

Why Walmart?

Our mission at Jobs with Justice is to build a strong, progressive labor movement that works in coalition with community, faith, and student organizations to build a broader global movement for economic and social justice. Our theory of change rests in the belief that in order to secure victories and institute long-term sustainable changes, we need to advocate around the root causes of the problems facing workers and communities. We firmly believe in the power of solidarity that contributes to building long-term relationships, which are nestled in the principles of reciprocity, mutual respect, and the conviction that our struggles for social justice cannot be undertaken separately. At the core of all of these beliefs is organizing, educating, and mobilizing working people and their allies to build collective power.

As the largest private sector employer in the United States, Walmart has enormous power to set trends, not just for the retail and service industries, but for the economy as a whole. Walmart workers, current and future, face exploitive wages and working conditions that have a ripple effect throughout all jobs.

So it should come as no surprise that Jobs with Justice would prioritize building a campaign strategy that unites workers with the communities they live in to change Walmart.

But *how* will we actually change such a massive company, embedded in right-wing, anti-union practices?

First, Jobs with Justice coalitions are building local campaigns to insist Walmart executives address the needs and standards of community members, democratically determining how the company expands into our neighborhoods. One such example includes the struggle for the Large Retailer Accountability Act in Washington, D.C.—an effort where community leaders joined existing workers to demand a living wage (\$12.50/hour) at retailers over 75,000 square feet.

Additionally, Jobs with Justice coalitions are in solidarity with workers—mobilizing the community to support them when they bravely speak out for dignity and respect. These community leaders include husbands and wives, clergy, retirees, children, and all kinds of friends of Walmart workers who stand with, or even more often, sing behind Walmart workers. Whether it is walking workers back to work after they have spoken out, mobilizing leaders and allies to observe the conditions of a Walmart supplier, or sharing their stories more widely, Jobs with Justice believes that the voice of workers should be a major factor in determining company policies and practices.

In all of these activities, we draw on some of our deepest core values:

- ✓ **Solidarity:** Be in strong solidarity with workers organizing to demand respect from Walmart.
- ✓ **Respect:** The principle of respect: where all of our actions and communications are filtered through a lens of respect for each other, the Walmart associates that we support, and the community in general.
- ✓ **Nonviolence:** The principles of nonviolence and non-property destruction: where we will not destroy property of any kind, make threats, and/or engage in any acts of violence

Walmart has not necessarily made the same commitment and has in fact routinely found ways to get around laws protecting workers. We seek to ensure that all laws protecting workers, their families, and their communities are enforced.

Some say that Walmart cannot be challenged. But many said the same about auto workers at Ford before 1935 or about janitors before 1985. Both victories not only changed the lives of the workers involved, but they raised the floor for working people and our communities across the country. They changed the entire economy for the better by creating sustainable jobs and dignity for our communities. **If we can change Walmart, we can improve the lives of all working people.**