

The Official Publication of UFCW Local 135 Jan-Sept 2020

# WORKER

A VOICE for WORKING FAMILIES



Inside this issue of  
**The WORKER**

- A Call for Public Support of Grocery/Retail/Healthcare Workers
  - Members React to COVID-19 Pandemic
- Meet Your Executive Board • Seung Ho Appointed to State Pharmacy Board
- A Brief History of UFCW Local 135 • UFCW Local 135 Offices are Open

# The Worker

*A Magazine for the Members and Retirees of UFCW Local 135*



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Cover: UFCW Local 135 members at Kaiser Zion Outpatient Pharmacy

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## - UFCW LOCAL 135 MISSION -

*The mission of UFCW Local 135 is to improve the lives of working families and to bring justice to the workplace. The UFCW is one union with one voice. We are committed to changing the places where we work and the communities where we live so that all workers have the opportunity to reach the American Dream.*

*UFCW members are from many backgrounds and walks of life, but come together as the UFCW for the shared goal of achieving the American Dream. The UFCW is about workers helping workers improve their standard of living. When we unite for better wages, benefits, and working conditions, we help protect and improve the livelihoods of all workers.*

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## CLOSED FOR UPCOMING HOLIDAYS

Veteran's Day: November 11  
 Thanksgiving: November 26-27  
 Christmas: December 24-25

## ESSENTIAL RETAIL AND HEALTHCARE WORKERS NEED THE PUBLIC'S HELP

*UFCW Local 135 members are on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic*

**By Todd Walters**

The United Food and Commercial Workers Union, Local 135 is a huge part of the San Diego community, we represent over 10,000 members at grocery and drug stores, at Kaiser pharmacies and hospitals, dental offices, at Viejas Casino and Resort, legal cannabis retailers, and food processing plants. We are your neighbors and friends. And, we are part of the fabric that weaves San Diego together.

Our hardworking members serve the community by keeping San Diegans fully stocked on groceries and supplies. They maintain your health with life-saving prescriptions and perform vital lab work, such as testing for COVID-19. They clean your teeth and perform dental procedures. They process meat and sugar for consumers to enjoy. They also provide cannabis products at the dispensary.

Our members, these essential workers, are facing difficult times due to being on the frontlines of this pandemic. Unfortunately, the work they do cannot be done at home via telecommuting. Yet, they proudly go to work because the community depends on them to do what they do.

During their work shifts they face incidents that make them think twice about whether to hug their children when they get home from a shift or whether to sleep in the same bed as their spouse. Until recently, these essential workers could not even get a Covid-19 test unless they were showing symptoms, which is too late.

While working hard to help keep the



public fed and healthy, our members have been coughed on, sneezed on, directly exposed to infected people, and stuck in overcrowded situations due to a lack of social distancing within their workplaces.

To make matters worse, they become targets of anger from frustrated customers, some of whom have yelled at, cursed at, threatened, and confronted workers.

With all that being said, our members have had many of the same issues as everyone else trying to cope with this new normal.

They have unemployed family members, and child-care and home school concerns with their kids out of school, as well as a rational fear of getting sick. With the potential of exposure being high due to working with the public, these essential workers cannot even get the proper masks to help minimize the contagion risk. Many utilize facial coverings of their own design, or one's donated by community members, and those given to them by UFCW Local 135.

With the many obstacles in front of

them they continue to clock in every day to serve the community. We consider our members brave for doing so. But their bravery only goes so far. They need the public's help.

On behalf of our members we ask that you please wear a facial covering when inside buildings. Don't wear it because it is mandated by the County of San Diego, wear it because it is the right thing to do to help your fellow community members. Our members wear one to protect you and your family when you come into our grocery stores, pharmacies and hospitals. Please wear one to help protect them as well.

We also ask that you give those working some space. Please practice social distancing when in the stores and don't reach over workers stocking shelves to get that item you need. Ask and they will gladly step aside. When at the check stand, please don't go around the plexiglass that has been installed to protect the checkers.

And we kindly ask that you do not take your frustrations out on the workers. They are doing their best to service you and get you what you need. Please be mindful of them and other customers while shopping.

Our society is undergoing some drastic changes due to this pandemic and it is our responsibility to take care of one another during this crisis, especially those on the frontline. Our members are doing their part, please do yours as well.

