



Labor Relations Update: The News You Need to Know

PRESENTED BY:



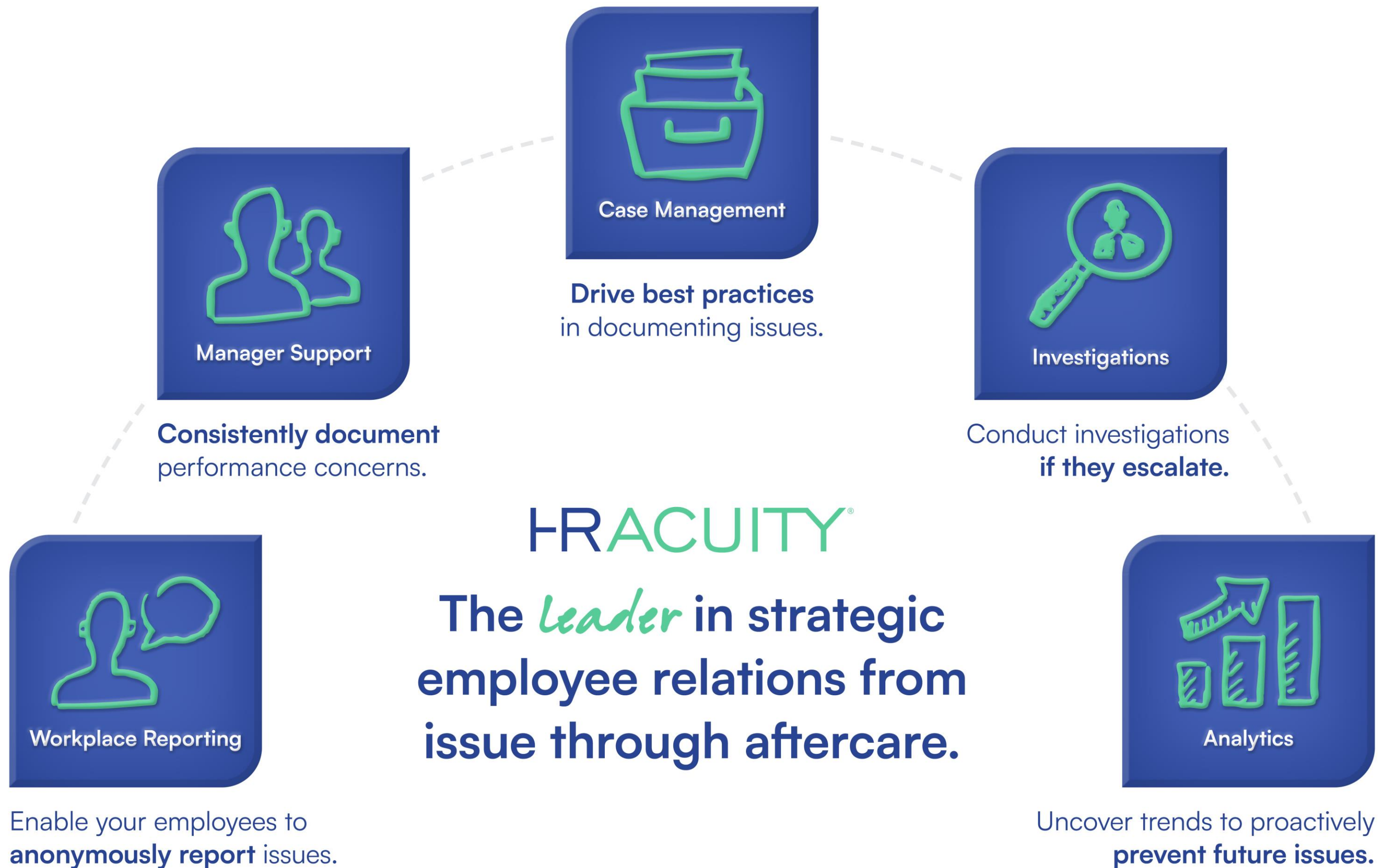
Danine Clay
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Reliant Labor Consultants



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The Leader in Employee Relations



Employee Relations Benchmark Study

The go-to resource for ER leaders, packed with valuable insights and data.



Employee Relations Quotient (ER/Q)

The first-ever maturity model for Employee Relations.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS QUOTIENT

ER/Q



empowER

The largest free-to-join online community exclusively for ER professionals.




ERroundtable

Our annual event connects over 400 global ER leaders to learn, share ideas, network and more.



Important Dates & Upcoming Events



Webinar | **The Power of Mediation: Resolving Workplace Conflict with Confidence**

August 13 at 1:00 p.m ET



Dr. Jeremy Pollack
Founder and CEO, Pollack
Peacebuilding Systems



August 13
1:00 PM ET



empowER
by HRACTIVITY

MEDIATION TRAINING

Fundamentals of Conflict Resolution

 Six hour course  Earn SHRM and HRCI recertification credits



Jeremy Pollack
Founder & CEO,
Pollack Peacebuilding Systems

Sept 16
2:00 PM ET

 **MEMBER-LED DISCUSSION**

Exploring PIP vs. Package Options.



Jessica Shawn
WEX



Andrea Riganti
Equifax Workforce Solutions



Megan Grimes
Daiichi Sankyo

August 5
1:00 PM ET



Boston

Oct. 28-29
In-Person Event

Donation

Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma

- Every day in eastern Oklahoma, families must decide between paying rent and buying groceries. Children go to bed hungry. Seniors leave prescriptions unfilled so they can buy food.
- It doesn't have to be this way. There is enough food in our community for everyone. With the right resources, hunger is a problem we can solve together



Welcome Our Guest Speakers



Danine Clay
Labor Relations Institute



Evelyn Fragoso
Reliant Labor Consultants



Michael VanDervort
Labor Relations Institute



Michael VanDervort, Danine Clay, Evelyn Fragoso

LRI Consulting Services, Inc.

LRI Client Update

July 30, 2025

**Helping clients create extraordinary
workplaces for over 45 years**

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Agenda

- Labor Relations Trends and Developments (H1 2025)
- The New Face of Unions - How Unions have changed their look to align with Millennials and Gen Z
- Organizing in Cannabis
- Employee Resource Groups – an unexpected risk?

