

Unions 101

What is a labor union?

A union is a **business** which represents employees in the workplace. Union members pay for “representation” through dues.

Unions claim to improve their members’ terms and conditions of employment, often promising better pay, benefits and job security. However, unions **can’t actually guarantee those promises**, so members could end up with more, the same or less than what they had before.

What is collective bargaining?

Collective bargaining is the negotiation process between unions and employers. During this process, the union and the employer go back and forth on terms and conditions of employment such as pay, schedules, benefits, safety protocols and much more. Importantly, employers are not obligated to agree to the union’s proposals, which is why **no one can guarantee the outcome of the negotiations**.

How much say do members have in union operations?

Union leadership can use resources and endorse causes without **any direct feedback or a vote from union members**. Decisions concerning retreat and conference spending, executive salaries, political candidate donations and other activities are ultimately controlled by a relatively small group. These decisions may not always align with your opinion or values.

¹ Union of American Physicians and Dentists (UAPD) LM-2 Form 069-941 (2025)

What would it cost me if UAPD was voted in?

Union of American Physicians and Dentists (UAPD) dues are \$477 yearly PLUS 0.9% of your base pay.¹ You could end up paying thousands of dollars to the union directly from your paycheck, even if you didn’t vote or voted no. For example, if you make \$165,000 per year, **\$5,886 of your pay could go to the union** over the span of a three-year contract.

What if I don’t want to be represented by the union?

If an election is held and a majority of those who cast votes choose to unionize, every eligible employee in the voting unit will be represented by the union **whether they chose this option or not** and will be required to pay representation fees or membership dues.

What does it actually mean to have a union represent me?

Being represented by a union means that your pay, schedule, benefits and other terms and conditions of employment **must be negotiated between the union and a legal representative for the organization—not the employee and their organizational leaders**.



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