

# Organizing and Collective Bargaining Glossary of Terms

## TERMS USED IN AN ORGANIZING CAMPAIGN

- Authorization Cards:** Cards signed by employees, authorizing a particular union to represent them for the purpose of negotiating with the employer over wages, hours, and working conditions
- Bargaining Unit:** A group of employees who bargain collectively with their employer (In the private sector, the NLRB usually determines the bargaining unit when the employees file for an election.)
- Captive Audience Meetings:** Meetings held by employers with their employees on work time, during a union organizing drive (Employees are required to attend these meetings, at which the employer explains why they should vote against the union. They may or may not be allowed to speak.)
- Card Check Agreement:** An agreement by an employer to recognize a union provided a majority of the employees have signed cards authorizing the union to represent them
- Concerted Activity:** The legally protected activity of employees who are working together to affect their wages, hours, or working conditions, with or in the absence of union recognition by their employer
- National Labor Relations Act (NLRA):** The federal labor relations law which governs union organizing and collective bargaining in the private sector (see NLRB)
- National Labor Relations Board (NLRB):** The National Labor Relations Board administers the provision of the National Labor Relations Act
- Neutrality Agreement:** An agreement by an employer to remain neutral during a union organizing drive
- Unfair Labor Practice:** An action that violates provisions of national (NLRA) or state labor relations acts (Both unions and employers may be guilty of Unfair Labor Practices.)

## TERMS USED WHEN BARGAINING A CONTRACT

- Agency Shop:** A union security clause that requires an employee in the bargaining unit who refuses to join the union to pay a service fee to the union equal to union dues
- Arbitration:** A way of settling disputes by calling in an impartial third party, whose decision is final and binding on both parties
- Fact-Finding:** A method of resolving an impasse through investigation by a neutral third party who issues recommendations for settlement
- Good Faith Bargaining:** The mutual obligation of an employer and a union to meet at reasonable times and places, and make a sincere effort to reach an agreement
- Grievance Procedure:** The formal process for adjusting grievances through progressively higher levels of authority of union and management, usually with arbitration as the final step (see above)
- Impasse:** A deadlock in labor-management negotiations
- Management's Rights:** The rights of an employer to hire, suspend, or discharge employees and establish policy; usually defined in the contract
- Mediation:** The attempt by a neutral third party to get union and management to voluntarily agree when there is a dispute, or when impasse is eminent; in the private sector, mediation services are provided by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, which tracks the progress of negotiations in its jurisdiction
- Open Shop:** A company where union membership is not a condition of employment (see Agency Shop and Union Shop)
- Ratification:** The internal voting process for the formal approval of the contract negotiated by a union
- Union Shop:** A company in which every worker covered by the contract must become a member of the union; new workers are typically required to join after a certain number of days, usually 60 to 90 days

