

# TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKERS: Do you feel trapped in your job?

Is your employer telling you that you don't have any rights and you must do whatever they say? If you try to stand up for your rights, do they say there's nothing you can do and threaten to cut your hours or send you back to your country? Temporary foreign workers, especially those with closed work permits, are at risk of exploitation and psychological abuse. Some employers believe they can take advantage of their fear and isolation to exploit them with impunity. **Your union can advocate for you, help you defend your rights and steer you towards organizations that can support you.**



## YOUR EMPLOYER'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

- For jobs paying less than \$26/hr, the employer must pay for your plane ticket (both ways) and make sure you have affordable housing and full health insurance until you get your Québec health insurance card.
- Your employer can't make you do work that violates your work permit.
- Your employer or recruiter can't charge you a recruitment fee.
- Your working hours cannot be reduced unless the employer is in demonstrable economic difficulty and the collective agreement is respected.
- Your employer must make every effort to provide a workplace free of abuse and harassment.

## OTHER ORGANIZATIONS (BESIDES THE UNION) THAT CAN HELP:

Immigrant Workers Centre  
514 342-2111



SIARI (interpreting, assistance and referral services for immigrants):  
514 738-4763

Pro bono legal services provided  
by volunteer lawyers



Register with the Régie de l'assurance-maladie du Québec

## YOUR RIGHTS:

- You have the same rights as other employees.
- Your salary is determined by the collective agreement and you cannot be paid less than other workers because of your temporary status.
- If you're injured on the job, you're covered by the CNESST.
- In some cases, you can get employment insurance if you lose your job.
- If you are disciplined, suspended or dismissed, you have the right to be accompanied by the union, which can represent you in dealings with the employer.
- If the employer retaliates against you or discriminates against you, the union can take legal action.
- If the employer terminates your employment, you have the right to remain in Canada until your visa expires, and it may be extended under certain conditions. Your status in Canada doesn't necessarily depend on your work permit.
- It is possible for vulnerable workers to get an open work permit. It takes a while and it's valid for less than a year, but it can give you time to find another job and get a new closed work permit. The union can help with this process.