Originally published online on May 22  
by San Diego Union-Tribune

***Don't wear a facemask because it is mandated by the County of SD, wear it because it is the right thing to do to help your fellow community members.***

## THE PANDEMIC HASN'T GONE AWAY – NEITHER SHOULD HAZARD PAY



**By Todd Walters and  
Brent E. Beltrán**

In San Diego, frontline workers are continuing to show up for our communities every single day despite the very real dangers they still face with more than 35,000 COVID-19 cases countywide and more people getting sick every day. Workers in our neighborhood supermarkets, drug stores and health care facilities are among the most affected, and sometimes interact with thousands of customers or patients a day.

Without the courage of these essential workers who continue to put themselves in harm's way, our families would not have the food or medicine we need during this crisis. Given the growing risks as COVID-19 cases continue to spread, it is time for the CEOs of every grocery, retail and health care facility in the county to step up and guarantee an extra \$2 an hour hazard pay, for all of these frontline workers.

United Food and Commercial Workers Local 135 represents more than 13,000 workers in grocery and drug stores, hospitals and clinics, and many other essential businesses across the county. The members of our union know firsthand that the danger did not go away for these workers. Yet many of the CEOs of

our country's largest grocery and retail chains ended hazard pay for these workers as if the pandemic was over and they were no longer at risk. And, unfortunately, workers in the health care industry received no hazard pay at all even though their risk is potentially even higher.

In reality, grocery, retail and health care workers across the country continue to get sick and die from COVID-19. There have already been at least 100 grocery worker deaths and thousands of grocery workers infected or exposed to the virus. Here in San Diego County, more than 200 of our union members have been infected and every grocery, retail, and health care worker continues to live with the daily fear of not only becoming sick, but also putting their family in danger by bringing this deadly virus home.

Members of UFCW Local 135 have experienced tremendous abuse while on the job – from the public flagrantly violating safety protocols by not wearing facial coverings or following social distancing guidelines to screaming expletives and threatening our members with bodily harm. This abuse must be stopped.

It was stunning to see companies like Kroger, Albertsons, Rite Aid and

others raking in billions in profits during the pandemic and still cutting hazard pay. These companies are treating workers as expendable at a time when the danger of COVID-19 is just as real as on day one of the pandemic and we continue to count on these essential workers to help us out.

Even worse, many of our country's largest companies refuse to release the numbers on how many of their workers have died, or become sick or exposed during this pandemic. It is outrageous that these companies are keeping all of us in the dark about the dangers these workers face and the hazards that still exist across San Diego County and the state. Our families deserve better.

As COVID-19 cases continue to spread across California and our state's grocery workers continue to be essential to our communities, it is time for all of these companies to tell the truth about the real risks that exist in grocery stores and provide the strong hazard pay that these workers have earned for the danger they face every day. The only way we will get through this is together, and that starts with companies doing the right thing and putting workers and families first.

Originally published online on  
August 20 by Voice of San Diego.

## MEMBERS SPEAK FROM THE FRONTLINES

### Surviving COVID-19

By Irene Garibo-Fonseca, MedMen

My name is Irene, I'm 25 years old, born and raised in San Diego and this is my story of surviving coronavirus. On the 3rd of March I went to West Hollywood with a friend. We spent the weekend going to bars, restaurants, being around celebs and I was brought to an exclusive party. We were constantly around people. She tells me as we're at her home that her coworker got sick and said her throat felt like it shut. The day before my friend came back from work early feeling like she had a fever and laid on the couch.

Before she got sick she was planning on coming over to my house to stay in San Diego the next week for work. We went Downtown that night. As I was mingling, I started to have fever symptoms and wasn't sure why. My friend joked and said it was coronavirus. The feeling didn't last long so we continued our night drinking and dancing.

The next day we went to brunch in Little Italy with what I thought was a little hangover. I had a headache and I was a little sore all over my body. I began to feel worse that afternoon and my friend decided to go home. Throughout that week the headache became more aggressive. I had to call out of work and went to a clinic to get checked out fast. I had no fever when they took my temperature.

The doctor came into the room to examine me without a mask and said it seems like I was at the tail end of the flu and should be getting better. I felt better on March 18 and went back to work the next day. While I was at work I started to cough. A little at first and then more. This was before we had to wear masks, but people were starting to become more aware and nervous about catching coronavirus. I went home early. That night my cough and lungs felt worse. I had a burning sensation when I breathed in. That's when



***"I was wondering:  
Am I going to die  
from this virus?"***

I started to suspect I had COVID-19. I was worried. It's rare for my asthma to act up. But now it was.

