

# Rights at Work

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The very first people that will tell you complete and utter bullshit in hopes they can take more money from you is your employer.

Some common ways employers try to screw you

1. Wage Theft: If you are working, you have to get paid, this includes meetings and trainings. If they tell you to show up 30 minutes early to go over some company policy, they need to pay you for those 30 minutes. If they close the store but you are stuck cleaning the place up, you have to get paid for that. They do not have to pay you for a lunch break. Some states have more strict rules than others, i.e. new york is better than florida. If you suspect wage theft, speak up.

2. Making employees pay for business expenses: Employers are allowed to have a dress code, i.e. make you wear a generic black shirt, but if your uniform has a company logo or is specialty equipment, the employer must pay for that. They get to write it off of their taxes as its a business expense, so it doesn't even cost them much. Do not pay for anything thats a business expense.

3. Rules against discussion wages/salaries: It is illegal to tell employees they can't discuss their wages. You are allowed to freely discuss what you make. There could be some rules against spending work time doing this but you can do whatever you want on break and after work.

4. OSHA: The occupational health and safety act guarantees a safe workplace and employees do not have to do work that is dangerous and cannot be fired for doing so. Furthermore, employees are free to report unsafe work conditions to OSHA without fear of retaliation.

5. Protected Classes: This one might be more state specific and I am most familiar with New York: in New York you cannot be fired for being pregnant, for being old, for being black, for being gay. Employers will lose in court if they cannot prove employees were fired for other causes. A clear cut case is an employee announces they are pregnant and 3 days later the employee says they are going through layoffs and they were cut off. Unless the employer had CLEAR documentation you were being laid off before being told about the pregnancy, they will lose in court and you can sue for damages and lost income and lawyer feeds.

The more money you make and the easier you can get another job, the easier it is to fight your employer. I only say this because the united states generally has "at-will employment", which means you can quit for zero reason and employers can fire you for zero reason. That being said, employers cannot fire you for certain reasons, such as being pregnant or complaining about certain safety conditions. If they fire you after one of these certain reasons is present in you, then they basically have to prove they didn't fire you for that reason, otherwise an employment lawyer

will eat them up.

The most likely employer to break the law is a small mom and pop shops; so you work for your uncle's friend, he and 4 dudes mows lawns. Employment lawyers won't want to target him because he doesn't have that much money to sue for. If you work for a large company like walmart, you can almost guarantee they take a large effort to follow the law because anytime something is violated, you can get a free consultation and lawyers will be salivating to sue them for everything they got. Lawyers might be expensive and annoying, but they are critical to ensuring a fair and compliant society in the United States.

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