This form is NOT the same as a grievance, and filling it out doesn't mean that you will receive follow up. If you are looking for assistance, reach out to your steward or staff representative. However, the information from this form will be used in our discussions with management about any and all COVID-19 related policies. You can find a copy of this form linked on the [UIC Updates page](#) under “Resources & Links.”



Requesting a Desk Audit

If you are concerned that you are working out of your job title and doing the duties of a higher classification, then you can reach out to your department HR to request a desk audit. This means that your classification and position will be reviewed.

Bulletin Boards

Fighting for access to bulletin boards has been a long time struggle at UIC. Our contracts state that “The Employer will endeavor to provide reasonable bulletin board access to all stewards.” If you do not have reasonable access to the bulletin boards in your department or work area, reach out to your steward or union staff representative.



Posting & Filling Vacant Shifts

The contract requires that vacant shifts be posted for all employees to apply. Depending on the requirements of each contract, employees may be notified by email of vacancies, or the shifts may be posted to the [UIC Job Board](#). If two equally qualified employees bid for the same shift, then preference should be given to the employee with greater seniority. If someone was moved to a shift that was never posted, or if the less-seniority of two equally qualified employees was given the shift over their more senior coworker, reach out to your steward or union staff representative.

- Building Service Worker open shifts will be posted at Facilities Management, UI-Hospital and the College of Medicine Building

Posting & Filling Vacant Positions

The contract requires that vacant positions be posted for all employees to apply. Depending on the requirements of each contract, positions may be posted to the [UIC Job Board](#) and at work stations. The employer has the right to hire the most qualified applicant. For the Technical contract, if two or more employees with the same qualifications apply, then preference should be given to an employee within the department. If someone was hired for a position that was never posted, or if someone from outside the department was hired over someone in your department with equivalent qualifications, reach out to your steward or union staff representative.

Finding your Staff Representative

Your stewards are your primary advocates in the workplace. If you don't know who your steward is, then refer to the [UIC Updates page](#) to identify your steward or to find the contact information for the union staff representative assigned to your area.



Resources for UIC Members

Refer to the [UIC Updates page](#) often. There, you will find the following information:

- Updates about labor management, all affected grievances, and impact bargaining sessions for employees and any other important announcements
- Information about UIC COVID19 policies and vaccinations
- Information for any upcoming meetings
- List of stewards at UIC
- Contact information for UIC staff representatives
- A complete list of links and resources for UIC union employees to use

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