

## Advocating for yourself in the workplace

You can protect your employment rights by practicing skillful conflict resolution in the workplace.

### **Dealing with conflict**

Conflict is a natural part of any relationship, team, or workplace. When handled well, it can promote growth and problem solving. If a situation arises at work, find a safe place to deal with the conflict. Assert your needs clearly and specifically. Build an agreement that works for all involved.

### **Document your experiences**

Keep track of details about your employment so that you will be prepared if a conflict arises. Record the dates and hours you worked and the pay you received (especially if paid in cash). Keep a copy of any written correspondence you have had with your employer. If needed, your notes can be used as evidence.

### **Contracts and unions**

If you are part of a union, the rules of your workplace are governed by a contract between the workers and the employer. About 1 in 10 workers in the U.S. is part of a union. If you are not part of a union, your employer decides a lot of the rules of the workplace. This means that, in Pennsylvania, if you do not have a union contract, you can be fired, demoted, have your hours cut, or be disciplined at work for any reason, unless a specific law has been violated.

### **For more information**

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