



Will work for
FOOD

Walmart 

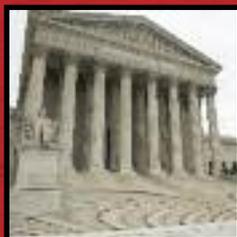
Why shopping here could
put you out of work

You get what
you pay for 



Down & Dirty

Supreme Court may soon deal Labor a major setback.



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Cash & College

You and your children may be eligible for college scholarships or tuition assistance.



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Grips & Grins

If Matt Bell is your Union Representative, your photo may be in this issue of Umagazine.



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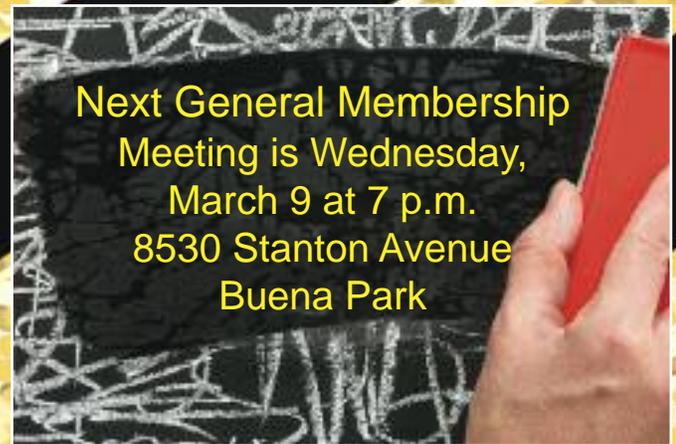
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- Withdrawal Card Request
- Change of Address Form

Member's name: _____

SSN: _____ DOB: _____

Address _____

City _____ zip _____

Phone # _____

email _____

If requesting withdrawal, what was your last day worked? _____

If we don't know where you live or how to reach you, there's no telling what you might miss out on in the future.

U have to tell us!

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Asst. Editor: Mercedes Clarke



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Monday-Friday

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Supreme Court may soon hand down decision that will hurt unions

If we all stopped paying our taxes on the grounds that we shouldn't be forced to support a government that makes laws we don't agree with there is no court in the land that will call that an exercise of free speech. As citizens of a civilized society, we are compelled by law to contribute to its daily operation and maintenance. Throughout history, those who have claimed the right to withhold that support have been rebuked. Those who insisted on exercising "free speech" by evading taxes have continued their "free speech" from inside a jail cell.

Sadly, the Supreme Court appears ready to disregard this long accepted line of reasoning and reward public sector workers who refuse to pay their fair share of collective bargaining activities.

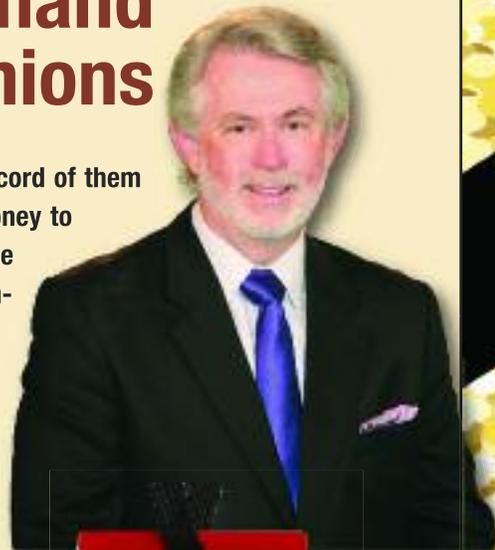
The case is known as *Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association*. The Court listened as lawyers for the plaintiffs argued that requiring public sector workers who don't join the union to pay fair share fees was unconstitutional. Courts have ruled over the years that because those workers benefit just as much as their union colleagues when a contract is negotiated they can be required to contribute to the costs of securing that contract in the form of "fair share fees." Most legal experts who listened to the arguments and questions from judges agreed that the majority sounded like they had already made up their minds in favor of the plaintiffs.

