

Respect for Shopworkers Week

12-18 November 2018



Campaign Briefing



Message from the General Secretary

Everyone has the right to go to work and not expect to be abused or assaulted. That is the message at the heart of Usdaw's Freedom From Fear Campaign and is the reason why, when stores are getting busier and patience gets stretched during the run up to Christmas, we organise our Respect for Shopworkers Week so that we can get the message over to the wider shopping public that abuse is not part of the job.

I know from speaking with our reps and members, and from the evidence we gather, that it's tough on the frontline in the stores and that over the past couple of years shopworkers have been experiencing more abuse. That's why it is important to increase our efforts this year to get the campaign message out there and for the campaign to have a visible presence in stores during Respect for Shopworkers Week.

We can only do this with your help so please do everything you can this year.

Thank you for supporting the campaign, I know that working together, we can make this year a huge success.

Getting involved in the Campaign

As a rep, you can support the campaign in a number of ways:

- Giving an hour to use the Respect for Shopworkers Week 'Lite' Campaign Pack in your workplace.
- Organising a stall during Respect for Shopworkers Week, 12 – 18 November 2018.

- Encouraging your members to support the campaign on social media using the hashtag #RespectShopworkers.

More information on the campaign and how to organise a Respect for Shopworkers Week event is in this briefing and a campaign pack order form was included with it so that you can get all the materials you need to take part in this important campaign.

Campaign Aims

Usdaw
Union of Shop, Distributive
and Allied Workers



www.usdaw.org.uk/freedomfromfear

The Freedom From Fear Campaign seeks to highlight the abuse that workers suffer whilst simply going about their jobs. The campaign aims to tackle the idea that 'abuse is part of the job' and promote practical ways to prevent abuse and violence in the workplace.

Respect for Shopworkers Week is an annual event held in the run up to Christmas during which events are held to engage with the public around the theme 'Keep Your Cool at Christmas'.

#Respect18

Keep Your Cool – Respect Shopworkers

The Freedom From Fear Campaign

Making the Workplace Safer

The Freedom From Fear Campaign seeks to make the working environment safer for workers by tackling violence and abuse. The campaign's core message that 'abuse is not part of the job' means that everyone has the right to go to work, carry out their job, and come home without having to face violence, threats or abuse whilst doing so.

To this end, Usdaw has worked with reps and employers to make sure that systems are in place to report and tackle abuse and that companies take the issue of workplace abuse and violence seriously.

Industrial Gains

All of the major retailers that we have agreements with support the Freedom From Fear Campaign, as do the British Retail Consortium (BRC) and the Association of Convenience Stores (ACS).

Usdaw carried out an audit of employers at their request. As a result most have reviewed security measures and staff training on violence and abuse.

Employers attended high-level summit meetings called by Usdaw. The meetings were also attended by senior politicians and by representatives from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), Police and Crime Commissioners and local authorities.

With Usdaw's help, the BRC produced its own guidance on prevention of violence setting out the standards of good practice which retailers should follow.

The HSE continues to run its Prevention of Violence Partnership bringing together unions and employers from various sectors to share good practice. Their retail violence toolkit www.hse.gov.uk/violence/toolkit contains a lot of the advice from our Freedom From Fear Campaign.

Protecting Workers

Not all of the campaign's aims can be achieved by industrial means. That's why we seek to work with politicians wherever possible.

The campaign has raised issues around neighbourhood policing, retail crime, under-age sales and additional legal protection for workers whilst they go about their jobs. Tackling each of these issues is best done by political means.

A key part of the campaign politically has been a new law protecting workers that would create a specific offence, with serious penalties, relating to assault on people whose work brings them into face-to-face contact with members of the public.

This is why we have been working to amend the Government's Offensive Weapons Bill and with Daniel Johnson MSP to introduce a Protection of Workers Bill to the Scottish Parliament.

Each time Usdaw, working with Labour politicians, has come close to achieving this aim, it has been blocked. Either by the Conservatives in Westminster or the SNP in Holyrood.

Political Gains

The last Labour Government put an extra 10,000 police officers on the streets, leading to a one-third reduction in crime, in part due to Usdaw highlighting concerns around safety in our communities.

Following Usdaw's lobbying on under-age sales, the last Labour Government committed additional funds to the 'No ID – No Sale' safety campaign.

The last Labour Government amended magistrates' guidance, to state that where violence is used in the course of shop theft, it should be treated as an aggravated offence, possibly leading to a prison sentence.

Working with the Labour Police and Crime Commissioner for Nottinghamshire, the police force, local authorities and employers, new initiatives were developed to promote safety standards in stores.



Running a Respect for Shopworkers Week Event

Organising a Stall

The best way to take part in the campaign is to hold a stall at the front of your store during Respect Week. This is an excellent way to engage the public with the campaign.

The first step is to talk with your store manager about where and when to hold the stall. After that you'll need to arrange for people to cover the stall during the event and order materials in plenty of time to make sure they arrive for the event. Don't forget to promote the campaign through your union noticeboard if you have one.

If you haven't done a stall before you might want to contact your Area Organiser through your local office on 0800 030 80 30 for advice.

Campaign Message to the Public

"Abuse is not part of the job. Shopworkers deserve respect whilst they do their best to help you. During the busy Christmas shopping period, we are asking you to Keep Your Cool at Christmas."

Canteen Event

Sometimes it isn't possible because of space or time to run a stall at the front of your store. If this is the case, think about running a campaign event in your canteen.