My friend James, who I recently ended a romantic relationship with, knew I was sick and checked on me every day. I took my albuterol inhaler to open up the bronchial tubes and it relieved the asthma symptoms that night, but it got worse the next day. Two days later I ended up in the ER.

My bronchial tubes felt inflamed and I was coughing constantly. I could barely speak a full sentence without coughing and had fevers going past 99°. The scariest thing is when you feel like you can't breathe normally, and I didn't want to admit to James how scared I was or my fear about possibly having COVID.

I was wondering: "If this is a new type of virus are they going to know how to treat me?" "Am I going to die from this virus?" I shook my head and thought no, but it's all in God's hands and I have to keep my hopes up.

My fever was about 102°. The nurses, doctor and staff could only come in with a separate paper-like layer over their clothes, mask, gloves but even with all that hassle they were the nicest and made me feel so much better emotionally. They gave me medication to help. I was then given an influenza A and B test with a COVID-19 test through the nose with the big Q-tip lookalike, some blood tests, a blood culture, and an X-ray.

They finally got my temp back down to 99° and said surprisingly my chest X-rays were clear and my lungs sounded great. Tests came back soon after negative for the Flu so that meant I probably had COVID-19 and would have the test results in 4-5 days.

The nurse technician assured me and said that even if I had COVID I would get through it. That eased my stress and anxiety about it and then I was discharged with medication. Three days later I ran out and my grandmother called the doctor for me, since it felt like I was winded even just talking or walking a little bit. I was told to go to the ER. My fever was almost 103° this time.

I talked to a respiratory specialist and he gave me a tube for my inhaler. It was a lot more effective and helped tremendously. My fever went down to 99° and I could breathe a lot better. I almost felt normal before leaving the hospital. They let me know it might feel uncomfortable for now, but I would get through it and I was recovering. I felt a lot better breathing the next few days and got better from there.

I realized I lost my sense of smell and taste and was in bed for a week. Days when I only had 99° fever were great days. The morning I woke up and felt no soreness was a great big sign I was recovering, and I was thrilled to let my family and everyone know.

I got my test results on March 26. A

**Continued on next page.**

## MEMBERS SPEAK FROM THE FRONTLINES

### My COVID-19 Story

By Lili Novarino, Vons 2323



Working during this pandemic has definitely been a very unique experience within my 29 years of service at Vons. From holding the title of “Essential Worker” to “Hero,” I personally don’t

believe that I am either. I am just a single mother that doesn’t have another choice besides showing up to work every day. I think we can all learn something important from this experience, nothing is forever, and health is everything. Yes, maybe we could not find toilet paper or pasta around stores, but we can survive without it. On a more personal note, the morning of March 25 I woke up at 5:00 AM to go to work. I had a sore throat and body aches. I called my store and told them that I had to call in sick. Additionally, I called my doctor and told her my symptoms. She ordered me to remain at home and quarantine for two weeks. Since testing was not available during this time, she treated me as if I had COVID-19. I was not even permitted to get close to my daughter and I had to wear a mask around the house at all times. For two weeks, my friends and co-workers delivered food to my doorstep. I had to use all of my sick and personal days, as well as my one week vacation, which I had already scheduled to be compen-

sated for. I am still seeking to be remunerated by the company, according to what they promised they would do if you were advised to be placed in quarantine by your physician. I had always been there to serve my customers, I shouldn’t have to feel like I was at fault. Despite all of this, I made sure to keep one thing in mind which is that: “Every time you were convinced you couldn’t go on, you did.”



### Disappointed in Rite Aid

By Kimberly Jones, Rite Aid 5627

I am disappointed that Rite Aid ended our Hero Pay back in May since the pandemic is still going on. We deserve the extra pay. We still have to wear masks, it's mandatory for employees, but Rite Aid doesn't allow us to enforce the face mask mandate for our customers. Which is putting us, the employees, at a greater risk. We have lots of customers daily that do not wear masks, and they don't feel the need to. But they are still allowed to come in and spend as much time as they like in the store, which is putting us all at risk.

### Surviving COVID-19 Continued

nurse called me from the County of San Diego and told me it was positive. Thankfully, I was feeling good enough to talk to him. I told my manager of the positive result right away. Within the next hour they had our MedMen location shut down temporarily and deep cleaned.

Everyone was so nice and understanding, wishing me to get better and I felt so much comfort from that. James continued to check in on me every day and I realized he genuinely cared about me. I decided after I’m fully recovered that I’m giving us a chance at love again. My “friend” from LA acted like it was my choice or my fault. We’re no longer friends.

