



Freedom From Fear

Delivering for Usdaw Members



Recent Progress in the Campaign



Usdaw's Freedom From Fear campaign has ensured that the issue of violence and abuse towards retail workers remains at the top of the political agenda. Our extensive research, and the incredible efforts of our reps, has forced the UK Government to take action.

This campaign goes right to the heart of why workers need unions – because it can never be acceptable to tolerate abuse at work.

The campaign will continue to push for action to protect retail workers, as well as supporting those who have experienced abuse and violence at work.

Legislation to Protect Retail Workers

Following intensive Usdaw campaigning, alongside retailers and other organisations, the UK Government u-turned and agreed to introduce a separate, standalone criminal offence for assaulting a retail worker in England and Wales. This followed Scotland introducing a new ground-breaking law in August 2021, to protect shopworkers from violence, threats and abuse. By the end of 2023, over 6,000 incidents had been investigated by police under the provisions of the Act in Scotland.

We will wait to see the full details and impact of the Government's proposals, but after years of opposition we finally persuaded them to act.

Usdaw is clear that any new law on its own will not resolve the issues of violence and abuse facing retail workers. We must ensure that any legislation is understood right across society, all crimes are reported and the police and courts have the resources to tackle offenders, with more neighbourhood police officers and more high street patrols.

We will also continue to campaign in Northern Ireland to ensure that all retail workers, wherever they work, have proper protection.

Our Work with Employers

Usdaw has worked with employers in Scotland to highlight the new legal provisions and ensure that appropriate training is in place so that everyone understands them, and we will do the same in England and Wales when the new law is introduced. A key theme behind the campaign is 'Report It. Sort It.' which ensures that employers, police and local authorities are aware of the scale of the issue so that they can allocate appropriate resources.

The campaign is also active in workplaces and has secured changes in employer policies to make working lives safer. Usdaw has highlighted the need for improved security measures in stores, such as body worn cameras, proper risk assessments for affected colleagues as well as improving incident reporting structures – a crucial element in tackling violence towards retail workers.

Our Work with Police

There are encouraging pilot projects with some police forces to improve reporting of incidents to the police and to use the evidence to deal with prolific offenders. Usdaw has been building relationships with Police and Crime Commissioners to ensure tackling the violence and abuse of retail workers is their priority.

Legal Support

If you're a victim of violence and you suffer serious injury in the UK, call FirstCall Usdaw on **0800 055 6333** to start your claim. Usdaw Legal Plus can help members claim compensation from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority, a state-funded scheme.

To qualify for compensation, your injuries must be sufficiently serious to justify the minimum amount of compensation, £1,000; you must personally report the incident to the police within 48 hours and get a crime reference number; you must see a doctor immediately for treatment of physical injuries as well as psychological ones such as stress or shock.



Assault at Work Grant

Ushaw has introduced an Assault at Work Grant for members who sustain an injury arising from an act of violence whilst in the course of their work.

The grant is subject to a number of qualifying conditions, including:

- Reporting the incident formally at their place of work;
- Attending their GP or A&E to ensure a proper record was taken;
- Having a continuing physical and/or temporary anxiety condition which lasts at least 6 weeks and which is supported by medical records;
- Reporting the incident to the police and getting a crime reference number;
- Registering the incident as a potential claim through FirstCall Usdaw within 2 years of the date of the incident.

The grant can only be claimed through a personal injury claim. Once the claim is registered, Usdaw will identify potential claims and contact the member. If reps are aware of any members who may be eligible then they should advise them to register their personal injury claim with FirstCall Usdaw on **0800 055 6333**. All payments of the grant are at the discretion of the Union and if any subsequent claim is successful and the member receives compensation for their injuries the grant is repayable by the member.

Further information and the qualifying criteria can be found on our website at:

www.usdaw.org.uk/cashbenefits

How Joining Usdaw Can Help

- Usdaw National Officers work with companies to agree clear policies that support and protect retail workers.
- Reps and Area Organisers are available to offer advice and support for workplace issues.
- Usdaw works with companies to clarify, support and enforce policies on age-restricted sales.
- Usdaw offers support through FirstCall Usdaw for accidents and injuries sustained while at work.
- The Retail Staff Survey helps Usdaw make a better case to employers and politicians to ensure stronger protections. Share your experiences and suggestions here: www.usdaw.org.uk/fffsurvey

Join Usdaw

The more members we have, the stronger our case is with companies for better policies and better protections. Usdaw has a large number of retail workers as members and understands the issues that they face in the workplace.

For immediate membership and full protection, simply complete a membership form and return it to Usdaw's Head Office. Just write FREEPOST USDAAW on the envelope and put it in the post.

You can also join online at: www.usdaw.org.uk/join



Scan to
join today

For further information call our Helpline on **0800 030 80 30** or visit: www.usdaw.org.uk/fff



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