

# UFCW 951 BULLETIN

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## United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 951

The *UFCW 951 Bulletin* is a regular publication of UFCW Local 951, designed to give members a quick update of union news and notice of upcoming events. The flyer is distributed at the workplace by union representatives and is also available on-line at [www.ufcw951.com](http://www.ufcw951.com). To receive e-mail copies of the *Bulletin* during the first week of publication, call the UFCW 951 Communications Department at 1.800.999.0951.

## Meijer Universal Benefits Agreement Negotiations Update

On July 25, UFCW 951 held Town Calls where stewards were update on the status of Meijer Universal Benefits negotiations.

Bargaining is being conducted by UFCW 951 and three other locals as the agreement covers all unionized Meijer employees in Michigan, Ohio and Kentucky, as well as OMP/IF employees. It is negotiated separately from the master agreement and covers the non-wage, economic portions of the contract including pension, health insurance, paid time off, and the fringe calculation. The current six-year Universal Benefits Agreement expires this year, and a new agreement needs to be ratified in time for open enrollment for health benefits this fall.

“While these negotiations are challenging, we are making progress, and are getting closer to reaching a consensus on key issues,” Marv Russow, UFCW 951 president, told the group. “While it is too early and not right to divulge any specifics of our discussions, as no formal agreements have been reached, I can tell you I believe we are close to reaching an agreement that addresses several of members’ main concerns.”

Members’ goals Russow believes can be achieved are listed in the sidebar on this page. “As we push for these and other improvements in the Universal Benefits Agreement, we must weigh these gains against potential wage gains and other protections we are able to negotiate in 2012 when the master agreements expire,” Russow said. “We

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### Union Optimistic Several of Members’ Goals Will be Achieved

While negotiations are on-going, UFCW 951 believes the new Universal Benefits Agreement will reflect many of members’ goals including:

- ✓ **Containment of health care costs.**
- ✓ **Reduction of the daily fringe calculation, and limiting the circumstances that cause a loss of fringe.**
- ✓ **Increased paid time off for members hired after October 23, 2005.**
- ✓ **Protecting the pension of older members, while meeting the desire of younger members for a more portable retirement option, such as a 401(k).**
- ✓ **Increasing job security.**

do not want to be in a place where our Universal Benefits Agreement precludes us from negotiating meaningful base rate wage gains, as members rated wage increases their top bargaining goal, and were very clear they want these wage increases to come in the form of base rate increases, not top rate adjustments.”

With negotiations continuing, Russow reminded stewards “what may have been agreed to yesterday can change tomorrow as we reach agreements in other areas.”

To read the full text of Russow’s Town Call comments, go to [www.ufcw951.com](http://www.ufcw951.com).

## UFCW 951 and Meijer Resolve TMAG Grievance

Prior to the scheduled arbitration of the Meijer Team Member at a Glance (TMAG) grievance, the parties resolved the issue in the form of a letter of understanding.

The letter details changes to Meijer’s Positive Discipline Incident Report and store level practices to reflect their agreement that the first step of the Positive Discipline system (PD1) is a counseling step, not a disciplinary step. Another positive aspect of the agreement is the expansion of the Positive Discipline system to include an additional step. A “final warning” step for incidents that occur after the PD7 has been issued will now be included in the Positive Discipline system.

The letter of understanding also includes allowances for unplanned absences due to mitigating circumstances including death of an immediate family member; hospitalization, extreme weather, disaster striking a member’s residence, food borne illness, flu epidemic, and other exceptions as determined by management. This change means the attendance policy is no longer a no fault system.

Any outstanding TMAG grievances will be resolved according to the terms of the letter of understanding. For more information on the new TMAG guidelines, consult your union representative.

## Agreement Reached on Meijer GM Scheduling

Prior to the 2007 contract negotiations, Meijer members working in General Merchandise departments expressed a desire to combine departments for scheduling purposes, enabling members to expand their career path opportunities and allowing more senior employees the opportunity to work additional hours and/or a more desirable shift.

UFCW 951 brought members’ wishes to the bargaining table, and secured agreement from Meijer on the concept of department combinations. Due to the extensive changes it would necessitate, the issue was not included in the contract.

Over the last three years, despite no contract language calling for the combination of departments, several stores have adopted this practice. To insure the consistent application of combining departments, UFCW 951 and Meijer recently signed a letter of understanding outlining the process of combining departments #59, #66, #88, and #44 for scheduling purposes. Based on store design, the Letter of Understanding does not apply to stores #213, #248, #250, #257, #244, #260, #311 and #316.

“Interested GM members now have the right to cross training and the ability to use their seniority to work more and better hours,” Marv Russow, UFCW 951’s president, said. “The Letter of Understanding achieves the goals expressed by members prior to the last contract negotiations.”



Marv Russow, President  
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