I was told by my manager I should file for unemployment when I was sick because even though I still have a job most of us went from full-time to part-time. But since I tested

positive for coronavirus it was a technicality up to the EDD. That process is ongoing, and another story, but I finally got my first check on June 19.

When May 1 arrived, I completely stopped coughing. I was ecstatic and so thankful to God I got through coronavirus. The health officer in the official document stated I had to wait three days after my last symptoms before I returned to work so I let my manager know.

The whole thing still seems surreal and a blur. I thank God, Jesus and my angels every day for being alive. I had so much time to reflect on life, my family, friends and everyone. But I also think everyone has been forced to as well due to the quarantine. A new relationship blossomed with James and we’re happily together now. We are all growing, and I believe the answer to life is love. We

shouldn't care only about our inner circle, we have to care for everyone. Just like we are all in this together, we will also get through these weird and difficult times together. I’m blessed and have learned so much. Thank you for reading my story. Live life to the fullest, do what makes you happy, and spread love.

## KAISER NEWS

# My Story as a Frontline Worker at Kaiser Permanente

By Wesley Frani, Kaiser Zion

The COVID-19 pandemic makes us re-think how we work to better serve our members, community, and co-workers. We are now required to wear face coverings at work and when around others at all times. How do you still do what you need to do while meeting the new mandated health guidelines to keep everyone safe and healthy?

The employees have a designated employee entrance that is separate from members and the public. Everyone entering the hospital is screened at their respective entrances. Employees are screened to ensure we are fit to work that day. Patients have a separate entrance than employees to prevent cross contamination between healthy employees and patients who could be ill. The nurses stationed at each entrance check temperatures and ask about symptoms. They screen for symptoms such as coughing, shortness of breath, sore throat, and other symptoms of COVID-19. Employees will not be permitted to work if they have a fever above 100.4°F. Previous points of entry to the building have been closed in order to screen all persons entering. Masks are provided if you arrive without one.

Signage is posted at all entrances and throughout the hospital. It reminds everyone to wear a face covering and maintain 6 feet of social distance. Stairway usage is encouraged and elevator capacity is limited in order to meet the San Diego health mandates.

I have seen employees from other departments wear face shields and gowns over their scrubs. Due to the



nature of our work in the pharmacy we are required to wear face coverings at all times. Our priority is always to protect our members, and the public. Now there is the additional factor of keeping both them and ourselves healthy. When we take our lunch, we maintain six feet of social distancing so there can only be two people maximum in our break room.

My personal experience with COVID-19 began while at sea on a cruise ship. The countries on the itinerary refused our ship, and we were not able to stop for supplies, or food, or entertainers, much less visit the ports of call. Returning to San Diego, Downtown looked like a ghost town. It was something I would have never thought Downtown would look like. After disembarking, we had to quarantine at home for 14 days. While we were away, our daughter's preschool

closed, leaving us at home, in a brand new home environment. Faced with being locked down, we had to find a way to pass the time. During our home confinement, we tried to pass the time with happy memories of our recent trip, and talked about our favorite activities, new friends, or shows that we watched while on board.

Our daughter had so much energy to burn that my wife, who is anti-screen time, bought a dancing video game for the Xbox, so she could play and learn some dance moves. We video chatted with her preschool friends because she missed being around them every day. Being quarantined at home for weeks made me realize the importance of being a dad. I watched my daughter grow up so fast right in front of my eyes. I saw for myself her passions in life: dancing, singing, and arts and crafts with my wife. I saw my daughter crave attention and expanded upon her curiosity for the world around her. We entertained ourselves with card games and jigsaw puzzles, watched movies, and joked and laughed together as a family on many occasions at home during these difficult times. I learned to slow down and appreciate the people around me and be more mindful of the memories we were creating, despite the reason why we were quarantined.

What did become part of our routine was tuning to the daily briefings from the government officials. Every day, we saw the graph go up, and see the numbers of cases and deaths. It kept us resolute in staying indoors, maintaining our distance from others, and only going out to get essentials, primarily food.