The case has been a major source of dread for the Labor Movement from the moment it decided to hear the case last year. A solid majority of the justices owe their positions to anti-union Republican Presidents and were expected to tow the party line until the bitter end.

Strangely, justices seemed to embrace the hollow argument that fair share fees require non-union workers to support activities they personally oppose. Apparently these plaintiffs took issue with the increase in pay, benefits and working conditions that came with their collective bargaining agreement. By the

way, we could find no record of them giving back the extra money to the school district on the grounds that they were undeserving.

The workers who feel they should not pay fair share fees are claiming that they don't benefit from the results of collective bargaining. It is the equivalent of a taxpayer insisting he derives no benefit



Greg Conger
President



from the road he drove to work on or the fire truck that saved his house from burning last spring.

It is probably no more ridiculous than the misguided belief that judges are unbiased oracles of virtue whose only pursuit is to find justice. We idealize them as perhaps the only mere mortals in our society capable of shedding the biases and passions that have turned our other political institutions into hopelessly incompetent debate societies.

Our deification of judges isn't as pronounced as it used to be, but it remains one of many contradictions that apply to this court in particular. The conservative majority responsible for such brilliant decisions as the one that allows billionaires to buy any politician they want (Citizen's United) have set their sights on Organized Labor. In mounting their assault, these judges are turning the word "conservative" on its head. Its most outspoken members claim to revere tradition and precedence. And the record shows that they do . . . when they agree with the tradition and precedence.

When they disagree, however, this so-called conservative court is apparently willing to introduce chaos to whole sectors of the economy. If it rules as it appears likely in June, it will effectively turn 10,000 union contracts across the country into ambiguous and toothless guidelines that will inspire dozens of new

(Continued on Page 4)

Courts have never been free from politics; In fact, judges are the ultimate politicians

(Continued from page 3)

lawsuits within months.

Hundreds of lawyers will soon struggle to make sense of every ambiguous nuance, blurry example and tortured line of reasoning that will be injected into the nation's Labor Law. This so-called conservative court tasked by the framers with bringing closure to endless debate with assertive and objective counsel will do more to muddy previously crystal clear waters born from years of legal precedent than any court before it. Where there was peace and stability, they have injected uncertainty and conflict—hardly the result of the kind of judicial restraint and wise caution that conservative jurists claim to possess in abundance.

Let's call a spade a spade and stop pretending that the nation's most important judges are any less political than members of Congress or the president. Every one of them has attained their current status by greasing the wheels of the political establishment. The only difference between the Supreme Court, Congress and the president is that one of the three political bodies is permitted to overrule the other two without the support of the people and for as long as they manage to live. Although well intentioned, our forefathers did not create an independent body of scholars that dutifully guard against the volatility of the masses. They actually created a tiny group of unelected elitists who have the distinction of being the only politicians in the country that need not give a moment's thought to the interests of the public they serve.

My admittedly cynical take on our political system is not at all novel. Many have woken up to the reality that our judicial system isn't as pristine as our textbooks have suggested. We have to burst a few more bubbles before that oft repeated slogan sinks in: "It matters who you elect."

The case Friedrichs Vs. California Teachers'

Association was filed by a public sector employee.

Most legal experts believe that the court's ruling will be limited to public sector unions.

The image that has been built up around our top court is a myth that requires wholesale reconstruction. The justices are not impartial seekers of the truth and the institution is not the last sanctuary of goodwill. Its members are not above the adolescent squabbling that has turned Congress and many state legislatures into way stations of indecision. They are simply a smaller version of the hopelessly gridlocked legislative branch, with all its internal divisions, rivalries and intractable passions.

When we divorce the U.S. Supreme Court from its utopian myth we will see it for what it truly is—the consequence of our votes for Senator and President. They are the ones who appoint the black-robed Justices with the power to affect the lives of millions with a single slam of the gavel. If it turns out like everyone expects, it will be the best—or should I say the worst—example yet that who we elect matters.



