



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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National #ShopSmart Campaign to Keep Grocery Workers Safe From Coronavirus & Protect Nation's Food Supply Announced Today

America's Largest Food & Retail Union Also Releases New Poll Results of Grocery & Food Worker Top Concerns & Fears

New Initiative Launched Amid Increase in Food & Grocery Workers Exposed to Coronavirus

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the [United Food and Commercial Workers International Union \(UFCW\)](#), America's largest food and retail union which represents over 900,000 grocery workers, launched a new national initiative to help protect America's food and grocery workers. The [new national campaign](#), entitled #ShopSmart, will target American grocery shoppers and is in response to the growing number of food and grocery workers who are becoming exposed to the coronavirus and the direct threat this growing outbreak poses to our nation's food supply.

UFCW International President Marc Perrone said: "The coronavirus pandemic represents the greatest health and safety crisis that America's grocery and food workers have ever faced. Since the beginning of the outbreak, these workers have been on the front lines of this terrible pandemic. While tens of millions of Americans were told to work from home for their safety, grocery store and food workers have never had that option. More must be done to protect them and our food supply now."

The new nationwide public safety effort, which includes [a new #ShopSmart ad campaign](#) with digital and TV commercials, is being announced as the UFCW estimates that **30 UFCW members have died from COVID-19**, and **nearly 3,000 UFCW food and grocery workers have been directly impacted by COVID-19**.

The estimated number of deaths and exposed workers is based on reports from UFCW local unions and includes those who have tested positive for COVID-19, missed work due to self-quarantine, are awaiting test results, have been hospitalized, or are symptomatic.

"Grocery workers are deeply concerned. The fact is that this pandemic represents a clear and present danger to our nation's food supply and all grocery store workers. The "Shop Smart"

campaign will help save lives by making clear that all members of the public can take key safety steps to help protect these workers and each other from the coronavirus,” **Perrone added.**

To highlight the growing concern of food and grocery workers, the UFCW also released results from a **survey of more than 5,000 grocery and food workers** (sample of 5,000 UFCW members/1 percent margin of error with 95 percent confidence level).

The key survey results, which are included below, highlight the real fear and concern of food and grocery workers, and the need to take a more dramatic series of action to protect workers.

- **Customer Support for Workers**
 - **29 percent** said customers treated them somewhat poorly or very poorly.

- **Top Customer Safety Issues:**
 - **85 percent** said **customers are not practicing social distancing.**
 - **81 percent** said **customers are hoarding supplies or groceries.**
 - **62 percent** said **customers are blaming employees for shortages**
 - **43 percent** reported instances of **customers shouting at employees**

- **Safety Priorities for Grocery Stores:**
 - When asked what grocery stores should do to improve customer safety and treatment of workers:
 - **72 percent** supported a limit on the number of customers in stores
 - **49 percent** supported stores banning unruly customers
 - **41 percent** supported stores hiring more security
 - **26 percent** supported stores hiring more workers to meet demand
 - **23 percent** supported advertisements with customer safety tips

For more information about UFCW’s customer campaign, please visit <http://www.ufcw.org/coronavirus/shopsmart/>.

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*The **UFCW** is the largest private sector union in the United States, representing 1.3 million professionals and their families in grocery stores, meatpacking, food processing, retail shops and other industries. Our members help put food on our nation’s tables and serve customers in all 50 states, Canada and Puerto Rico. Learn more about the UFCW at www.ufcw.org*