

UFCW Dues and Fees



In states like Ohio (unlike Kentucky) that do not have a Right-to-Work law, unions legally can – and generally do – negotiate “Union Security” language into their labor contracts. This language requires employees to pay dues/fees just to keep their jobs.

The Union Security language from the UFCW Local 75 labor contract with Kroger states:

3.1 Union Shop - It shall be a condition of employment that all Associates of the Employer covered by this Agreement who are members of the Union in good standing on the execution date of this Agreement shall remain members in good standing, and those who are not members on the execution date of this Agreement shall, on the sixty-first (61st) day following the execution date of this Agreement become and remain members in good standing in the Union. It shall also be a condition of employment that all Associates covered by this Agreement and hired on or after its execution date shall, on the sixty-first (61st) day following the beginning of such employment become and remain members in good standing in the Union. The Employer may secure new Associates from any source whatsoever.

UFCW By The Numbers

- **UFCW charges members union dues between \$32.08 to \$43.50 each month.**
It could cost you as much as \$522.00 a year just to keep your job.
- **UFCW has initiation fees between \$50 to \$125 for new members.**
The union could waive that fee for any employees in the bargaining unit at the time of the election. But, it would likely expect any new or returning employees to pay the initiation fee.
- **UFCW collected \$14,993,980 in dues and agency fees from members in 2022, but only spent \$3,047,686 on “representational activities.”**
Which means it spent only 20 cents of every dollar representing its members in 2023. Representational activities include efforts to organize new members and dissuade current members from leaving the union.
- **UFCW spent \$907,371 more than it collected in the last financial reporting year.**
Unions depend on dues and fees to operate.

All numbers are from UFCW Local 75's most recent financial filing (2023) with the federal government, called an LM-2 report, file number 544-266

Before considering whether or not to unionize, make sure the numbers add up – especially since a union can't guarantee wages, benefits or working conditions will improve.

Frequently asked questions

Q If we choose to unionize, will I have to pay the union?

A Ohio is not a Right-to-Work state (unlike Kentucky), so it is likely you would have to pay dues/fees just to keep your job. This is because the union can negotiate what is called “Union Security” language into the labor contract. This language states that members must pay dues, fees and assessments as a condition of employment.

Please be aware that if you were to have the option and chose not to be a dues-paying member of the union, you would not be able to vote on important union business, like contract ratification, who your union stewards would be, or whether or not to go on strike.

Q If the union is elected, how much would employees have to pay in union dues?

A According to the most recent annual financial filing with the federal government, called an LM-2 report, UFCW charges members between \$32.08 to \$43.50 each month to become a member. This could be as much as \$522.00 a year in union dues.

Q Who determines the amount of union dues we would have to pay?

A A union determines the amount it charges members and has the right to increase dues at any time. Dues amounts are not negotiated, and Cincinnati Children’s would have no say in what the union charges.

Q If the union is elected, when would we have to start paying dues?

A Typically, when a union is newly elected, members will be required to pay dues after a collective bargaining agreement or labor contract is reached.

Q Would we have to pay an initiation fee to join the union?

A According to UFCW’s LM-2, they charge an initiation fee of \$50 to \$125. While it is entirely up to the union, it’s not uncommon for unions to waive initiation fees for current employees. However, it is likely the union would charge new employees this fee, which has the potential to hinder recruitment efforts.

Q Can unions charge us money beyond member dues?

A Yes, unions usually have a constitution and bylaws that members are required to follow. Not following the rules outlined in those documents can result in additional fees and assessments beyond monthly union dues. Before considering whether or not to elect a union, it’s important to read those documents so you are aware of the rules you would be expected to follow.