

National Retail Justice Alliance

Basic Facts About the Retail Industry

The Retail Sector Is Essential To The Health Of The U.S. Economy and America's Middle Class.

The retail sector is the largest industry by employment in the United States, and is projected to add almost 1.8 million jobs between 2010 and 2020 (more than any other industry except construction). Strengthening the middle class is essential to rebuilding our economy and

it's critically important that retail employers lead the way in making sure that retail jobs are good jobs with benefits so that retail workers have a pathway to the middle class.

The Retail Sector Is An Important Employer Of Minorities And Women.

In 2011, 10.8 percent of retail workers were African American; 4.5 percent were Asian; 14.6 percent were Hispanic; and 48.6 percent were female.

Retail Workers Are Struggling To Survive In Low-Wage Jobs With Inconsistent Hours And Little To No Benefits.

Retail jobs are low-wage jobs, and over half of retail workers have no retirement plan. In 2011, the median hourly pay for cashiers was \$9.06; \$10.04 for retail salespeople; and \$9.73 for stock clerks and order fillers. The median annual pay for the eight million workers in these occupations in 2011 was well below the most recent federal poverty guideline for a family of three.

Retail workers struggle to get enough hours and are less likely to have health insurance. Just under one third (31 percent) of retail workers were part-time (less than 35 hours per week) in 2011, and 1.5 million of them were involuntarily part-time. In 2010, 20.9 percent of retail and wholesale workers were uninsured; 13 percent were on public insurance (including Medicaid); and 20.2 percent used a family member's employer-provided insurance.



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Academic Studies Show That Improving Retail Jobs Could Pay Off For Employers.

Academic studies have provided quantitative evidence that retailers can benefit from investing more in their workforce. Retailers that invest in their employees (higher pay, better benefits and schedules, more training) see positive results, including healthy sales and profit growth, higher labor productivity, lower turnover and higher customer satisfaction. (Sources: "Why 'Good Jobs' Are Good for Retailers," by Zeynep Ton, Harvard Business Review, January-February 2012 and "Retail Store Execution: An Empirical Study," by Marshall Fisher, Jayanth Krishnan and Serguei Netessine, Knowledge@Wharton, December 2006.)

Changing Walmart Will Alter The Retail Sector.

As the largest retailer in the United States, it's imperative that Walmart listen to—and respect—its workers in order to rebuild our country's economy and strengthen America's middle class. The UFCW is fighting to improve working conditions at Walmart through the Making Change at Walmart campaign, and the new employee association, Organization United for Respect at Walmart (OUR Walmart). To support Making Change at Walmart and OUR Walmart, please visit <http://makingchangeatwalmart.org/>.