Legal Tools to Empower Community Members
Your Response to Workplace Immigration Enforcement

In a summer marked by the largest single-state workplace immigration raid in U.S. history, workers continued to organize. At Justice at Work’s second annual legal training institute, your support helped equip organizers with legal tools for assessing risk and asserting rights in the face of draconian enforcement.

Each of the institute’s training sessions role-played worker center concerns, including how they and their members can prepare for and respond to the issuance of Social Security no-match letters; the expiration of employment authorization documents for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders; and to I-9 audits, which can be a precursor to raids. We also discussed raid response approaches, drawing from lessons shared by Centro Comunitario de Trabajadores (CCT’s) Director Adrian Ventura, who experienced ICE’s 2007 raid at the Michael Bianco factory in New Bedford. Finally, organizers were briefed on potential immigration relief avenues for workers who have suffered labor trafficking, including T-Visas and U-Visas. Thank you for standing with participants from the Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health’s (MassCOSH’s) Immigrant Worker Center, Brazilian Worker Center (MA and CT offices), Brazilian Women’s Group, Matahari Women Workers’ Center, Jobs with Justice, and the Ironworkers District Council of New England!

“By distilling the most pragmatic legal protections for immigrant workers, Justice at Work’s Summer Institute gave me the legal tools to better empower our community members in their pursuit of justice. It also affirmed the importance of grassroots organizers as non-legal advocates. I am excited to bring this knowledge back to my community.”

Kayla Degala-Paraíso, Community Organizer Matahari Women Workers’ Center
You’re Helping Workers Protect Their Voice on the Job

All workers have the right to act together to try and improve their working conditions. Yet employers routinely fire people when they exercise this right and get away with it, in part because private attorneys rarely take these cases. You recently helped two groups of worker center members who were illegally fired for taking collective action hold their employers accountable.

Connecticut Scrap Workers Confront Hazardous Practices

OSHA Issues Citation

When a worker at a scrap metal yard was nearly hit by a piece of metal that his boss threw out of a large crane claw, he complained and was fired. Workers on the site came together in protest. The next week, they were told their hours had been cut or that there was no work for them at all.

Through word-of-mouth in their community, the workers found support from CCT, which referred them to Justice at Work for legal help. In a meeting at a worker’s house, our staff heard complaints from workers about years suffering serious burns, cuts and other injuries, and bullying and threats. We filed at both the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), and represented one worker as he provided testimony at the NLRB office in Hartford. The company was forced to settle, and was also subject to an OSHA inspection resulting in a citation for three separate serious violations. Your support made our first victory in Connecticut possible. Thank you.

“We can’t let our kids grow up thinking this is just the way things are because we are Hispanic. If we don’t do something about this now, then the boss’ kids will treat our kids the same way.”

— CCT member Felipe

Double your impact now! The Lenny Zakim Fund is matching up to $10,000 in new or increased giving between now and December 2019. Make a gift at www.jatwork.org/donate or with the enclosed envelope.
Group Takes Action to Improve Conditions at Adult Day Care

NLRB Finds Company at Fault

Last April, a group of workers at an adult day care facility delivered a letter to their employer outlining concerns about a troubling work environment. The next day, the company informed them -- in writing -- that they were being fired because of the letter.

After turning to CCT for support, the workers retained Justice at Work to represent them at the NLRB. We also filed retaliation complaints with OSHA, allowing the workers to seek punitive and emotional distress damages not available at the NLRB.

The company was quickly forced to settle. The NLRB also required it post a notice in Spanish at the worksite naming the vindicated workers and explaining the company’s legal obligations to all its employees.

In compliance with a court order, the U.S. government has extended work authorization for TPS holders from El Salvador through January 2, 2020. Salvadoran TPS holders, however, have employment authorization cards that list an earlier expiration date of September 9, 2019. For them, the last few weeks have brought scrutiny from employers and obstacles to applying for new jobs.

In response to concerns raised by members of the Massachusetts TPS Committee, Justice at Work recently helped organize a legal aid presence at an assembly of an estimated 400 TPS holders held at the Most Holy Redeemer Church in East Boston. Thanks to our partners at Greater Boston Legal Services, a letter is now available for Salvadoran TPS holders to use if they need to clarify to employers that their work authorization remains valid.

Justice at Work’s Legal Program Coordinator José Palma is currently on leave in order to coordinate the national campaign to defend Temporary Protected Status. We appreciate all the support for the TPS community.
JUSTICE AT WORK AND TAMBÓ PRESENT THE

8th Annual

Salsa for Justice

Friday, October 18, 2019
6pm - 1am

Dance Classes & Performances

DJ & Live Music

Dinner, Dessert & Raffle

*Dive music will begin at 10:30pm.

Dante Alighieri Society of Massachusetts
41 Hampshire St.,
Cambridge, MA

All proceeds benefit Justice at Work, a legal nonprofit supporting workers in low-paying jobs as they seek justice and organize for change.

Purchase tickets with the enclosed envelope or at www.jatwork.org/salsa-for-justice.