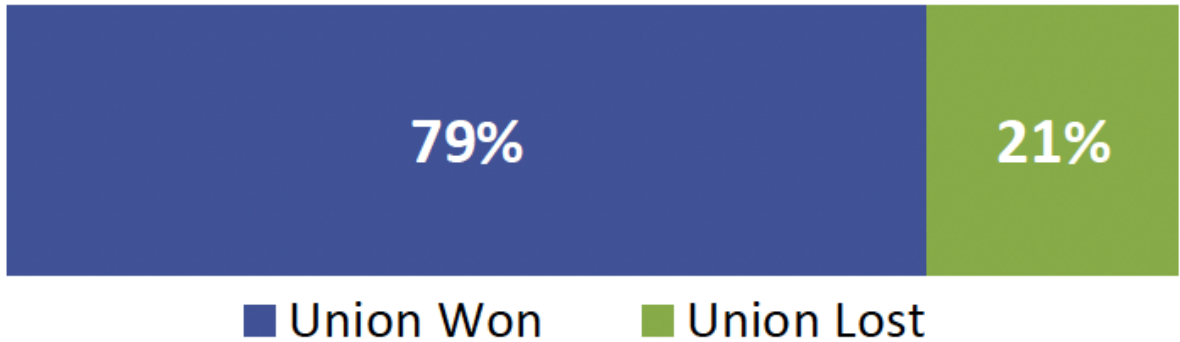
Summary of the Second Quarter 2025 NLRB Elections Review

NLRB Representation Elections (details page 4)

A total of 768 representation (RC) elections were held through Second Quarter 2025, down 19% compared to 2024.

Unions won 78.6% of all representation elections held through Second Quarter 2025. As a result of those elections, unions organized a total of 40,517 workers.

RC Elections through Second Quarter 2025

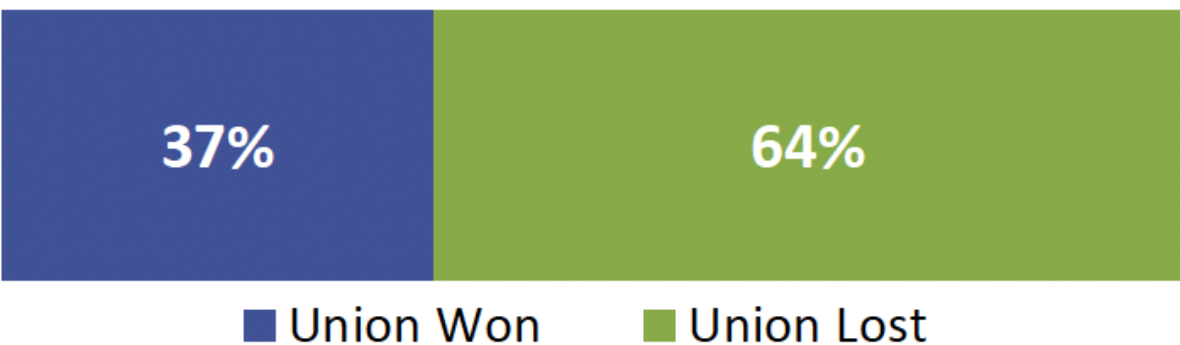


NLRB Decertification Elections (details page 5)

A total of 74 decertification (RD) elections were held through Second Quarter 2025, down 19% compared to 2024.

Unions lost 63.5% of all decertification elections held through Second Quarter 2025, up from 70.3% in 2024. As a result of those elections, unions lost a total of 1,400 workers.

RD Elections through Second Quarter 2025

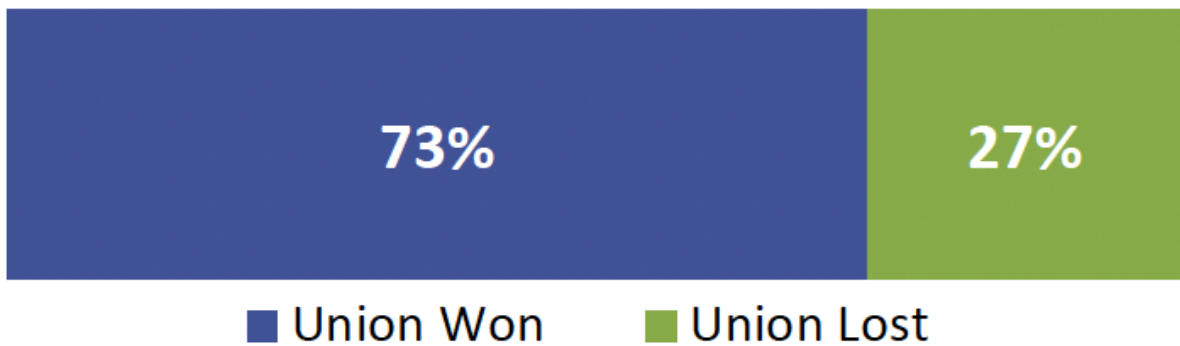


NLRB Employer-Filed Elections (details page 6)

A total of 45 employer-filed (RM) elections were held through Second Quarter 2025, down 55% compared to 2024.

Unions won 73.3% of all employer-filed elections held through Second Quarter 2025, up from 72% in 2024. As a result of those elections, unions organized a total of 907 workers.