The first step is to talk with your store manager about when to hold the event. Try and agree a day and time when there will be plenty of your colleagues in the canteen for you to talk to about the campaign. Don't forget to promote the campaign through your union noticeboard if you have one.

Respect Week 'Lite'

The Respect Week 'Lite' pack helps you to take part in the campaign in a short amount of time. So if you can't run a full stall, but you can spare an hour during Respect Week, we will send you a pack of materials to enable you to quickly and easily take part.

Campaign Message to Shopworkers

"Abuse is not part of the job. It is never acceptable for you to be abused whilst you are doing your job. Incidents going unreported continues to be a problem. We won't make progress in tackling this issue unless incidents are reported and we work together to tackle them. Remember, if you want to sort it, report it."

Inviting a local Labour politician

Everyone should try to invite their local Labour politicians to take part in the campaign. This helps them to understand the issues at the heart of the campaign and builds the links that make it easier to deliver the improved protection shopworkers need.

Once your store manager has agreed to a stall during Respect for Shopworkers Week, you can invite your local Labour politician by writing to them at:

MPs – House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
MSPs – Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh EH99 1SP
AMs – National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff CF99 1NA

Or telephone them on 020 7219 3000 for the House of Commons, 0131 348 5000 for the Scottish Parliament or 0300 200 6565 for the Welsh Assembly.

To find out who your MPs, MSPs and AMs are, go online at: www.writetothem.com and enter your store's postcode.

Using the Petition and Survey

The petition is an excellent way to not only engage your colleagues in the campaign, but also to use as a conversation starter with members of the public so that you can discuss the campaign.

The Retail Staff Survey and the information it provides are a very important part of the campaign. Full details for how to get the most out of the survey are on the back of this Campaign Briefing.

Completed petitions and surveys should be sent to Usdaw Central Office. Just write **FREEPOST USDW** on the envelope and put it in the post.

**To order materials
for your event,
please use the
accompanying
order form or go to
www.usdaw.org.uk/order**

Freedom From Fear Retail Staff Survey Briefing

How to use the Survey

Remember, this is about starting a conversation, try not to be too formal. You might want to read through this briefing a few times, just to familiarise yourself with the questions. The survey also gives reps an opportunity to recruit new members demonstrating that Usdaw is campaigning about issues that affect them and is acting to tackle these problems.

Identity Information

The survey is completely anonymous. However, it is helpful for us to know who the employer is so that we can present data in support of our negotiations. It is also helpful to know which division and the postcode area you are in for when we present data to politicians and the media.

Question 1

When asking about verbal abuse you need to make it clear that any form of abuse is unacceptable and it is certainly not a part of the job.

Question 2

We are looking for incidents where violence was threatened but not actually carried out.

Question 3

A violent incident includes any aggressive contact from a customer, a push, a trolley bash, a poke with a finger or more serious acts. We also want to know if the incident they talk about took place in the last 12 months or not.

Question 4

After the person has talked about how many times they have been abused, threatened, attacked or harassed you should ask if they would like to talk about these incidents (if they haven't done so already). Please be sensitive to the possibility they might not want to discuss it further.

We would be interested to hear a brief account of any incidents you are told about. Don't go into great detail, we don't want you getting writer's cramp! Something as simple as "customer called me a bitch" is what we are looking for.

Question 5

Part of the theme this year is to find out how often shopworkers don't report incidents to their employer. The Union is concerned that shopworkers are led to believe that abuse is just a part of the job. This was highlighted in last year's retail crime survey conducted by the British Retail Consortium (the BRC is the employers' organisation) in comparison with our Freedom From Fear Survey:

	BRC	Udaw
Verbal abuse	20 in 1,000 (2%)	56 in 100 (52.6%)

As you can see, the difference between the number of incidents per shopworker in each survey is huge. This is because shopworkers are telling us

about incidents, but not reporting to the employer. Worryingly, our survey last year showed that almost a quarter of shopworkers who suffered violence didn't report the incident.

Questions 6 and 7

We hear from members that one of the reasons shopworkers don't report incidents to their employer is that they don't think the manager will do anything about it, or worse still they will take the customer's side. So we want to hear what did happen when a shopworker reported an incident by scoring the manager's response on a scale of 1 – 10 and by saying how the employer could improve.

Question 8

We know that companies have procedures to deal with incidents like an aggressive customer, a shoplifter, or a refusal to serve an age-restricted product. So we want to see how many shopworkers are fully aware of the procedure and know exactly what the company expects of them.

Question 9

Last year's survey told us that 56% of retail staff who suffered abuse, threats or assault did not report the incident to their employer. Worryingly 22% of shopworkers who were physically attacked did not report the assault. So this question seeks to find out why so many staff do not report incidents to their employer.

Questions 10, 11 and 12

Having been through the survey, you now need to connect the campaign with joining Usdaw. Explain that:

- The reps in store need the backing of high membership when going to management to raise issues such as those highlighted by this survey.
- The Union can help by negotiating with management at the top of the company for policy changes that help our members.
- In the unfortunate case of an assault, the Union will pursue legal claims for compensation on your behalf.
- Use the 'Whilst You're Looking After the Shop, Who's Looking After You?' leaflet (Lft 362) to recruit the shopworker.

Please record whether non-members completed an Usdaw membership form F1(a).

Thank you.



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www.usdaw.org.uk