



## Unions and What to Expect

**Employers and employees both benefit from knowing what unions are and how they are relevant in the employment landscape. Knowledge of unions can help employees and employers navigate the complex and ever-evolving world of labour relations and workplace dynamics.**

### What is a union?

A union is an organisation that represents workers in a particular industry or occupation. Unions negotiate with Employers on behalf of their members to improve wages, working conditions, and benefits. Unions also help to protect the rights of workers and ensure that they are treated fairly.

### What is the role of a union representative?

A union representative is a person who has been elected by union members to represent them in the workplace. Union representatives have a number of responsibilities, including:

- Negotiating collective bargaining agreements with Employers
- Representing members in grievance and dispute resolution procedures
- Providing advice and support to members on workplace issues
- Advocating for the rights of workers

### What are the legal obligations of Employers towards union representatives?

Employers have a number of legal obligations towards union representatives, including:

- Allowing union representatives to enter the workplace to carry out their duties
- Providing union representatives with access to information and resources
- Consulting with union representatives on workplace matters
- Not discriminating against union representatives

### What are the rights of union representatives in the workplace?

Union representatives have a number of rights in the workplace, including the right to:

- Enter the workplace to carry out their duties
- Access information and resources
- Consult with Employers on workplace matters
- Represent members in grievance and dispute resolution procedures
- Be free from discrimination

### How do unions assist in resolving workplace disputes?

Unions can assist in resolving workplace disputes in a number of ways, including:

- Providing advice and support to members on workplace issues
- Negotiating with Employers on behalf of members
- Representing members in grievance and dispute resolution procedures

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### How to engage constructively with union representatives

Employers can engage constructively with union representatives by:

- Communicating openly and honestly with union representatives
- Respecting the rights of union representatives
- Consulting with union representatives on workplace matters
- Negotiating collective bargaining agreements in good faith

### Types of Industrial Action

Employers have a number of legal obligations towards union representatives, including:

- Strikes
- Work stoppages
- Slowdowns
- Overtime bans
- Boycotts

### What are the rights of union representatives in the workplace?

Industrial action is any action taken by workers to try to improve their wages, working conditions, or benefits. Industrial action can take many forms, including:

- Enter the workplace to carry out their duties
- Access information and resources
- Consult with Employers on workplace matters
- Represent members in grievance and dispute resolution procedures
- Be free from discrimination

### Tips for engaging constructively with union representatives:

- Be prepared for meetings with union representatives. Have the necessary information and documentation on hand.
- Be respectful and professional in your dealings with union representatives.
- Be willing to listen to the concerns of union representatives and to work with them to find solutions.
- Be honest and transparent in your communications with union representatives.
- Keep union representatives informed of any changes to workplace policies or procedures.

Unions play an important role in the workplace. They can help to improve wages and working conditions for workers, and they can also help to protect the rights of workers. Employers should engage constructively with union representatives and respect the rights of union members. By doing so, Employers can help to create a more harmonious and productive work environment.

Employers should have a good understanding of union movements and the rights of union representatives.

Establishing clear boundaries, communication, and processes is key to successfully managing relationships with unions, union representative and dealing with industrial action.