RM Elections through Second Quarter 2025

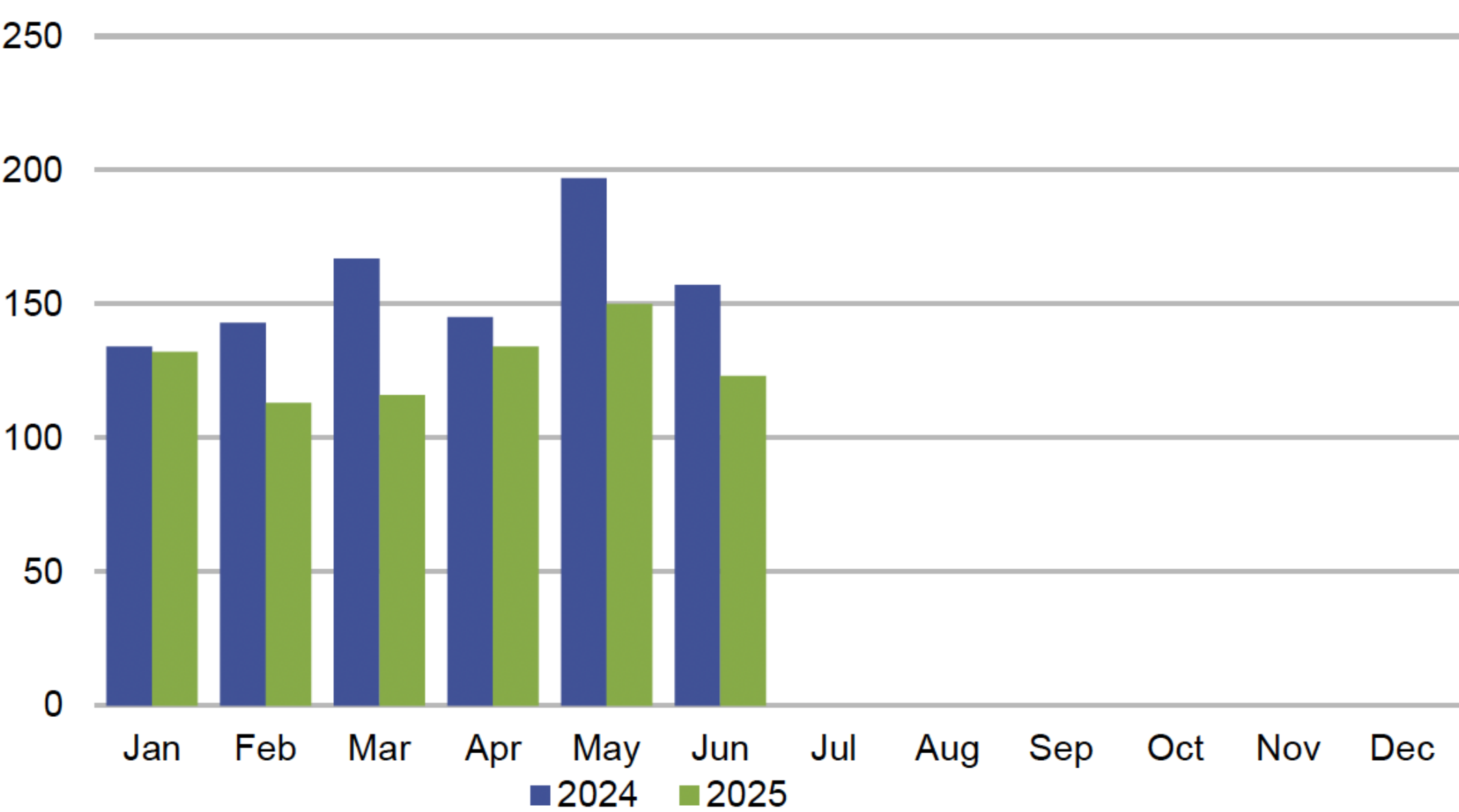


Representation (RC) Elections Summary

Total Representation Elections through Second Quarter 2025 (Compared to 2024)

The number of representation elections for all unions was down 19% through Second Quarter 2025 compared to 2024. The following chart shows a month-by-month total of representation elections for both years and the percentage change year-over-year (based on elections held).

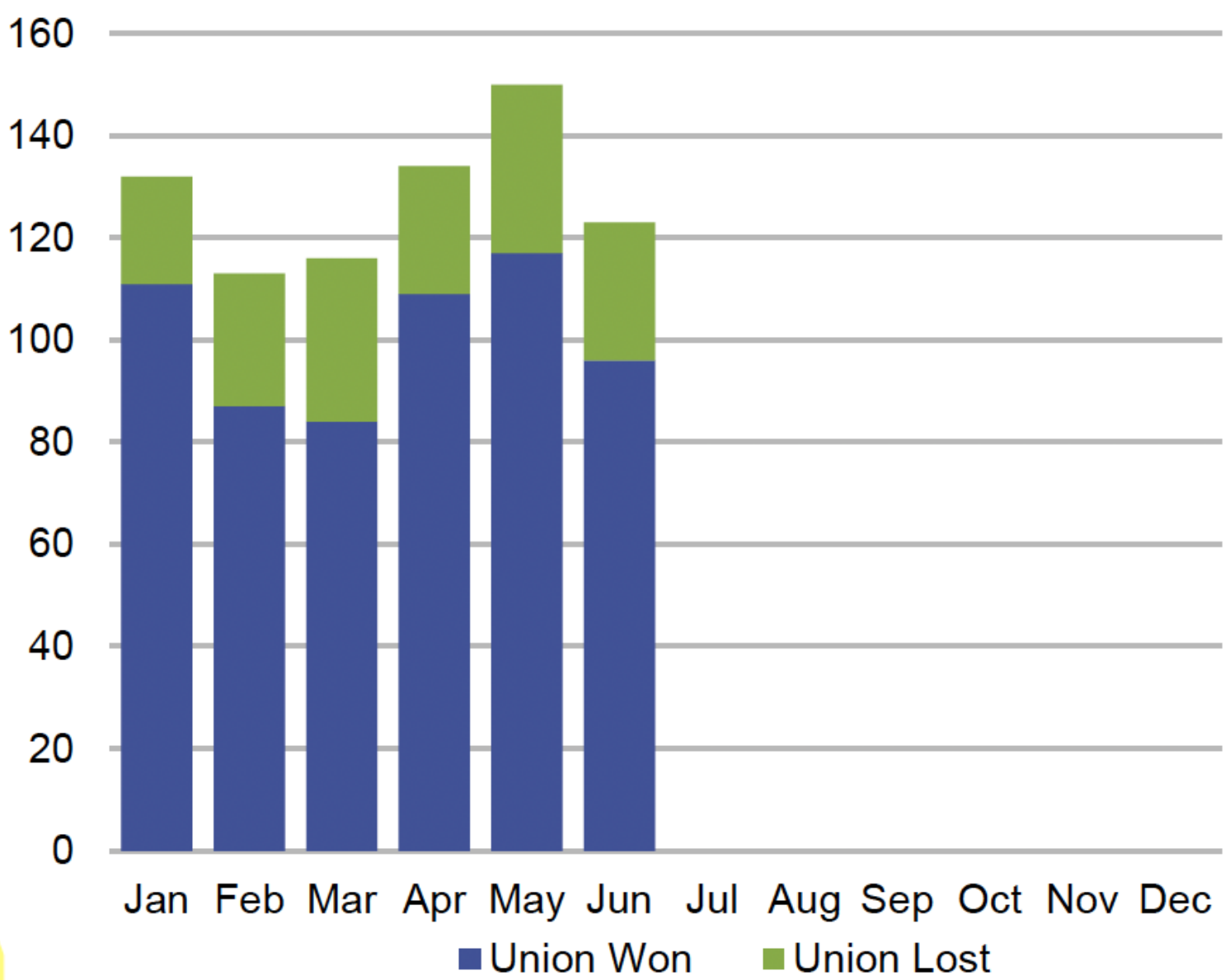
Month	2024	2025	Change
Jan	134	132	-1%
Feb	143	113	-21%
Mar	167	116	-31%
Apr	145	134	-8%
May	197	150	-24%
Jun	157	123	-22%
Jul			
Aug			
Sep			
Oct			
Nov			
Dec			
Total	943	768	-19%