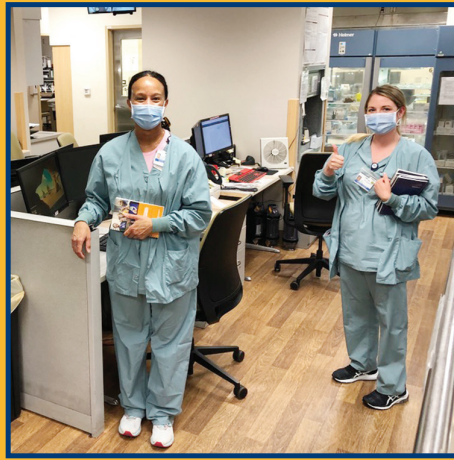
***“How do you still do what you need to do while meeting the new mandated health guidelines to keep everyone safe and healthy?”***

# OUR HARDWORKING MEMBERS





# MAKE UFCW LOCAL 135 GREAT!



## AN ESSENTIAL GROCERY WORKER SPEAKS FROM THE FRONTLINES

By Robert Launius, Gelson's 30

I have been working in the grocery business for over twenty-four years. I am a proud, active union member with United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 135.

I have seen a lot working on the front lines of the coronavirus pandemic.

The coronavirus has hit me directly. A colleague of mine at the store I work at recently tested positive for the virus. That really brought home how serious it is.

While working I have had many experiences with customers conforming and not conforming to the rules requiring that the public wear a mask or facial covering while out shopping. I tell customers many times a day to please abide by the six-foot social distancing rule. Yet, they frequently come from behind while I'm stocking and grab products off the shelf. Just inches away from my face.

I have had customers tap me on the shoulder asking me where a product is. I also see them going behind other customers grabbing products off the shelf without waiting for the customer to finish and move away. The lack of



social distancing by some customers is disturbing to say the least.

Another thing I notice on a daily basis are customers removing or pulling down their masks after they enter the store. My fellow employees are often scared or nervous to warn customers about the rules. They fear the customer will yell at them or report them to management for being rude by enforcing the rules or, as has been the case at some stores across the country, even worse.

But I am not one of those employees. I have no problem going directly to the customer to inform them about how these rules are in place not only for our protection but for theirs as well.

Thankfully, most customers are very well behaved. Yet, some are not. Those that are not are the ones that make this situation more difficult for us. There are almost daily incidents where we have to ask customers to leave or a customer becomes so upset with us that they cut their shopping trip short.

Sometimes customers lash out verbally and say things like, "you can stay home, if you are too scared to work." And, many times, they've said even worse things not fit to print.

I've heard about situations at other grocery locations in San Diego about unruly customers that have shoved and even spit on workers for being asked to wear a mask. And everybody has read about or saw on the news the two recent incidents in Santee where one customer wore a KKK style hood and another had a swastika attached to their mask. There have also been incidents of violence and death nationally at retail and fast food outlets. There is no place for these types of actions. We are only trying to be safe while doing our job.

Our store location has awesome customers who have sent us letters of appreciation, baked us cookies, and bought food and drinks for us workers. And we are frequently given thanks for working and being open.

I truly believe our community supports essential grocery workers like those in my store, but there are the few who make working during this difficult time even more difficult. Receiving \$2 extra an hour helps, but it is not a factor in why most of us are working. We honestly just want to help our communities and country get through this crazy time. We are all in this together and we must come together to get through it safely.

### Local 135 Helps Distribute Food



Since early March, UFCW Local 135 has volunteered most Saturday mornings alongside our labor siblings at the San Diego & Imperial Counties Labor Council and Feeding San Diego to distribute free food to families in need during the coronavirus pandemic. We are honored to have the opportunity to give back to our fellow San Diegans.

Originally published online on May 22  
by San Diego Union-Tribune

# MEET YOUR UFCW LOCAL 135 EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board of UFCW Local 135 consists of leadership, staff, and union members elected every three years by a vote of the membership. The E-Board oversees the work of Local 135, approves the budget, and gives guidance when necessary.



**Todd Walters - President**  
15 Years - Local 135/19 Years - Ralphs



**Grant Tom - Secretary-Treasurer**  
19 Years - Local 135/17 Years - Vons



**Maribel Mckinze - Recorder**  
10 Years - Local 135/9 Years - Albertsons



**Lindsey Bensinger - Vice President**  
17 Years - Local 135/5 Years - Ralphs



**Leigh Delikat-Savedra - Vice President**  
11 Years - Stater Bros



**Tamara Long - Vice President**  
24 Years - Vons



**Chris Lopez - Vice President**  
4 Years - Local 135/16 Years - Vons



**Esther Lopez - Vice President**  
30 Years - Ralphs



**Cristy Mackie - Vice President**  
13 Years - Kaiser



**Bethyl Mitchell - Vice President**  
30 Years - Vons



**Cristina Palmieri - Vice President**  
16 Years - Ralphs

## UFCW LOCAL 135's ONE WEEK iHEART RADIO CAMPAIGN

During the first week of June, UFCW Local 135 aired commercial public service announcements on iHeart radio stations in San Diego. These 15 and 30 second radio spots were broadcast on KGB 101.5, Rock 105.3, and Channel 933. In addition to thanking our members for the hard work that they have been doing, we asked the public to follow social distancing guidelines, wear a facial covering when indoors, and not visit if sick.



