

Dignity at Work Coalition - Wisconsin

Our Vision for a Just Wisconsin

Our Purpose: The Dignity at Work Coalition brings together groups and individuals in Wisconsin who represent people of faith, worker organizations, and progressive causes who advocate or organize to establish a dignified life for all who labor.

Our Values: The Dignity at Work Coalition values social and economic justice for all. We seek to establish higher standards of respect and equality for all who labor and greater compassion for working families. We foster community solidarity in the service of our mission. We believe that sustainable working conditions allow for sustainable lives and secure families. We believe we are stronger when we work collaboratively.

Our Mission: We seek to advance a broad agenda to secure social change addressing the needs of all who work. Our core issues areas are:

- Fair pay
- Predictable, stable hours
- Paid sick leave
- Paid family and medical leave
- Affordable, quality child care
- Affordable housing
- Racial equity
- Gender equity
- Accessible public transportation
- An end to discrimination in hiring and employment practices
- Pension protection
- A right to organize

Our Goals:

1. To be a locus for intentional partnership among coalition members to foster existing and new campaigns,
2. To support coalition member groups and organizations who are engaged in active campaigns focused on at least one of our core issues,
3. To help develop and launch new campaigns together to advance our core issues, and
4. To promote a “worker justice lens” through which our own organizations and our state leaders can consider the whole quality of life for any given Wisconsin worker, when making decisions in any one issue area.

Our Vision:

The changes we envision require moving forward together boldly; we are “culture shifting.” What emerges will be a Wisconsin that looks like this:

Every working person earns no less than a living, sustainable wage for full-time employment, based on the local cost of living, adjusted annually for inflation. Earnings allow every employee to support oneself and one’s family. Work hours are stable and predictable. Paid sick leave and paid family and medical leave are guaranteed benefits of work.

Every workplace in our state welcomes people of all ages, abilities, racial identities, gender identities, religious persuasions, ethnic heritages, immigration status, and geographic locations (urban, rural, and suburban). Equitable hiring and employment practices are reflective of this value.

Universally accessible and affordable high-quality child care, staffed by a skillful and equitably paid workforce, is guaranteed to all who need and want it. The high value we place on the care and well-being of our children is reflected in our public policies.

Multiple modes of transportation and community infrastructure serve the needs of a diversity of workers in our state. Walking and biking are safe, as are our roads and bridges. Our transportation infrastructure is built around the person rather than the car. Public transportation is readily accessible, convenient, and affordable. Public transportation connects people to employment and services in rural areas as well urban. Mixed-use development creates single and multi-family residential areas that are readily connected to employment, medical services, shopping, education, child care and recreational facilities.

Sustainable wages allow families and individuals to put money aside in government-managed private pension funds, if they do not get pensions from work. Retirement security allows for more entrepreneurship, as does universal health care.

Collective bargaining rights are restored, and unions are able to negotiate for higher salaries, better hours, pensions, equal pay, safer work environments, and equal treatment in employment and hiring practices. The wage gap closes and equal opportunities for education and advancement are available for all.

Unions lead to higher wages, better benefits, and a more secure retirement. Union workers earn 26 percent more, on average, than non-union workers, are half as likely to be victims of safety violations or of wage theft, more likely to have health coverage, and more likely to have a pension.

Whether it's affordable childcare, paid time off to take care of a sick family member, a strong pension, safe working conditions, or a livable wage: when workers unionize, they can achieve all of this and more. Unions keep inequality, discrimination, and sexual harassment at bay. As more workers join unions, not only do we build power at the workplace, but in communities as well.

All these policies feed each other in a continuous loop, creating a more secure workforce, more stable family life, and a more robust economy.

Our Coalition:

The Dignity at Work Coalition was formed in recognition that no single organization can bring about the changes needed to establish the norms of economic equality, stability, and sustainability across our state. We are connecting the many organizations which address issues that have a direct impact on Wisconsin workers and their families. We are building relationships, on the path to pooling our resources, expertise, and capacities. Each organization is needed to provide depth of knowledge on its core issues, as well as to broaden our reach across all our constituencies. Together, we can reach out to a wider geographic and demographic variety of people across the state.

Ultimately, we strive to connect these issues in the minds of Wisconsin neighbors, voters, and leaders. We have long known that the availability and quality of livable wages, predictable and sustainable hours, paid leave, transportation, and child care matter to workers. Yet, we know that not one of our single organizations has the capacity to provide sufficient education and advocacy in a way that interweaves these issues, even as we acknowledge them to be deeply interwoven.

This is powerful and vulnerable work. It is bold to demand change while showing how the underpaid worker in one area is the over-charged consumer in the other. It is compassionate children's advocacy that includes the working conditions of the adults in their lives. We come together recognizing we are stronger when we work collaboratively.

Yet, we admit that we are still separate and important organizations. Each of us brings our own areas of expertise; we come with varying degrees of organizational capacity; and have duties to other partnership as well. We bring our own needs: to safeguard the unique identity of our organization; to control access to our memberships; and to ensure that our own issue receives equal attention and respect.

The challenge we face, therefore, is to create a framework whereby we can:

- Learn from each other, so that we can appropriately and intelligently represent each other's issues and make the connection when we speak about our own issues.
- Call upon each other to contribute our expertise to joint campaigns.
- Show up to each other's events in support and solidarity.
- Create a comprehensive vision for the future which lifts up all of these work-related issues and builds a stronger community for all.

Dignity at Work Coalition Member Organizations

4-C: Community Coordinated Childcare, Inc.

9to5 Wisconsin

End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin

Fair Wisconsin

Family Farm Defenders

First Unitarian Society Social Justice Ministries

James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation Peace, Justice, and Sustainability Group

Lake Edge United Church of Christ

Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin

Milwaukee Jewish Federation

Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin

The Road Home

Wisconsin Early Childhood Association

Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice

Wisconsin Alliance for Women's Health

Wisconsin Council of Churches

Worker Justice Wisconsin

Wisconsin Network for Peace, Justice and Sustainability

Website: Dignityatworkcoaliton.org

Email: dignityatworkcoalition@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/dignityatworkcoalitionwisconsin/>

To join our Coalition: <http://www.dignityatworkcoalition.org/join.html>