Union Won/Lost Totals in Representation Elections through Second Quarter 2025

Unions won 78.6% of all representation elections held through Second Quarter 2025, down from 80% in 2024. The following chart shows the month-by-month union won/lost totals in representation elections.

2025	Elections Held	Union Won	Union Lost	Union Pct Won
Jan	132	111	21	84%
Feb	113	87	26	77%
Mar	116	84	32	72%
Apr	134	109	25	81%
May	150	117	33	78%
Jun	123	96	27	78%
Jul				
Aug				
Sep				
Oct				
Nov				
Dec				
Total	768	604	164	79%



Workers Involved in Representation Elections	2024	2025	% Chg
Total number of workers eligible to vote in representation elections	71,393	57,223	-20%
Total number of workers organized as a result of representation elections	61,041	40,517	-34%

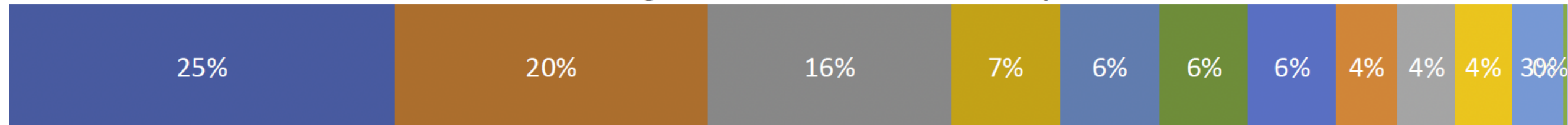
Election Records Per Industry and Unit Size through Second Quarter 2025

Representation (RC) Elections Per Industry

Industry	Elections Held	Union Won	Union Lost	Union Pct Won
Healthcare and Social Assis.	188	163	25	87%
Entmt, Accom, Food Services	153	125	28	82%
Services	119	94	25	79%
Manufacturing	53	34	19	64%
Retail Trade	49	31	18	63%
Transport and Warehousing	43	35	8	81%
Wholesale Trade	43	29	14	67%
Utilities	30	28	2	93%
Finance, Insur, & Real Estate	28	18	10	64%
Information Communication	28	23	5	82%
Construction	25	16	9	64%
Mining	2	2	0	100%
Ag, Forestry, Fish & Hunt	1	1	0	100%

* Totals may not match all election totals on preceding pages due to not all industries being reported.

Percentage of RC Elections Per Industry



■ Healthcare and Social Assis.
 ■ Manufacturing
 ■ Wholesale Trade
 ■ Information Communication
 ■ Ag, Forestry, Fish & Hunt

■ Entmt, Accom, Food Services
 ■ Retail Trade
 ■ Utilities
 ■ Construction

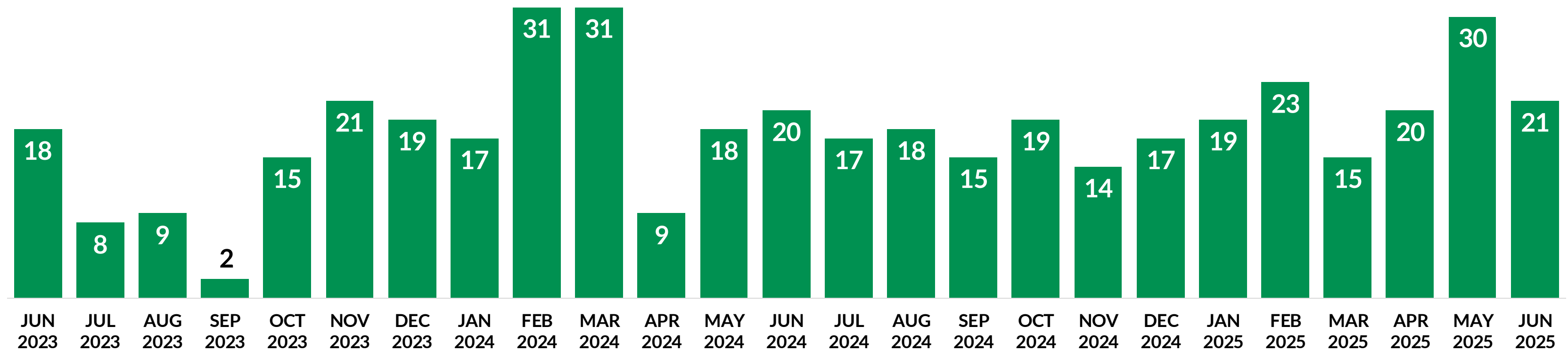
■ Services
 ■ Transport and Warehousing
 ■ Finance, Insur, & Real Estate
 ■ Mining

