



Federal law protects ALL workers

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Ahead of Labor Day, the Department of Labor observes Labor Rights Week by partnering with the Mexican Embassy, its 52 consulates, other diplomatic missions and other federal and state agencies to spread awareness about labor rights – and to remind workers of the protections available under the law.

At the Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA), we ensure that all people employed by an employer, regardless of immigration status, background or nationality, know they enjoy protection under federal law for work-related retirement and health benefits.

The theme for this year’s Labor Rights Week is “Rights, Health and Safety for Workers: The

Power of Collaboration”/ “Derechos, salud y seguridad para los trabajadores: El poder de la colaboración.” EBSA is doing exactly that—harnessing the power of collaboration by partnering with consulates across the country to host events that provide education in Spanish about protections for retirement and health benefits and how EBSA can help them. Unfortunately, not all workers are aware of these protections so they can take advantage of the benefits they may have earned. Immigrant and underserved workers also face barriers such as language that can limit use of and access to their hard-earned benefits.

But this is not something we do just for Labor Rights Week. It’s a commitment that we carry out all year long. We work with the consulates and other community groups to reach underserved communities where workers may not be aware of the benefit protections they’ve or how EBSA can answer their questions and assist with problems. We have been able to address the fear that workers express in reaching out to a federal agency directly or participating in a job-based benefit plan. We get a chance to talk to them and increase the workers’ trust in the services and confidentiality we offer. It is important to let them know that government agencies are here to help. Familiarizing with our agency makes them more likely to reach out to us because they know us and can speak to someone in their native language. This fiscal year alone, our agency has conducted over 220 outreach events in Spanish. We know that reaching out to underserved communities to provide education about job-based benefit plans helps not only to improve the financial security and wellness of the workers but has a broader impact on their communities.

You can take action by:

1. Learning about your job-based benefits and protections. There are many important benefit protections under federal law including some that can help you get health services at low or no cost and start saving for retirement. Knowing them ahead of time will prepare you to make informed decisions when needed to take advantage of your rights. These protections include the right to information about how your plan works. You can [access EBSA's Publications](#) to learn more

2. Using your benefits. Use your earned benefits and get the health coverage you need and to save for a secure retirement.
3. Connect with EBSA. EBSA's benefits advisors help workers who have questions or who need help with their job-based benefit plans in over 105 languages. Our help is free, confidential, and available – regardless of immigration status. You can [contact us online at askebsa.dol.gov](https://www.askebsa.dol.gov) or by calling toll-free 1-886-444-3272.
4. If you have other labor issues or questions, [visit MigrantWorker.gov](https://www.migrantworker.gov) for information on a range of topics including wages, workplace safety and discrimination and harassment – or [use the directory to Find Your Consulate](#) today!

This year, the Department of Labor celebrated the 20th anniversary of the [Consular Partnership Program](#) (CPP) by renewing its agreement with the Mexican Embassy. It's a major milestone that demonstrates the power of collaboration and a commitment to helping ALL workers, regardless of immigration status, and EBSA is proud to be a part of it. We also welcomed Colombia into the CPP by entering into an agreement with the Colombian Embassy, which was particularly meaningful since my family immigrated to the US. from Colombia over 50 years ago. Remember, EBSA is here to assist everyone with job-based benefits all year long!

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