Greg

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Contract talks begin as local grocery industry faces uncertain future

Retail Food Bargaining is about to begin. Your union contracts with Ralphs, Albertsons, Vons, Stater Bros and Gelsons expire March 6, 2016. Preparations are underway and we know that you are wondering what this means and how it will affect you.

Here is what we know:

- Meetings with Albertsons (on behalf of both Albertsons and Vons) and Ralphs will begin shortly.
- Stater Bros and Gelsons will most likely wait until after these are concluded to finalize their contracts.
- We will need the Employers to increase their contributions to the Health Plan and to the Pension Plan to maintain benefits. Our goal is to fully maintain the benefits we now enjoy in both the Health and Pension Plans.
- The overall number of hours for which contributions into our Pension Plan are decreasing due to declining market share. The funding of your pension plan is directly related to the total number of hours in the industry and as a result, significant contribution increases by the companies are necessary.
- Minimum Wage has increased and is expected to continue to rise over the next several years. This means that our lowest paid members need significant increases to stay above the minimum and maintain a respectable standard of living.
- All our members deserve wage increases. Although not as significantly in previous decades, the cost of living IS going up.
- Posting of schedules two days before the workweek begins often does not provide adequate opportunity for planning.
- Our members work hard and all the Companies are profitable as a result.

Here is what we do not know:

- Will Albertsons/Vons and Ralphs seek to resolve issues quickly and by or near contract expiration or will they try to drag out negotiations as they have done in the recent past?

- Are Albertsons/Vons and Ralphs willing to tolerate consumer and community actions in an effort to achieve their goals?

- Are Albertsons/Vons and Ralphs willing to recognize that their profits result from the hard work and continued dedication of their hard working employees?

- If negotiations with the majors delay, will Stater Bros. and / or Gelsons agree to meet before we conclude?

You are the most important part of these negotiations. You make the difference. During this process, your managers will be looking for weak links. They will be reporting back to upper management and the Company negotiators if they believe you can be divided. They will be listening for fear or hesitation when you talk among yourselves or when you answer customer questions about the process.

No one wants a fight. But being prepared and strong is the best way to avoid one. We are facing big issues in the negotiations. Many of these require substantial increases in the companies labor budgets. Albertsons/Vons and Ralphs are backed by multi-billion dollar corporations with record profits. They pay their top corporate executives and CEOs enormous salaries. We are just asking for our fair share. And by standing together, united and strong, we have the best chance of achieving this.



Andrea Zinder
Secretary Treasurer

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrea".

UFCW Local 324's Scholarship Awards Competition

UFCW Local 324 is proud to announce its scholarship program for the academic school year 2015-2016. Those eligible to compete are current members of Local 324 working at **Disney, Food 4 Less, El Super, The Market, Day-Lee Foods, UFCW Credit Union, CVS, Rite-Aid, and Kaiser Permanente;** affiliated and paid-up life members, their spouses, their dependent children and stepchildren, unmarried and receiving financial support from parent(s) who are claimed as dependent(s) with the Internal Revenue Service. Not eligible to compete would include sisters, brothers and grandchildren.

Food contract members, Albertsons, Ralphs, Vons, Stater Bros., Gelsons, and Super A Foods are not eligible for this scholarship award because they may participate in the million dollar Scholarship Award and Tuition Assistance Programs offered by the Southern California United Food and Commercial Workers Unions and Food Employers Ancillary Benefit Fund (Benefit Fund Scholarships).

Applicants must establish basic eligibility by applying for a scholarship award and completing the "Local 324's Scholarship Award Application." Application available at Union office and on our website

www.ufcw324.org/Local_Scholarships/. You may also call Joanne John at 714-995-4601 ext. 209 to obtain an application by mail.

