# How the Union Contract Improves the Postdoc Experience

## The Download:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before First Contract</th>
<th>With Current Contract</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salary</strong></td>
<td>UC’s recommended minimum salary was below the NIH minimum and some Postdocs made as little as $18,000 per year. No guaranteed pay increases.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Time Off (PTO), Sick Leave &amp; Holidays</strong></td>
<td>Postdocs received no fixed amount of PTO. Maximum was 20 days but only at the PI’s discretion, and time off requests were frequently denied. One sick day per month; no roll over to new appointments. No guarantee of time off on UC holidays.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Parental/Maternity Leave</strong></td>
<td>No guaranteed parental or family leave, maternity leave was only 60% of salary for five of six weeks.</td>
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<td><strong>Medical, Dental &amp; Vision Benefits</strong></td>
<td>Many Fellows, Paid-Directs and LBL Affiliates did not receive employer-provided health insurance for themselves or dependents.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Appointment Security</strong></td>
<td>No minimum appointment length.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Discipline &amp; Dismissal/Layoffs</strong></td>
<td>Postdocs could be disciplined or dismissed arbitrarily, or “at will.” UC could lay off Postdocs at any time and for no reason without notice or compensation.</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dispute Resolution &amp; Non-Discrimination</strong></td>
<td>No neutral, fair dispute resolution process. The only neutral recourse for discrimination or harassment claims was through costly and time-consuming state and federal agencies.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Career Development/Individual Development Plans (IDP)/Mentoring</strong></td>
<td>No guaranteed performance evaluations or the right to create an IDP with your PI. Access to career development resources could be removed at any time.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Visa Processing</strong></td>
<td>No protection against university delays in visa processing.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reasonable Workload</strong></td>
<td>There were no limits on the number of hours or days that a PI could demand that Postdocs work.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Health &amp; Safety</strong></td>
<td>UC unilaterally set and enforced health and safety standards. Some Postdocs did not receive the proper health and safety training or equipment when requested.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political Advocacy</strong></td>
<td>No unified Postdoc voice in national policy making.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Become a Member of The Postdoc Union!** Since the union was formed, our strength has come from member support and involvement. Whether enforcing the rights listed above, developing critical resources for Postdocs (such as career development tools and visa/immigration support), or winning more rights in the future, our success is dependent on Postdocs joining in collective efforts. Want more information on how our union has made important improvements for Postdocs? Read the paper by UAW 5810 members in the journal *eLife*, “How Postdocs benefit from building a union” (*eLife* 2014;3:e05614). Join us to improve working conditions and help realize your vision of a great UC Postdoc experience! When Postdocs stand together, we all achieve more!

**CONTACT US:** uaw5810@uaw5810.org • 510-845-5726    VISIT US ONLINE: uaw5810.org

Note: This is only a summary. Please refer to the actual contract (http://uaw5810.org/know-your-rights/contract) for detailed information.

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