

Community Organizing Standards

We, the undersigned religious leaders, put our faith in a God of justice, fairness, and equality for all people. Hence it is our faith that makes us insistent on the rights of every person to fair working conditions and adequate compensation. We therefore support the right of workers to move from a minimal wage to a living wage, with decent working conditions.

The right to form a union is an essential civil right, recognized by federal law. Yet federal labor laws as they are currently applied do not adequately protect that right. Employers are able to resist union organizing efforts with impunity, because there are no penalties for intimidating and pressuring employees not to unionize.

Throughout the nation, employees who try to organize are faced with threats of loss of jobs, loss of benefits, and in many cases actually do end up being fired. Employees who stand up for themselves face retaliation and a federal law that countenances endless delay and obstruction.

For these reasons, we have developed a series of principles that prescribe conditions for fairness in union organizing. These guidelines eliminate the climate of fear that currently pervades union organizing campaigns, and they level the playing field so that employees can make a free choice about whether or not to unionize.

We the undersigned concerned clergy insist that during the course of any union organizing campaign the following principles be observed.

1. **Principle of freedom from retaliation and intimidation...** the employer shall not fire, suspend, discipline, or retaliate in any way, against employees or their families for support of a labor organization, or use its economic clout to implicitly threaten loss of benefits or jobs as a result of unionization.
2. **Principle of freedom from coercion...** there be no mandatory employee meetings, either group or one-on-one, held by the employer.
3. **Principle of equal access to information...** the principle of equal access be observed: if the employer chooses to invite employees to any voluntary meetings regarding unionization, the employer will provide the union with an equal amount of time at the same location to address employees.
4. **Principle of open and reasonable debate...** the union and employer agree to hold a minimum of 2 debates. Such debates will be moderated by a member of the Rochester clergy. Employees will be allowed to ask questions of both the union and the employer at these debates.
5. **Principle of truthfulness...** the union not make promises just to win votes. It is already illegal for employers to make such promises during a union

representational campaign, and we must hold the union to the same high standards.

6. **Principle of timely response...** neither the employer nor union engage in delaying tactics.

7. **Principle of freedom from outside harassment...** the employer shall not hire a union avoidance law firm, or any outside entity specializing in tactics which threaten, coerce, delay, or otherwise violate any of the above principles.