

Fight for \$15 Plans Protests, 'Civil Disobedience' on November 29

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Fight for \$15, the four-year-old movement to secure a minimum wage of \$15 an hour, has announced plans for demonstrations, strikes, and protests in 340 cities across the country on November 29. Tens of thousands of employees are expected to participate. The current federal minimum wage is \$7.25 an hour. Some state and local laws provide for higher minimum wages than the federally mandated rate.

According to *The Hill*, strikes are planned by baggage handlers at Chicago O'Hare International Airport and by fast food workers across the country. Protests also will take place at Los Angeles International Airport, Newark International Airport, and 20 other airports in major cities. According to the website action.lowpayisnotokay.org, baggage handlers, fast-food cooks, home care workers, child care teachers, and graduate assistants will participate. The movement demands "\$15 and union rights, no deportations, an end to the police killings of black people, and politicians keep their hands off Americans' health care coverage."

During a November 21 conference call, spokespersons for the movement claimed the planned protests are in response to President-elect Donald Trump's victory in the recent presidential election.

Under the National Labor Relations Act, employees have the right to engage in group activity for the purposes of "mutual aid and protection." Thus, regardless of whether a union is involved, if two or more employees acting in concert walk off the job to protest work conditions or enforce demands relating to the terms of their employment, the walk-out, or strike, generally is protected concerted activity under the Act. (However, short, intermittent work stoppages might not be.) Under these circumstances, it would be unlawful to discipline or discharge (or otherwise disadvantage) employees for walking off the job. It also means that unless the employees have been permanently replaced, the strikers are entitled to be returned to their jobs when they make an unconditional offer to do so.

What can employers do? There are several actions available for employers who are faced with this kind of activity. For a detailed explanation of those options and for more about the history of Fight for \$15, see our November 2015 article, ['Fight for \\$15' Walk-Outs and Protests Continue; Are You Prepared for November 10?](#)

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