STARBUCKS RC & RM PETITIONS 2023 to 2025

Source LRI Rightnow

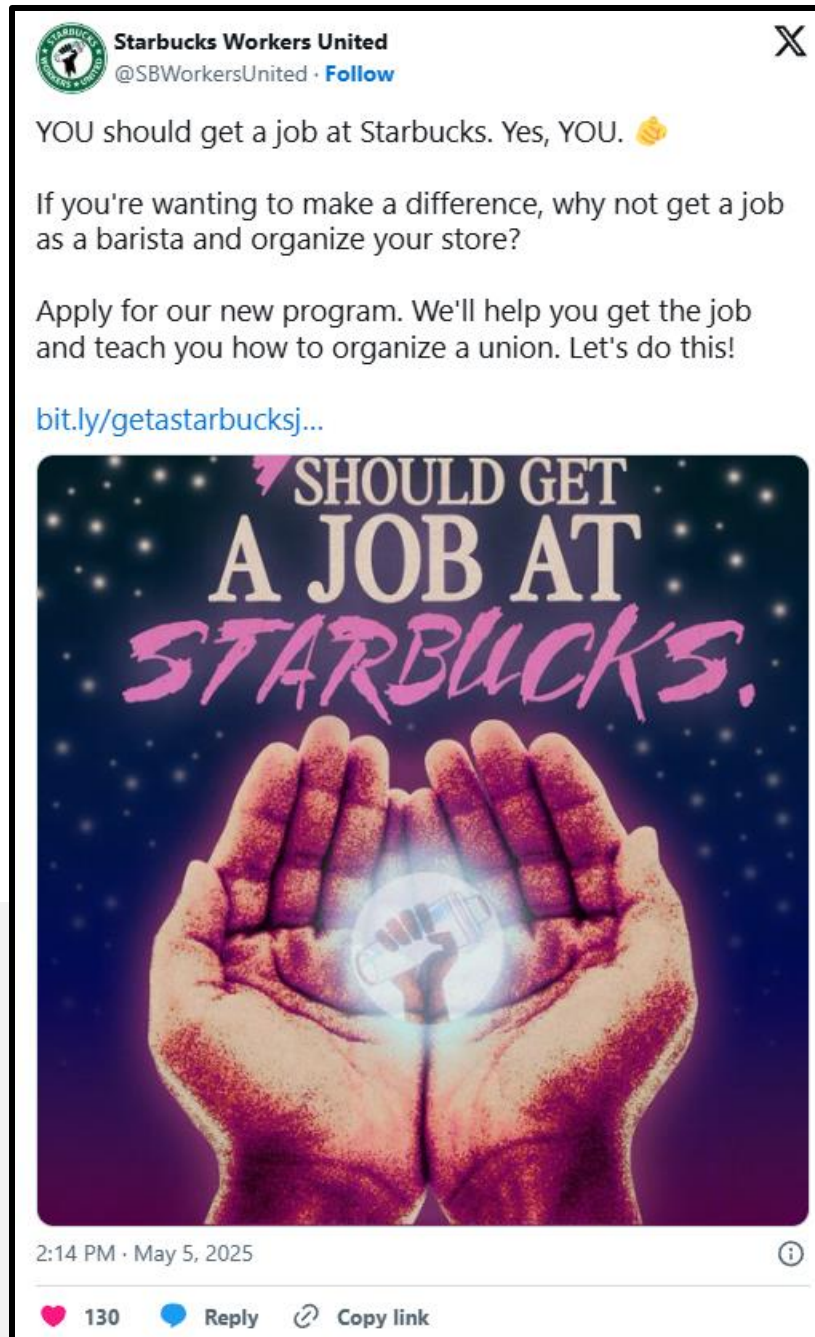
Starbucks RC & RM Petitions, 2023-2025

Source: LRIrightnow.com



12 RC, 1 RD & 0 RM PETITIONS FILED SO FAR IN JULY

Salting Is On The Rise



GET A RANK AND FILE JOB TO ORGANIZE THE SOUTH

The only way to change the quality of work and life in the South is to *get organized*. The Southern Workers Assembly is recruiting workers who want to be a part of leading this change, by getting jobs in key strategic industries across the region and digging in for the long-term to build power with their coworkers.

Apply southernworker.org/rankandfile

Southern Workers Assembly
southernworker.org | info@southernworker.org | [@swa_solidarity](https://twitter.com/swa_solidarity)



Work At Starbucks - Support Unionizing Partners!

Once you fill out this form, you'll be connected with a Starbucks Workers United organizer who can help you choose which stores to apply to, successfully interview, and get oriented to the working at Starbucks. Along the way, we'll work with you to develop the organizing skills necessary to support and build our union!

This is not an application to work at Starbucks Corporation and is not being done in coordination with Starbucks. This is a project of SB Workers United, a worker-led union of SBux partners.

Non-Traditional Union Organizing

Regional Activity:

- Southern Workers Assembly
- Union of Southern Service Workers (SEIU)
- SC for All

Industry specific:

- Woodstock's Employees Alliance
- Restaurant Workers United

Characteristics:

- Worker to worker: Issue-driven, social justice
- Independent and democratic
- Building coalitions
- Leafleting, Blitz tactics,

Southern Worker Action Summit

June 13 - 15 **Spartanburg, SC**

Initiated by:

Southern Workers Assembly

Co-Conveners:

Asheville Food and Beverage Workers United

Black Workers for Justice

Carolina Amazonians United for Solidarity and Empowerment

Charleston Alliance for Fair Employment/Charleston Workers Center

Chester Worker Empowerment Center

El Futuro Es Nuestro/It's Our Future

International Longshormen's Association, Local 1422

National Domestic Workers Alliance/We Dream in Black

Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights

Southern Human Rights Organizing Network

Truckers Movement for Justice/TAMEXUN

UE Local 150, NC Public Service Workers Union

Union of Southern Service Workers

Venceremos

Virginia Caucus of Rank and File Educators

More info: southernworker.org/summit

Top Labor Relations Developments in 2025

NLRB Shift & Policy Rollbacks

- With President Trump's administration firing key NLRB members (e.g. Jennifer Abruzzo, Gwynne Wilcox) and nominating Republicans, the board is now leaning employer-friendly. Expect reversals on Biden-era pro-union rulings once Trump nominees are confirmed, such as captive-audience meeting bans and easier union organizing—yet the board's decisions have been stalled by quorum fights

Potential Labor Law Shake-Ups

- **PRO Act revival**
- **Faster Labor Contracts Act:** Introduced by Republicans (Hawley) with Teamster support, aiming to *speed up* first-contract bargaining, a twist few saw coming. Neither has passed yet, but the fact they're both on the Hill says the game is changing.
- **States:** Striker unemployment pay in WA, captive-audience bans in NV, RI, Anti-union action: Public sector bargaining bans in UT and FL. State bills (CA, NY, MA) calling for oversight of private-sector union elections and unfair labor practices due to lack of quorum.