Winners are selected by the Scholarship Committee based on:

- Academic Record
- Leadership Record
- Community Service and Volunteer Activities
- Personal Achievement

Awards are contingent upon the student being accepted by and registering at an accredited school.

Awards are determined at the discretion of the Scholarship Awards Selection Committee and its decision is final and binding. Late applications, incomplete applications and those missing required documentation will not be considered after **May 13, 2016**

* Food Division applications can be picked up at the office or mailed by calling 714-995-4601 option 3. Applications are due February 29.*

How To Apply For A Non-Food Scholarship Award

(Disney, Food 4 Less, Rancho Federal Credit Union, UFCW Credit Union, CVS, Rite-Aid, Kaiser Permanente, The Market, Day-Lee Foods, Bridgford, El Super)

Complete and sign all sections of this form. If the Applicant is different from the Member, both persons must sign and date the form. Mail the application to the Union Office. Include all documents listed below in Section 3.

Incomplete applications will not be accepted. All applications and accompanying documentation must be postmarked no later than May 13, 2016 in order to be eligible for consideration.

1. Member's Information

Member's Last Name		First Name		Middle Initial	Social Security Number (last 4)
Mailing Address		City	State	Zip Code	Date Of Birth
Home Telephone Number	Employer		Work Telephone Number		Union Local 324

2. Applicant's Information *(if dependent of member)*

Applicant's Last Name		First Name		Middle Initial
Mailing Address (if Different From Above)		City	State	Zip Code
Home Telephone Number	Employer, if currently employed		Work Telephone Number	
				Union Local 324

Current Academic Information: Are you Currently enrolled in school? Yes No

High School: _____ (name of institution) Undergraduate College/University: _____ (name of institution)

Date of High School Graduation: _____ Technical/Vocational School: _____ (name of institution)

Degree objective: College/Undergraduate degree Technical school credential Vocational license or credential
 Graduate Degree

Do you have a bachelor's degree? Yes No

School or Schools you plan to attend:

(name of institution) (address) (telephone number)

(name of institution) (address) (telephone number)

(name of institution) (address) (telephone number)

3. Documents you must attach to your application:

a. Transcript

Obtain a transcript of courses you have completed and grades you received from your high school and other schools including undergraduate colleges and universities that you have attended.

Your official transcripts MUST show your cumulative GPA and SAT scores. (SAT scores not required if you have attended college for 2 years or more.)

b. Teacher's Appraisal Forms

There are two Teacher Appraisal Forms with your applications package. You must sign and date each form and give them to two teachers who have taught courses you have taken. The courses may be academic, technical, or vocational subjects. **Letters of recommendation are required.**



**Special
Walmart
supplement**

The billionaire bully

“

**Walmart is the
single gravest
threat to the
livelihoods of
UFCW members.**

—President Greg Conger

”

*The wealthiest company in history
takes greed to breathtaking heights*

There is probably no topic you will hear us talk about more than the threat Walmart poses to your job. Walmart is legendary for unscrupulous business practices that seek to not simply out-sell their competition, but to drive them out of the market entirely.

But if knowing they're out to get you isn't enough to keep you from shopping there, the company has provided plenty of reasons why you may want to avoid adding to their bottom line.

Its status as the wealthiest company the in world means nothing to its executives. Its reputation for dishonesty is pervasive, as demonstrated by its refusal to play a lead role in any na-

tional campaign for the public good. Their reputation for dishonesty is overshadowed only by its greed.

Year after year, its jaw-dropping profits rarely find their way to charitable causes in local communities. Instead, billions are channeled into the bloated estates of the founder's relatives. They have made headlines not for the philanthropic generosity but for eccentric stunts and comical aloofness.

There are at least 10,000 reasons why you might not want to support them with your hard-earned dollars. But we ran out of space after number 9. It's a pretty compelling list with only 9. Read on.

Walmart
Supercentre

9

Reasons ^{to} **NE** **step foot**

1 Walmart means welfare

Because Walmart doesn't pay its employees enough to live independently, taxpayers like you pick up the tab when Walmart employees are forced to rely on Public Assistance to survive.