# UFCW Local 135 Pharmacist Added to California State Board of Pharmacy

*Seung Ho Appointed by Governor Newsom to Four Year Term*

On February 24, California Governor Gavin Newsom appointed UFCW Local 135 member, Seung Oh, to the California State Board of Pharmacy. The Board of Pharmacy is entrusted with protecting and promoting the health and safety of Californians by pursuing the highest quality of pharmacist's care and the appropriate use of pharmaceuticals through education, communication, licensing, legislation, regulation, and enforcement. His appointment is for one four-year term.

"Seung's tireless advocacy for his patients and Californians made him the ideal choice to serve in this important role," said Local 135 President Todd Walters. "As a pharmacist, Seung knows the crucial role pharmacists play in Californians' health and the importance of providing individual quality care to keep patients safe. Through his years of experience and training, Seung will bring to the board important insights, from day-to-day operations and areas where the profession can enhance the role of pharmacy in providing access to healthcare."

"I'm honored by the opportunity to strengthen the profession of pharmacy and pharmacists' role in patient care by serving on the California Board of Pharmacy," he said to UFCW's Western States Council. "As a practicing pharmacist, I know firsthand what pharmacists need to properly serve our patients and improve their health, including safe workspaces. On the Board, I will be a strong voice for pharmacists, patient health and improving access to quality healthcare for all Californians."

Seung received his Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Arizona and earned a Master of Advanced Studies degree in leadership of healthcare organizations from UCSD. He has been a pharmacist for about seven years, almost six of them as a member of the UFCW. He's the Pharmacist-in-Charge/Pharmacy Manager at Vons 2735 in Liberty Station. He's been there since 2014.

Seung became a pharmacist because he was really passionate about medications and taking care of people. "I felt like that was the area I had the biggest understanding. And that was the area I wanted to be involved in. Helping patients with medication management and understanding their treatments."

The best part of his job is helping people.

"I'm lucky at this location that I get to know people very intimately. We really develop relationships that are close. We get to know their families. We get to know their stories. And I think that's what makes this job so unique and great, I get to really help them take care of their family and take care of their everyday needs," he explained passionately. "When they're really down and they need their medication they're not always at their best at the moment. It's important that they are taken care of so that the last thing they have to worry about is getting their medication."

Seung is pleased that Governor Newsom decided to appoint some-

one who's not in management to the Board of Pharmacy.

"In the past, the Board of Pharmacy positions have been geared towards people who are in management and upper management who don't have an understanding of what it's like to be a pharmacist in the real world," he proclaimed. "To me I think it's a sig-

[Continued on next page.](#)



***"I became a big believer in how important it is for us to be protected with the help of the union."***

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF UFCW LOCAL 135

The United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 135, has a long history dating back to the early 1900's. In 1903 the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America, Local 229 of the Western Federation of Butchers, also known as the Butchers Union and Meat Cutters Union, became affiliated with the San Diego Federated Trades and Labor Council in 1903. In 1917 the Retail Clerks organized and affiliated with San Diego Federated Trades and Labor Council.



Max Osslo, Meat Cutters 229.

Meat Cutters Local 229, under the leadership of Secretary and Business Manager Max Osslo, became one of the most respected and powerful unions in the United States. Mr. Osslo served for 46 years, beginning in 1936, as head of the Meat Cutters in San Diego and was key to creating apprenticeship programs for meat cutters, slaughterhouse workers, and others in the industry to help them become journeymen. He served on many boards and com-

missions during his tenure at Local 229, including on the national board of the Leukemia Society, whom UFCW Local 135 still has a relationship with to this day.

The contemporary era of the Retail Clerks Union started in 1943 with International representative Samuel Meyers. Mr. Meyers started an organizing campaign for grocery clerks. In 1944, Retail Clerks Local 1222 received their charter from the Retail Clerks International Association.

The United Food and Commercial Workers union was founded in 1978 when the Retail Clerks International Association merged with the Amalgamated Meat Cutters. Also joining were the Barbers and Beauticians Union.