Top Labor Relations Developments in 2025

Federal Executive Orders & Mass Layoffs

- **March 27 EO:** Trump ended collective bargaining for federal agencies involved in national security (e.g., State, Defense, VA, HHS) This is currently on hold with a preliminary injunction.
- **Mass federal layoffs:** Over 275K civilian employees affected by June 26 due to staff reductions and executive restructuring

AI is now actively reshaping work, including labor relations

- **Employers** are rolling out AI-driven performance & surveillance tools, which led to NLRB scrutiny under Biden. AI adoption is spreading across the workplace, including HR, with much of its impact yet to be realized. (automated warehouses, robotic workers, self-driving vehicles)
- **Unions** are responding in kind: Microsoft/AFL-CIO AI training, numerous unions have added CBA requirements protecting certain types of work from AI or requiring AI impact negotiations upon implementation.
- The NLRB has institutionalized the trend—naming David K. Gaston as its first-ever Chief AI Officer.
- This is still an early-stage development; much more yet to come.

NLRB Confirmation Hearing



Nominee for NLRB General Counsel, **Crystal Carey** (Morgan Lewis), faced sharp pushback from **Sen. Josh Hawley (R-MO)** during her Senate confirmation hearing



Confirmation at Risk: With a 12–11 GOP majority on the Senate HELP Committee, **Hawley’s “no” vote could tank the nomination**



Hot Button Issue: Hawley criticized Carey’s opposition to the NLRB’s 2024 ban on **captive audience meetings**, questioning whether she would enforce rulings she disagrees with

Today's NLRB Nominations



Trump nominates two Republicans to the Board:
Scott Mayer and James Murphy



Scott Mayer (pictured) is Boeing's chief labor counsel; ex-MGM, Aramark, Morgan Lewis



James Murphy – longtime NLRB veteran; most recently Kaplan's chief counsel



If confirmed, Mayer and Murphy would restore a GOP majority



Timing is tight: Mayer and Murphy may not be confirmed before Kaplan's exit. NLRB decisions stalled until quorum is restored

AI Applications in HR & Labor Relations

Four Key Use Cases

- **Automation & Efficiency**
 - Document drafting, email triage, meeting transcription
 - Policy conversion to plain language
 - File retrieval across systems
- **Training & Development**
 - Custom simulations for union conversations and ULP scenarios
 - AI avatars for real-time coaching
 - Interactive "what not to say" training
- **Employee & Labor Relations**
 - Collective bargaining simulations
 - ULP compliance checks
 - CBA analysis and strategy development
- **Communications & Monitoring**
 - Social media sentiment monitoring (early union activity detection)
 - Policy benchmarking and drafting
 - Multi-language content translation

AI Use Unions & Employer

Both sides are leveraging AI for competitive advantage in organizing, negotiations, and compliance.

Labor Unions

Organizing: AI sentiment analysis, campaign scripts, social media bots

Research: Employer profiling, CBA comparisons, ULP tracking, oppo research

Communications: Mass AI texting, multilingual outreach

Training: Digital roleplays, worker rights chatbots

HR/LR Professionals

Counter-organizing: Monitor union activity, manager FAQs, campaign playbooks

Intelligence: NLRB data analysis, policy benchmarking, compliance checks, investigations, oppo research

Content: Plain language policies, automated internal comms

Simulations: Collective bargaining prep, ULP training



The new face of unions

How Unions have changed their look to align with Millennials and Gen Z

The Evolution of Union Priorities

TRADITIONAL UNION FOCUS

- Pension security and retirement benefits
- Company loyalty rewarded through seniority systems
- Comprehensive medical coverage
- Required active member participation in meetings
- Emphasis on collective solidarity and mutual support

MODERN UNION APPROACH

- Social justice advocacy and broader societal concerns
- Flexible participation options with less mandatory involvement
- More individualized benefit structures
- Digital-first communication strategies
- Focus on work-life balance and psychological safety

This fundamental shift in priorities reflects changing workforce demographics and the values held by younger generations entering the labor market.

Image Transformation Strategy

Moving Away From



Historical perception challenges including corruption allegations, rigid hierarchies, and outdated organizational models that deterred younger workers.

Embracing New Identity

- ① Unions now position themselves as facilitators rather than controllers, emphasizing that members themselves drive decision-making.

Strategic de-emphasis of complex bylaws and constitutions during organizing campaigns to avoid intimidating potential members with bureaucratic processes.

Adoption of transparent governance models and digital accountability tools to build trust with tech-savvy generations.





Key Messages Resounding with Younger Workers

Social Justice

Younger workers respond to equity, inclusion, and anti-discrimination messaging. They see unions as vehicles for broader societal change.

Workplace Democracy

Transparency and having a voice in decision-making motivates young workers. They value democratic participation in the workplace.

Climate Action

Environmental concerns rank high with Gen Z and millennials. They expect unions to address climate issues and sustainability.

What are Unions telling Young Employees?

- Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wage system."
- ---IWW----

Our Issues

ING

Through
ake real change
conditions so
nts.

IMMIGRATION

Our union supports commonsense immigration reform that eliminates waiting periods for green card holders to access public health programs and provides a means for undocumented workers and their children to gain access to care beyond the ER.

HEALTH JU

We advocate for public
equality, and policies
determinants leading
for people of color, the
income working families

RACIAL JUSTICE

any way
men's
ir
igious

We believe that all lives have the same value in the eyes of the justice system, and that the laws of our country need to be enforced equally in every community.