By definition, these programs are designed to be a public safety net for low income families. So many of the company's workforce qualifies as "low income" that the company began to provide an additional service to their associates - a detailed explanation of how to find the nearby office of pub-

lic assistance and apply for welfare.

For a company that has reached such unimaginable wealth, allowing the government to support its employees is hard to imagine.

According to some reports, in some regions of the country the numbers are as high as half of an entire crew of associates - a half of its store's workforce qualified for welfare. It is a company without shame.

2 Walmart is your main competitor

If you work in the retail grocery sector, your company is vigorously competing to stem the loss of customers to Walmart. It is a struggle that has claimed many grocery stores in recent years as Walmart's Neighborhood Markets marched westward.

The company's business model relies on drawing away

your customer base with bottom-of-the-barrel prices. Some in Southern California have managed to hold on to loyal customers largely because of the quality of service provided by UFCW members. But every time you spend a dime in a Walmart, you are helping drive a stake deeper into the heart of your own employer and putting your job in jeopardy.

3 Walmart doesn't play fair

Walmart likes to say that it is simply engaging in the normal course of business. If longstanding local businesses go bankrupt trying to compete with Walmart, then the free market has spoken. But they leave out a few details such as predatory business practices that undercut competitors and devastate whole communities.

Example: If a mom and pop shop sells bicycles in the vicinity of a Walmart, it is a good bet that Walmart will begin selling bicycles at a lower price.

But the practice is only temporary. Walmart waits until its competitors go bankrupt and promptly raise the price of the product to a more profitable base line—sometimes higher than it started.

It is well documented that Walmart's lower prices aren't nearly as low in communities that have no retail competitors to challenge its dominance. Products and merchandise where Walmart is the only game in town are not sold at the rock-bottom discount prices they are elsewhere.

VER in



4 An inventory of cheap crap

If you bought it at Walmart don't plan on keeping it very long. The list of poor quality, second-rate merchandise sold by the retailer is long enough to stretch around the planet. But exactly which products are substandard is a gamble for the consumer. This is partly due to Walmart's practice of seeking out manufacturers and promising exclusive deals for the sale of their product.

Walmart then identifies what corners can be cut in the manufacturing process and demands, as part of the exclu-

sivity deal, that the vendor and future partner change the way their product is made. Some vendors have complained about this practice, but say they are put in a position of having to comply or losing out to a competitor.

So when you see two different products and one is half the price at Walmart don't be fooled. You are probably seeing a decidedly inferior product on Walmart's shelf. But the company simply doesn't care about the quality if the price is right and the profits are up.

5 Here today, gone tomorrow

Walmart's enormous sales volume is highly attractive to local governments eager to expand their tax base. Walmart takes full advantage of this environment.

The company aggressively seeks out hefty tax breaks extended over several years as the payoff that will get them to move in. Local cities and counties have been known to give multi-year tax holidays in which Walmart incurred no tax liabilities at all.

In some cases, cities or counties have agreed to build freeway offramps or even construct new roads to ensure adequate access to a new Walmart store.

It's not at all unusual for Walmart to operate tax-free in a city and announce that it is leaving town once the incentive runs out and taxes go back to normal levels. Fully aware of the negative impact a sudden store closure can have on a community, Walmart uses the threat of leaving town to extort various sweet deals with local governments. Walmart promotes its corporate conscience but works hard to avoid paying taxes in the communities where it does business. The result is either an increased tax rate for everyone else in the community or a major cutback in services.

6 Employees claim discrimination

As the largest employer in the nation, Walmart would be expected to have plenty of gripes from disgruntled employees. It comes with the territory. But the sheer volume of complaints that have turned into lawsuits makes Walmart stand out above all others as the most sued company in America.

It has paid out millions in damages to former employees alleging everything from sexual harrasment on the part of management to racial profiling by security guards.

