

## Communication from Public

**Name:**

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**Council File No:** 19-0229

**Comments for Public Posting:** Attached PDF, Public Comment for Los Angeles Fair Workweek Ordinance, on behalf of Legal Aid at Work: File number 19-0229

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April 6, 2022

Los Angeles City Council  
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Los Angeles, CA 90012  
[CityClerk@lacity.org](mailto:CityClerk@lacity.org)

**Re: Los Angeles Fair Workweek Ordinance, Council File 19-0229**

Dear Los Angeles City Council:

On Behalf of Legal Aid at Work, a nonprofit dedicated to advancing justice for workers with low-wages, I want to express our strong support for the LA Fair Workweek Ordinance. Our retail and grocery workers deserve access to high quality jobs and the scheduling stability that affords them a good quality of life and positive work-life balance. When schedules can change at a moment's notice, families cannot predict their income or plan childcare in the ways that they need.

There are more than 400,000 retail workers in Los Angeles County.<sup>1</sup> Currently, retail workers are expected to have open availability for their schedule, despite familial obligations. Even after schedules are posted, some workers have their hours changed before their shift, and more than half of the workforce has experienced managers changing their schedules within just one day of their shift.<sup>2</sup> For a parent with children, this can necessitate finding last minute childcare or rescheduling medical appointments. For all workers, this can cause income uncertainty and make it difficult to cover living expenses.

Black and Latina women are disproportionately likely to experience unfair scheduling practices, as they are more likely to hold low-paid jobs.<sup>3</sup> And the impact of having an unstable schedule is exacerbated for women of color by family

<sup>1</sup> Estimate of city retail workers based on Economic Census 2012 and County Business patterns 2015.

<sup>2</sup> UCLA Labor Center. *Hour Crisis: Unstable Schedules in the Los Angeles Retail Sector*. LAANE. <https://laane.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Hour-Crisis-Unstable-Schedules-in-the-Los-Angeles-Retail-Sector.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Tucker & Vogtman, *supra* note 2, at 4. See also Elyse Shaw et al., *Undervalued and Underpaid in America: Women in Low-Wage, Female Dominated Jobs*, Inst. Women's Pol'y Res. (Nov. 2016), <https://iwpr.org/job-quality-income-security/undervalued-and-underpaid-inamerica/>.

caregiving responsibilities; Black and Latina mothers are more often the primary breadwinners for their families, compared to white mothers, which compounds the impact that unsupportive policies have on their families' economic wellbeing.<sup>4</sup>

For example, Lupe, who had worked in LA grocery stores, needed to return to work to provide for her family after she had a baby. However, the jobs that she found had inconsistent schedules, which made it impossible for her to arrange for the childcare that she would need. As a result, Lupe was forced take more time off, leaving her family without income, while she searched for a job with stable hours.

Workers deserve a level of stability in their schedules so that they can meet their financial needs and care for their families. By supporting scheduling stability and allowing workers to plan ahead, this Ordinance will better enable families to care for their loved ones and be well.

Providing a fair workweek promotes health, respect, and longevity in the workplace. We hope Los Angeles will join the other major 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 deserve a fair workweek.

Sincerely,



Diana Fabian-Gutierrez  
Legal Fellow, Legal Aid at Work

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<sup>4</sup> Diana Boesch and Shilpa Phadke. *When Women Lose All the Jobs: Essential Actions for a Gender-Equitable Recovery*, Center for American Progress. (2021), <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/women/reports/2021/02/01/495209/women-lose-jobs-essential-actions-gender-equitable-recovery/>