GUN VIOLENCE

HEALTH

89 people die from gun-related
Very little progress has been
families and communities from
violence. Lifting the ban on re
to treat violence as it should be
health issue.

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[SEIU](#) Divide and Conquer: How Racism Harms Us All

More videos



0:59 / 5:41

CC Settings YouTube

Economic Justice Without Racial Justice

families





Modern Organizing Tactics Attracting Younger Workers



Digital-First Approach

Messaging apps, social media campaigns, and virtual events dominate. Young workers expect 24/7 digital access and engagement.



Peer-to-Peer Organizing

Friend-to-friend recruitment through digital networks proves effective. Content goes viral through authentic peer sharing.



Decentralized Participation

Flexible involvement options appeal to busy young workers. Micro-actions allow participation without major time commitments.

Current Union Focus

Cannabis and Starbucks : Rapid Unionization Growth

- Over 400 cannabis facilities unionized in 20+ states since 2020
- Led by United Food & Commercial Workers (UFCW) and Teamsters
- Issues: pay, safety, job security amid industry expansion

Starbucks' Rapid Unionization: 2023–2025

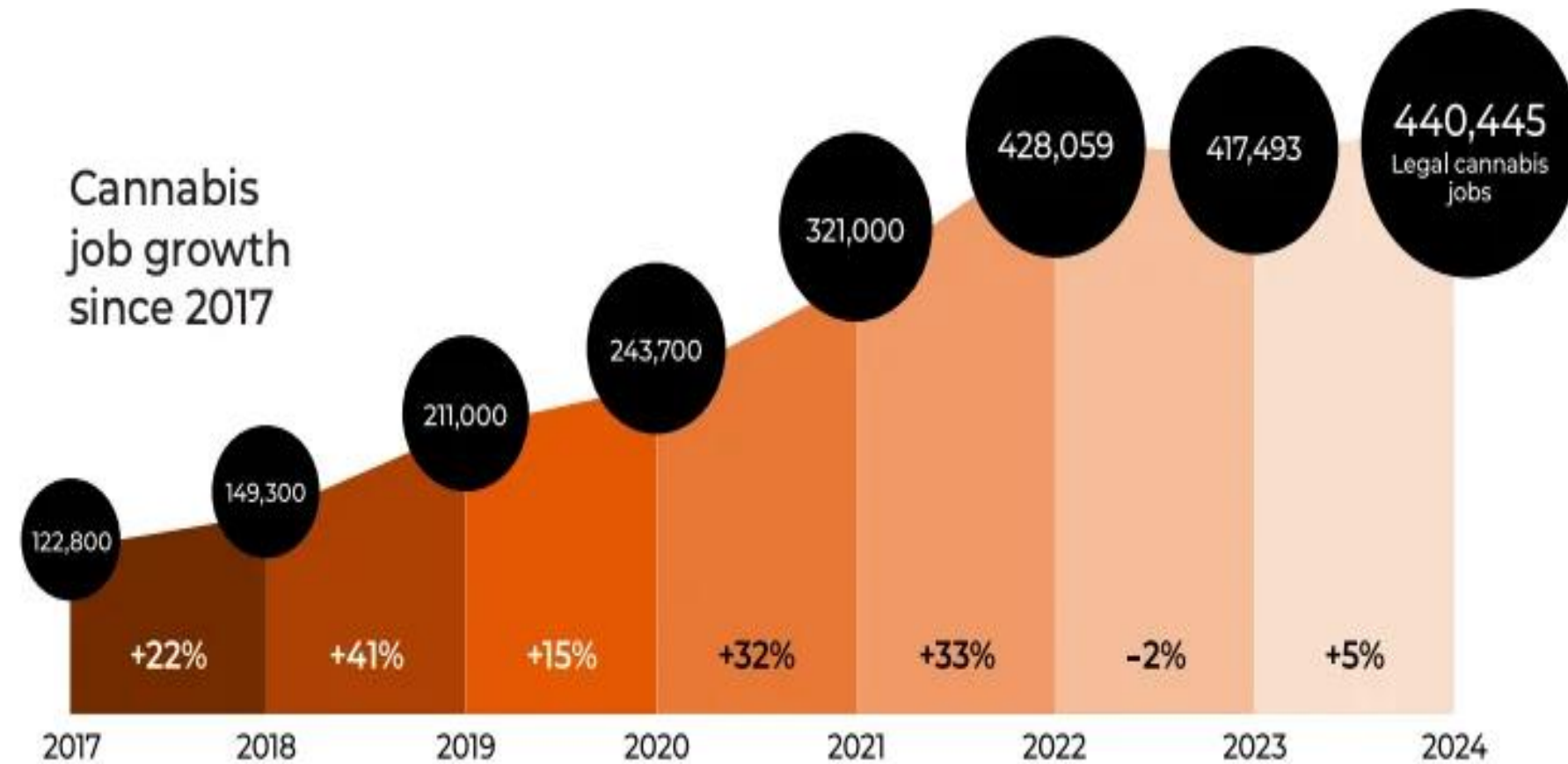
- Over **600 Starbucks stores** have unionized as of July 2025, a surge from just a handful in 2021; currently, *637 stores are unionized* as of July 2025.
- U.S. union interest is at a high, with **petitions for union elections doubling since 2021**, even as private sector union density dropped to a record low **5.9%** in 2024.
- Despite a 2024 framework agreement to move bargaining forward, **no first contracts have been reached** for unionized stores as of July 2025, and management continues to contest NLRB rulings.