And much like a wealthy criminal eager to quell the rumor mill, Walmart's out-of-court settlements of these cases

always includes a gag order that forbids the parties from discussing details. Everybody claims their innocence with vigor when first accused. But it's fair to say that the truly innocent don't turn around and pay hush money to their accusers and make them swear not to talk.

But despite rebukes from civil rights groups, government agencies and public office holders, little has changed in Walmart's corporate culture. It continues the tradition of applauding the noble goals of diversity and inclusion while restricting access to the good ole' boys club.



Reasons to **NOT** shop Walmart

7 Walmart hates UFCW- with a passion

Walmart's anti-union philosophy runs deep. Management has made it clear that union activities should be identified and dealt with before they fester into bigger problems. When you spend money at Walmart, you help pay for the company's comprehensive, top-down anti-

union starter kit. Consider this; every day Walmart spends thousands of dollars attempting to destroy both your employer and your union. Is this really where you want to spend your money?

8 Walmart lies about 'Made in America' inventory

Walmart isn't the only mega-retailer that uses foreign labor to keep its shelves stocked. But it might be the only one with the gall to launch a multi-million dollar ad campaign lying about it. It was only a few short years ago when headlines exposed the depth of Walmart's deception. The stories detailing the full extent of Walmart's reliance on cheap foreign labor came to light following a nationwide campaign in which the retailer bragged about

its dedication to all things American.

Informal audits of merchandise exposed Walmart's claims as bogus. One such analysis stated as little as 10 percent of its apparel was Made in the USA. It leads one to wonder if the company even knows how to tell the truth. If Walmart were a person it would require a psychiatrist to sort things out with medication and therapy.

9 Closures show a company devoid of conscience

In January Walmart demonstrated the true content of its character when it announced it was closing approximately 268 stores worldwide. About six of those stores were in the LA/Orange County area. It sited poor performance as the reason for the closures and outlined re-organization plans that appeared thorough, creative and far-sighted.

The detail showed that the company tediously studied the issue from multiple angles before making its decision. The thorough examination provided executives an extensive lead time before the affected stores would close their doors permanently. Yet despite knowing about the closures for months in advance Walmart gave the employees at the affected stores as little as a day's notice that they no longer had jobs.

The company barely batted an eye at the impending displacement of thousands of its loyal "associates." It made no apologies for the late announcements, blowing off criticism with a callous indifference that has become second nature for the world's largest retailer.

Concern for its workers ranks exceedingly low on its list of concerns, a fact that it has demonstrated time and again. Keeping loyal associates who have many years with the company in the dark is standard operating procedure at Walmart.

It is just one of many ways Walmart shows exactly how much it cares for the wellbeing of its workers, despite spending millions on TV and newspaper ads claiming to be the model of corporate compassion.

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CALIFORNIA
(Two Day Park Hopper Pass)
Adults (ages 13+) \$77
Children (ages 3-12) \$72



SEA-LIFE **LEGO** **2Day**
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SeaWorld
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One ticket price
\$64



Six Flags
Valid thru 9/25/16
General Use
\$42

Tickets are on sale now in the General Office of Local 324,
at our Branch Office in Lake Forest and online at www.ufew324.org

Prices are subject to Change and Availability. Online prices may vary
NO RETURNS OR EXCHANGES
Tickets are for Southern California Local 324 Members Only



... at a discount price!



REPRESENTATIVE

Union Representative Matt Bell





Healthcare Reimbursement Accounts

Tricky to maneuver sometimes but still a painless way to avoid out-of-pocket costs

Retail Food members enrolled in a PPO and who maintain Healthcare Reimbursement Accounts (have struggled to understand how it works and how best to use it. Many are discovering that the best way to become an expert on the ins and outs of an HRA is to get stung with an out-of-pocket expense.

Fortunately, at least half of the incidents involving unexpected doctor's bills are not the result of members mismanaging their HRAs, but rather the result of an ill-informed billing staff at doctor's offices.

