

Communication from Public

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Council File No: 19-0229

Comments for Public Posting: On behalf of ANSWER LA, I would like to submit the attached letter in support of the Fair Work Week Ordinance. We are in strong favor of this policy.

May 22, 2022

Los Angeles City Council
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

To: Council President Nury Martinez and Economic Development & Jobs Committee Chair
Curren D. Price

CC: LA City Councilmembers

RE: Los Angeles Fair Work Week Ordinance (Council File 19-0229)

On behalf of ANSWER LA (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism), I want to express our strong support for the LA Fair Workweek Ordinance (FWW) and would like to thank you for your leadership on moving the ordinance forward. ANSWER is an organization dedicated to ending racism and war, with a strong passion for the struggles for economic and social justice for all. We support the right of essential workers in LA to a Fair Workweek! Their hard work not only pulled us through the pandemic, but still continues to support our sustenance, and so they have every right to a more dignified life and working experience.

The retail industry is the second largest employer in Los Angeles, with over [140,000 retail workers](#) in the city, with a majority of the workers from communities of color and identifying as women. As you are aware, the pandemic rattled this industry as workers in this sector became frontline essential heroes responsible for connecting our communities with the food and resources needed during these uncertain times. Many workers have been forced to choose between their health and a paycheck—and they continue to meet the challenges of the pandemic while big corporations in this sector keep bringing in record profits.

As we move toward recovery from this unprecedented pandemic, a comprehensive FWW policy will make retail and grocery work more just for these thousands of workers, make jobs in this sector sustainable, and will help uplift our communities who have been most impacted by the pandemic. Unfair scheduling impacts a huge number of working families in our city, with unstable work hours upholding a system of income inequality that keeps communities in poverty: workers in this sector are the least well off in the LA economy. The “Hour Crisis” report released by the UCLA Labor Center showed that 8 out of 10 retail workers in Los Angeles do not have a set weekly schedule, with 77 percent of workers receiving their schedules no more than one week in advance—even day-of and last-minute scheduling changes are common. This instability in scheduling has detrimental effects that also lead to poor health, stress, anxiety, lack of sleep, irregular meal times, missed medical appointments, no time off for emergencies or special events, and little chance to plan ahead for family, school, and additional work commitments. A recent study released by The Economic Round Table found that over 58% of Kroger workers have work schedules that change at least every week, and that 67% say they do not earn enough money to pay for basic expenses every month.

Our retail and grocery workers deserve access to high quality jobs and scheduling stability that affords them a good quality of life, positive work-life balance, dignity, and respect.

The heart of this policy will ensure that retail workers in the city:

- Receive two weeks' notice of their schedules;
- Are not forced to work "clopening" shifts or to remain "on-call" for shifts;
- Will not be retaliated against for requesting a change in their shift;
- Will receive additional compensation for last-minute changes to their schedules; and
- Will be offered additional hours at their place of employment before employers hire additional part-time workers.

The policy will apply to employers with at least 300 employees globally in the retail and grocery sector, including chains and franchises, covering around 70,000 workers in the city.

We look forward to Los Angeles joining the growing chorus of cities that have passed fair scheduling policies, including New York City, San Francisco, Seattle, Philadelphia, and Chicago. Our essential workers in the retail and grocery industry should not have to keep facing the same challenges that they did prior to the pandemic.

Thank you for your leadership.

Edgar Reyes
Bartender & Community Organizer

ANSWER