Other Emerging Industries in Union Crosshairs

- Gig economy: rideshare, delivery, app-based workers
- Tech sector: warehouse logistics, data centers, AI content moderation
- Renewable energy: solar, wind, electric vehicle manufacturing
- Fast-growing service and logistics startups

Facts on Cannabis – Cannabis Generates Jobs and Money

- Cannabis is now legal recreationally in 24 states and 40 states for medical use
- Cannabis added approximately \$115.2 billion to the economy in 2024
- According to some projections, total revenue from cannabis is expected to reach \$35.2 billion – \$45.3 billion in 2025
- Early 2024, at least 440,445 full-time jobs were supported by legal cannabis
- Gen Z and Millennials make up 62.8% of all US cannabis sales
- Social Equity is important to consumers



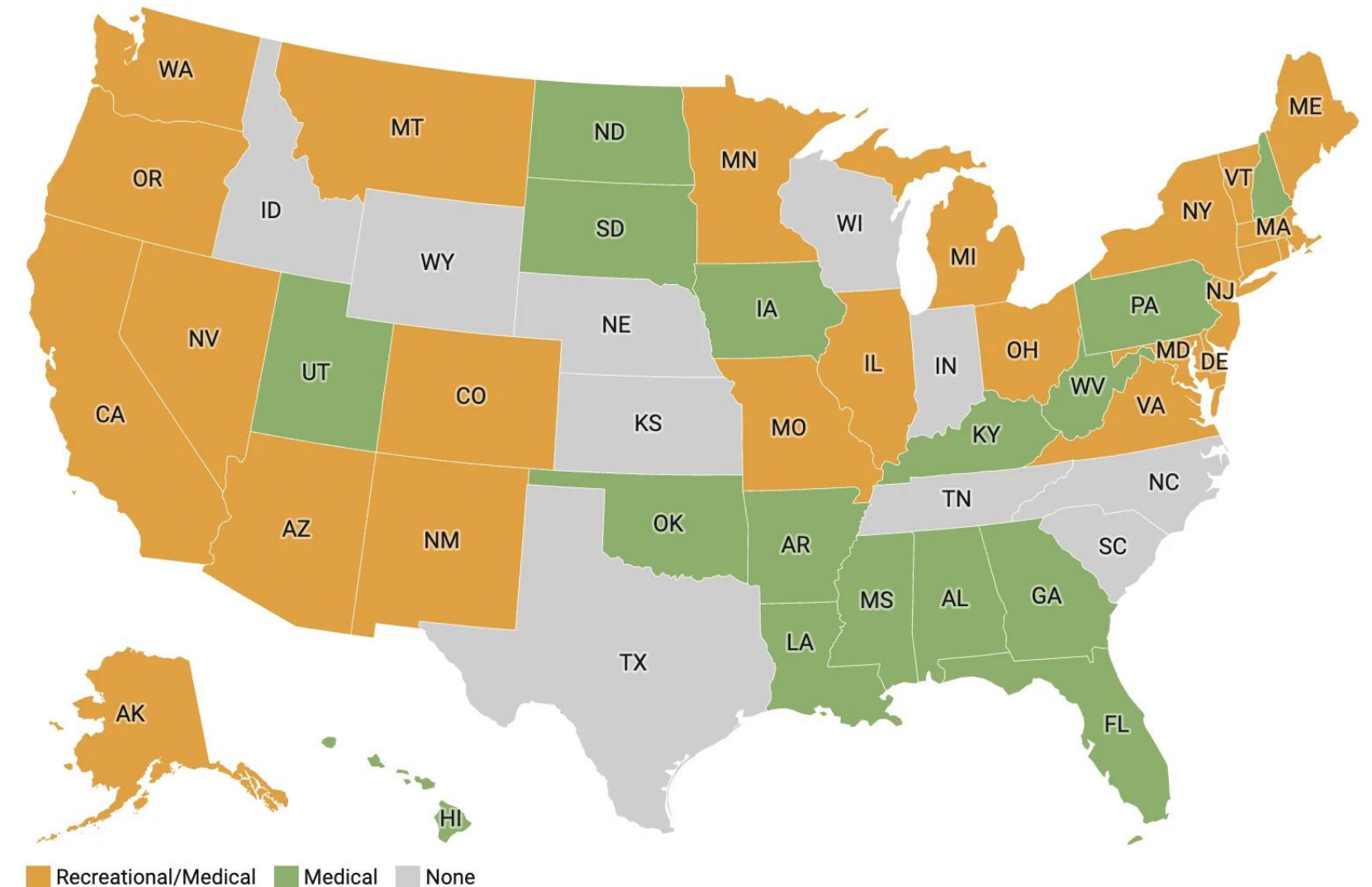
Organizing in Cannabis

- UFCW considers itself the leader in the Cannabis Workers Rising campaign (Cannabis Workers' Union)
- Many UFCW local union have a specific "Cannabis Division" focused on organizing the cannabis industry
- UFCW claims 418 organizing wins since 2020, including hundreds of CBAs across 20 states
- UFCW also claims to have organized 290 dispensaries and 36 grow facilities
- Major UFCW represented employers include Curaleaf, Green Thumb, Verano, Trulieve, Jushi, STIIIZY, AYR Wellness, and Cresco Labs



Exceptions to Unionization

- Not all workers in cannabis can unionize – outside of supervisors, the Act also excludes agricultural laborers.
- Exclusion applies to those engaged in cultivation, harvesting and packaging of cannabis
- Cannabis retail workers do not fall under the exclusion
- Yet, post-Harvest production workers fall under the Act and may unionize (Agricultural exception)
- Some states have also stepped in to cover potential cannabis agricultural workers under state unionization laws, even where the agricultural exception applies.



ERGs – What They Are (and Aren't)

- ERGs = employee-led groups focused on inclusion, identity, and belonging
- Common activities: networking, mentoring, cultural education
- But when ERGs begin advocating for workplace changes (wages, schedules, conditions), they risk being seen as labor organizations under the NLRA
- Intent doesn't matter—function is what counts



When ERGs Cross the Line

Risk triggers:

- Submitting formal proposals to management
- Speaking on behalf of a group about working conditions
- Being treated like a representative body by leadership

Consequences:

- NLRB could deem ERG a “labor org” → potential ULPs
- Possible forced union recognition or penalties
- Loss of ERG credibility, disruption of DEI initiatives



Stay Off the Thin Ice – Best Practices

- Create clear charters with well defined scopes and no negotiation or representation
- Train ERG leaders on NLRA boundaries
- Don't blur the line between employee advocacy and policy bargaining
- Keep HR involved in policy-related conversations
- Bottom line: Support culture without creating unintended legal exposure





Thanks!
Any burning questions?

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workplaces for over 45 years**

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