Union officials caution that members who take the time to familiarize themselves with their healthcare plans can often correct errors like these simply by explaining the procedure to their doctor's staff.

But even some highly informed plan participants have been taken by surprise on occasion. One of the

more common problems centers around the time table for making claims.

Attempting to spell out the exact amount of coverage for each activity and how it applies to every member would surely inspire more questions than answers. Suffice it to say that performing your healthy activities as early as possible is the way to go. That will ensure that you maximize the amount of money in your HRA to draw upon should you incur a medical expense.

With different levels of coverage applying to different plans and even more variables applying to single versus family coverage, the best way to clear up any confusion that remains is to speak with an expert. Call the Health Benefits Department at (714) 995-4601 x3 with questions about your specific plan.

Here are the ways you can pad your HRA

1. Update contact information for you and your primary doctor
2. Complete your Health Risk Questionnaire (HRQ)
3. View the online benefits video
4. Get an annual physical
5. Get certain preventive health care services (flu shot, colonoscopy, PSA test, mammogram, pap smear)
6. Get a health screening
7. Do a healthy "lifestyle activity"
(weight loss program, tobacco cessation program, gym/group physical activities, run/walk/bike event)

**Complete your healthy activities between
June 1, 2015 and May 31, 2016**

Your Automatic Base HRA Contribution from the Fund	Platinum Plus/ Platinum			Gold/Silver		
	Single	Employee + Children	Family	Single	Employee + Children	Family
Plan A	\$175	\$500	\$275	\$125	\$475	\$250
Plan B	\$150	\$425	\$250	\$125	\$475	\$250
Maximum the Fund can add to your HRA for Healthy Activities completed in one year	Platinum Plus/ Platinum			Gold/Silver		
	Single	Employee + Children	Family	Single	Employee + Children	Family
Plan A or B -additional \$\$\$	\$575	\$750	\$975	\$425	\$625	\$850
Number of activities needed to achieve maximum HRA \$\$\$	4	5	7	4	5	7

Off the wall



Some things you should know

- ▲ Your HRA will receive funding for Healthy Activities processed between June 1 and December 31, during the first week of January. The Fund will add contributions for activities completed between January 1 and May 31, as they are processed.
- ▲ After the Fund credits a Healthy Activity to your HRA, your additional funds become available to pay your eligible expenses. Only the balance on hand is available to pay your share of claims as they come in. HRA funds cannot be used to pay for previously processed claims.
- ▲ To use your HRA funds to pay prescription drug copays, you must “opt in” by returning an Rx-HRA Option Form to the Fund Office. The form is included in your Open Enrollment packet, or you can get one online at www.scufcwfunds.com or from the Fund Office.
- ▲ The Fund sends quarterly statements that show the Healthy Activities processed, the contributions made to your HRA, and the amounts paid from your HRA for your eligible expenses.
- ▲ When your HRA funds are used up, you must use your own money to pay any remaining deductible, your share of coinsurance, and prescription drug copays.
- ▲ If you don't use your entire HRA balance during the calendar year, it rolls over for use in future years, as long as you stay enrolled and eligible in the Indemnity PPO Medical Plan.
- ▲ Your HRA cannot be used for vision, dental, or orthodontic expenses.

If you don't take action, you will receive the base HRA contribution only. You will pay more for your healthcare. Visit the Fund's website (www.scufcwfunds.com) for more information. Call the Health Benefits department (714)995-4601 x3 if you have questions.

Umagazine is published by



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P.O. Box 5004
Buena Park, California 90622-5004



PERIODICAL
POSTAGE
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What have you done for me *Lately*?

STATS

Year End Totals 2015

GRIEVANCES FILED	1126
MEMBERS BACK TO WORK	104
BACKPAY COLLECTED:	
\$ 376,122.30	

UFCW324.ORG

LIVE BETTER WORK UNION