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Volume 1

# You Have a Choice in Who Represents You

Monthly  
Newsletter

## You have a choice in unions.

Many county employees have been told there is only one union representing Fairfax County workers... That is simply not true. The Fairfax Workers' Coalition is a recognized labor organization that was established in 2017 to provide an independent labor voice for Fairfax workers. We represent nearly 350 workers in public works, housing, human services, and many other agencies.

We believe in a union that's not beholden to political interests and is transparent and accountable. We are all Fairfax workers and only Fairfax workers- we're not owned by any corporation outside the union. All your dues stay in Fairfax and they don't go to any outside groups. We provide outstanding representation to our members and fight for their pay and benefits. With FWC, it's not just slogans and photo ops- we're here for you. FWC is a union - but it's also a family - based on service to others and standing up for County workers. We're sending this to you because we're not about to data mine your personal information and harass you at home or on your cell phone.

Time is of the essence, as change is happening very fast and it's wrong to have a small minority of workers and outside funding decide your future. Don't let anyone mislead you- when it comes to unions, YOU HAVE A CHOICE. FWC is the only union that is 100% your own.



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## What's Happening with Collective Bargaining?

You've heard about it... And now it's close to becoming a reality. Collective bargaining (CB) is a legal Fairfax County ordinance. It will affect almost every part of your work life. Soon, it will be up to you to decide who you want to represent you - or if you want any group to do so. The truth is most county employees barely know what's happening, or what it means. They've heard vague slogans about "a seat at the table" and "rights" but you need to know exactly what that means.

Collective bargaining is the legal process in which a designated group (usually a union) is your exclusive bargaining agent for wages, benefits, and working conditions. You don't have to be a union member, but a union may be selected to represent you if you are a member of the bargaining unit- which will include everyone from S-32 and below (with some exceptions). That means senior managers will be in the same unit as lower-wage workers. While we support CB, FWC opposed this ordinance as written because it will harm both lower-wage workers and even supervisors. But it's now County regulation. You need to be fully informed about this process, so you have all the facts.

Right now, the FWC is part of the process to hire a Labor Relations Administrator (LRA) who will determine bargaining units and election of a bargaining agent. We want your input. Many employees think the decision to join a union (or not) will determine their participation in this process. The truth is that the vast majority of workers will be in the CB unit whether they join a union or not. FWC wants you to know all the facts, so you make an informed choice.

## What is Happening With Pay?

FWC has been the leading advocate for fair compensation for all county workers. In a recent budget hearing, FWC Executive Director Dave Lyons told the Board of Supervisors that County was "no longer competitive to retain and hire quality workers" because of repeated pay freezes that have resulted in the majority of County workers being paid below mid-scale. County workers are leaving like never before, especially in the trades and human services. Private employers, non-profits, and even other government agencies are paying substantially more.

It's time to change this culture of undervaluing workers. Fairfax County is a great place to work. But all our workers need to be fairly compensated.

This year the Board has proposed- for only the third time in 12 years- to fully fund the Market Rate Adjustment (MRA) at 4.01%. In addition, merit increments averaging 3% will be paid in July for qualifying workers. Many agencies recognize the need for increased compensation and are raising pay in individual cases.

But it's not enough. DPWES workers, especially drivers, are being paid \$10-14 less per hour than the area market scale. Human service workers are leaving for better pay and working conditions. And the backbone of county workers, the administrative services folks, are continually kept below mid-scale.

This is not just a question of available money. It's a question of what we believe in and ending the culture of not valuing our workers. We're asking the Board- to bring your veteran workers to at least mid-scale, a fair rate comparable to what new people being hired into the county will receive. It's only fair, and it's the right thing to do if we really want to retain a quality workforce.

If this is a cause you can stand behind, please consider signing our petition below. If you have any further questions, FWC is here to help. Please reach out through phone, email, or social media.



## Sign Our Online Petition

Fairfax County workers deserve a fair raise and equitable compensation for the work they do. But the County's repeated pay freezes for pay, longevity, and merit raises have placed many workers in the lower rungs of their pay scales. The County vacancy rate continues to grow while workers are being asked to do more for less. We need more than just finally funding the MRA. We need in-grade adjustments to boost permanent worker pay up to fair market value. It's time to tell the Board of Supervisors that you deserve fair pay.



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