

Your Right to Organize a Union

As a federal employee, you have the right to “form, join, or assist any labor organization, or to refrain from any such activity, freely and without fear of penalty or reprisal, and each employee shall be protected in the exercise of such right.” §US Code 7116(a)

What does this mean? It means you have the legal right to talk with your co-workers about forming a union before and after work and during breaks (or any other non-work time). It means you can do this without any interference from your supervisor or any member of management.

The statute also is very clear about what management *cannot* do. No member of management can “interfere with, restrain, or coerce any employee in the exercise by the employee of any right under this chapter.”

What does this mean? It means management cannot do any of the following:

- encourage or discourage membership in any labor organization
- discipline or otherwise discriminate against an employee based on an employee’s involvement with the union

The only views any member of management can make regarding union organizing are those that:

- publicize the fact of a representational election and encourages employees to exercise their right to vote in such election
- correct the record with respect to any false or misleading statement made by any person
- inform employees of the government's policy relating to labor-management relations and representation

If you ever feel that your legally protected rights have been disrupted, or if you believe a member of management has violated any of the items listed above, contact your union organizer.