In January of 1986 the membership of the Retail Clerks of Local 1222 and those of the Meat Cutters at Local 229 merged to form one of the biggest unions in San Diego County, the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, Local 135.

Today, under the leadership of President Todd Walters, Secretary-Treasurer Grant Tom, and Recorder Maribel Mckinze, UFCW Local 135 has a membership of approximately 12,500 workers with nearly 7000 retirees. The current membership of Local 135 consists of workers in various fields including grocery & retail, medical, pharmacy & dental, meat & sugar processing, casino, and cannabis.



## Seung Ho Continued

nificant step in really supporting the regular pharmacist so that our voices can be heard and be represented. I think it's a huge deal. It means a lot for the pharmacists working out there. I just want to be able to represent us and protect our profession and the public.

In addition to being a pharmacist that cares for his patients, he also cares about his co-workers and the union that represents them. But it wasn't always like that. "At first, I was a skeptic. I wasn't a big fan. Before I really got to know what unions represent and how good unions can really make a difference

for the people and the community. I really became a believer through the process of what I saw UFCW do for its workers and the people that it serves. I became a big believer in how important it is for us to be protected with the help of the union."

He's such a big believer now that he thinks all workers across the state and country should have a union to back them up, especially health care professionals.

"We really need strong cohesion amongst us so that our voices are heard and represented. I think the union does a lot in protecting our

work conditions, protecting our wages, and making sure that our jobs are not jeopardized and that we can do our jobs the best we can. I'm so thankful for the union. I'm so glad I can be part of UFCW as a pharmacist."

UFCW Local 135 is proud to have a health care professional like Seung Oh as a member. He cares for his patients, he cares for his co-workers, and he cares for his union. Thank you, Seung, and congratulations on your appointment. You're going to be an amazing voice on behalf of everyday pharmacists throughout the state.

## - UFCW LOCAL 135 FIGHTS FOR THE MEMBERSHIP! -

**29 members of UFCW Local 135 have RETURNED TO WORK!  
301 GRIEVANCES have been processed in 2020 and  
\$98,832.80 in BACK PAY has been AWARDED TO MEMBERS so far!**

# UNION WORKERS HAVE RIGHTS!

## WEINGARTEN RIGHTS



*Weingarten Rights are federal rights for union workers.  
Protect yourself! Call for your union representative!*

### Read to Your Supervisor or Just Ask for Your Union Rep

If this discussion, meeting or telephone call could in any way be related to my being disciplined or terminated or affect any of my working conditions, I exercise my federal rights and hereby request that my union representative be present. Without their presence, I choose not to participate in this discussion or meeting. Please do not request that I waive this right.

## WHAT IS THE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE?

- 1) If you think your rights under the contract have been violated, the first step is to discuss the matter with your Union Representative and file a grievance, if necessary.
- 2) Your Union Representative will mediate and investigate on your behalf to help remedy your situation.
- 3) After a resolution has been reached all parties move forward to work together in enforcing the conduct and provisions of the contract.

**UFCW LOCAL 135 REPRESENTATIVES ARE HERE TO HELP YOU!**

If you have any questions call your Rep or the Grievance & Contract Department at  
**(619) 298-7772 Ext. 9**

Grievances **MUST** be filed in person at either union office.

Do **NOT** email or contact the union on social media for grievances or member issues.

## MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT

UFCW Local 135's Membership Department focuses on day-to-day union operations for our members. Contact them for joining the union, withdrawal cards, promotions, address changes, transfers, and discount tickets.

~ Membership Department (619) 298-7772, Ext. 6 ~

Stay up-to-date with the latest info and breaking news by keeping your contact info current

- Have you changed your last name or phone number recently?
- Do you have a new address?
- Are you going on leave or moving out of the state?

Call the Membership Department to make any changes to your contact information.

### DISCOUNTED THEME PARK AND MOVIE TICKETS

Local 135 provides discounted tickets to the following theme parks and movie theaters:

LEGOLAND  
SAN DIEGO ZOO  
SAN DIEGO ZOO SAFARI PARK  
SEA WORLD  
MAGIC MOUNTAIN  
AMC THEATRES  
REGAL CINEMAS  
READING CINEMAS

Due to the coronavirus call the Membership Dept for availability:  
**(619) 298-7772, Ext. 6.**

#### Rules and Regulations

- Tickets subject to availability and are available to Local 135 active members and retirees only (ID required).
- Prices are subject to change and supplies are limited.
- Purchases must be made in person by the member/retiree at Local 135.
- Magic Mountain tickets are limited to 10 per person per month and all other theme park tickets are limited to 12 per person, per month.
- All movie theater tickets are limited to 20 per person, per month.
- We accept cash or credit/debit card. NO CHECKS.

### QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

October 21 at 6pm

### NEW MEMBER MEETINGS

November 4 - 9am or 6pm

\$50 rebate if new member attends.

Meetings will take place via video conferencing on Zoom.

Contact your Union Rep for more info.

### DO YOU KNOW ANY RECENT HIRES AT YOUR COMPANY THAT HAVE NOT JOINED UFCW LOCAL 135 YET?

If so, let them know that if they've been hired within the last 30 days they can easily join via text link. By joining through a text link, they avoid coming into the office and there's no money down on their initiation fee. They can check to see if they qualify to receive a personal text-to-join link by calling UFCW Local 135's Membership Department.

## BENEFITS & PENSION DEPARTMENT

As a member of UFCW Local 135, you may be eligible for benefits provided through the UFCW Trust Funds. There are different eligibility requirements depending on which benefit program you fall under. Your eligible dependents may also be covered as they meet the Fund requirements for eligibility. The Trust Funds provide health & welfare benefits including medical, prescription drug, dental, vision, chiropractic, mental health, pension, death benefits & COBRA continuation of benefits.

If you have any questions regarding your insurance benefits or pension, call UFCW Local 135's Benefits & Pension Department at (619) 298-7772 Extension 8.

Southern California UFCW Unions and Food Employers Joint Benefit Fund (Food Trust)

(877) 284-2320 [www.scufcwfund.com](http://www.scufcwfund.com)

Southern California UFCW Unions and Drug & General Sales Employers (Drug & General Sales Trust)

(877) 999-8329 [www.ufcwdrugtrust.org](http://www.ufcwdrugtrust.org)

POSTMASTER, send address changes to:  
**UFCW Local 135 - The Worker**  
2001 Camino Del Rio South  
San Diego, CA 92108-3603

# UFCW Local 135 Offices Are Open!

Both UFCW Local 135 offices are, once again, open for union business.

Though we are open, for the continued safety of our members and staff, we recommend that members call us to conduct business. The staff at Local 135 can handle most of your needs over the phone. Conducting business via phone call helps limit potential exposure as well as saves members a trip to Mission Valley or San Marcos.

We also recommend that if your union business must be in person to have any paperwork pre-filled out (call if

**FACE COVERINGS ARE REQUIRED TO ENTER THIS FACILITY**  
**VISITORS MUST MAINTAIN 6 FEET OF SOCIAL DISTANCE**

If you are experiencing new onset of any of the following symptoms, please **DO NOT ENTER** this facility

- **Cough • Fever • Chills**
- **Muscle pain • Headache • Sore throat**
- **Diarrhea • Nausea • Vomiting**
- **Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing**
- **Recent loss of taste or smell**
- **You or a member of your family have been exposed to COVID-19 or suspect exposure**

Call (619) 298-7772 and we will take care of any requests you may have over the phone or through the mail

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, UFCW Local 135 is strictly following all public health guidelines set forth by the County of San Diego, the CDC, and OSHA:  
[www.sandiegocounty.gov/coronavirus](http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/coronavirus) [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) [www.osha.gov/coronavirus](http://www.osha.gov/coronavirus)

you need assistance), if possible come into the office alone, and please limit your time inside. Under normal circumstances we'd enjoy having members stick around to chat with. Unfortunately, these are not normal times and we are limited to how many people can congregate inside the offices.

We also request that visitors abide by safety protocols such as social distancing, wearing a facial covering when inside the union, and don't visit if experiencing coronavirus symptoms or if you have been, or suspect you have been, exposed to someone who tested positive.

UFCW Local 135 has taken many steps to ensure that we have a safe environment at both locations. In addition to a detailed safety plan, we have installed

new signage, social distancing floor markers, plastic sheeting, and now have separate entrances and exits at both offices.

These are difficult times for all of us, yet your union continues to be fully operational and ready to help the members of UFCW Local 135.

If you have any questions or need to conduct union business please call us at (619) 298-7772, extension 6 for Membership, extension 8 for Insurance & Pension, and extension 9 for the Contract & Grievance Department.



***These are difficult times for all of us, yet your union continues to be fully operational and ready to help the members of UFCW Local 135.***