



Developing Partnerships with

UFCW Local 919 The Cannabis Union



How partnership with UFCW 919 can protect your business, improve employee satisfaction, and grow your footprint.

Labor Peace Agreements, Cannabis and Unions – The Basics

What is a union?

A union is a collection of workers who decide to negotiate collectively over issues like wages, benefits and working conditions. Unions also provide employers with a mechanism to create transparent, fair, and straightforward agreements with their employees.

What is a Labor Peace Agreement? Am I required to sign one?

A labor peace agreement (LPA) is an agreement between an employer and the union which states that they will remain neutral if their employees are interested in joining a union. LPAs also allow unions to connect with workers and discuss union membership. LPAs are a requirement to obtain a state license for any cannabis business.

What are the benefits for the employer of signing an LPA or having a union in my workplace?

Unions negotiate Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) on behalf of employees who have expressed interest in joining the union. These CBAs, or contracts, provide some basic rights and standards for employees, but also a number of benefits for employers, including:



Why UFCW? What other unions are there?

UFCW is the only union with jurisdiction from the AFL-CIO, the governing body of unions across the country, to organize employees in cannabis from seed to sale. UFCW began organizing cannabis workers in 2010, and now has more than 10,000 cannabis members across the country in 14 states. We represent workers in cultivation, manufacturing, distribution and retail store fronts. This means UFCW brings a wealth of experience and knowledge specific to the cannabis industry, and has been a key partner across the country in helping to expand opportunities for legal cannabis businesses.

Maintain Control

A union collective bargaining agreement is negotiated between an employer and their employees which are UNIQUE to each business. You maintain control over your business, and you are never forced to sign an agreement that you can't abide by. Contracts are negotiated on a regular basis so that they can adjust and change with business conditions.

Your employees go through a democratic process to decide if they are interested in joining a union and need to vote on a negotiated contract before joining the union or paying any union dues.

Improved Workplace Satisfaction for Employees

With benefits and protections in a union contract, employees at union cannabis dispensaries are averaging much longer tenure than their non-union counterparts. Having longer worker retention means more efficient and more productive employees and minimizes training costs. Additionally, participating in a collective bargaining agreement allows employees a formal process for providing input and feedback in their workplace which in turn, helps improve employee satisfaction.

Help your business grow and access new licenses

HR Compliance

Union contracts include a clearly defined grievance procedure. This is a straightforward way to address workforce complaints that is handled internally. These mechanisms for resolving workplace disputes can help avoid expensive litigation and provide a clear and transparent process for your employees to raise concerns. CBAs can also include straightforward language on HR practices that make workplace safety, benefits and wages; transparent, equal and straightforward.

Access to affordable health insurance

UFCW partners across dispensaries to bundle health insurance costing with thousands of employees at once. This allows employers to access insurance at lower costs, minimizes employers responsibility for staffing and navigating benefits packages, and even has allowed management staff to join these affordable and high-quality health plans.

Community Service Collaboration Opportunities

We've collaborated with employers to execute community service projects like record change clinics and food banks. Together we help to build positive relationships with the community around your business.

Leadership development and training

Union members have been key in advocating for the expansion of legal cannabis and lowering retail, manufacturing, and cultivation tax rates across Connecticut. Our union can provide training and support for employees to engage in the political process in support of our industry.

Free OSHA 30 Training

UFCW also offers free OSHA 30 training to members and managers at affiliated businesses that focuses on OSHA standards that impact the cannabis industry. These training sessions help cannabis businesses stay compliant with state-wide OSHA regulations and maintain safe workplaces.

Strong Political Relationships

Our union has a multi-decade history of advocacy on Local and State policy issues throughout Connecticut. These relationships and connections can help to build the political will to support businesses and the industry as a whole.



Expanding legal cannabis in Connecticut

The United Food and Commercial Workers International Union has led efforts throughout the country to expand legal cannabis in the growing and cultivating facilities, manufacturing processing, laboratories, and dispensaries.

UFCW Local 919 has worked closely with Governor Lamont's Administration, Legislative Leaders, State Agencies and Local Municipalities while partnering with community activist groups across Connecticut to pass legislation that legalizes the adult-use of cannabis.

We have become a trusted voice in the fight to secure workers' rights in this emerging industry. Throughout the legislative process, we have provided a positive narrative by engaging in press conferences, marching in rallies, and testifying before key influential lawmakers ensuring the best policy was enacted.

Through coalitions with other labor organizations like the AFL-CIO, UFCW Local 919 has made a stronger impact at the Capitol, uniting local labor voices, and gaining a larger base of support for this important piece of legislation.

Testimonials



"Being General Manager and watching over staff can be a challenging role. The UFCW has worked closely with us in partnership so we can enforce the contract in a just manner and treat our employees fairly."

Valeria Hernandez, General Manager
From The Earth, Santa Ana



"Our partnership with UFCW 919 was essential for creating legal cannabis businesses in the City of Long Beach. Since my own shop became unionized in 2018, working with the union has helped us to remain compliant and created fair standards for our employees."

Greg Lefian, Primary Owner
Chronic Pain ReLeaf Center



"I feel confident I can have a career in the industry thanks to the union benefits."

Alex Castillo
Mr. Nice Guy