

# Charter Amendment Referral for Collective Bargaining for City and County of Denver Workers

Councilmembers: Gonzales-Gutierrez, Hinds, Lewis, Parady  
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# Charter amendment referral means Denver voters decide

If the charter amendment is successfully referred to the ballot, voters will decide whether or not to grant employees of the City and County of Denver the rights to collectively bargaining.

The charter amendment language will include standard language and pull from Denver labor law for the Firefighters, local labor policy for the Denver K-12 teachers, and federal labor law.



# What do collective bargaining rights mean?

Collective bargaining means employees and their employer sit down to negotiate and come to agreement on terms and conditions of employment.

Currently Denver teachers, Denver firefighters, and Denver police all have collective bargaining.

As do most workers in large American cities like Denver. In the United States, three-quarters of private-sector workers and two-thirds of public employees have the right to collective bargaining.



# Collective bargaining is good for workers and the public

Collective bargaining is in the public interest. When public workers have the ability to collectively address workplace issues they are better able to advocate for the public they serve.



# Collective bargaining is a basic human right

The right to collective bargaining also is recognized by international human rights conventions. The freedom to form and join a union is core to the U.N. Universal Declaration on Human Rights and is an “**enabling**” right—a fundamental right that ensures the ability to protect other rights.

- Collective bargaining is a way to solve workplace problems
- Collective bargaining **reduces wages gaps based on race and gender** and provides protection against discrimination.
- Workers with collective bargaining report **higher job satisfaction**
- When workers have collective bargaining their **workplaces are safer**

# How do collective bargaining rights work?

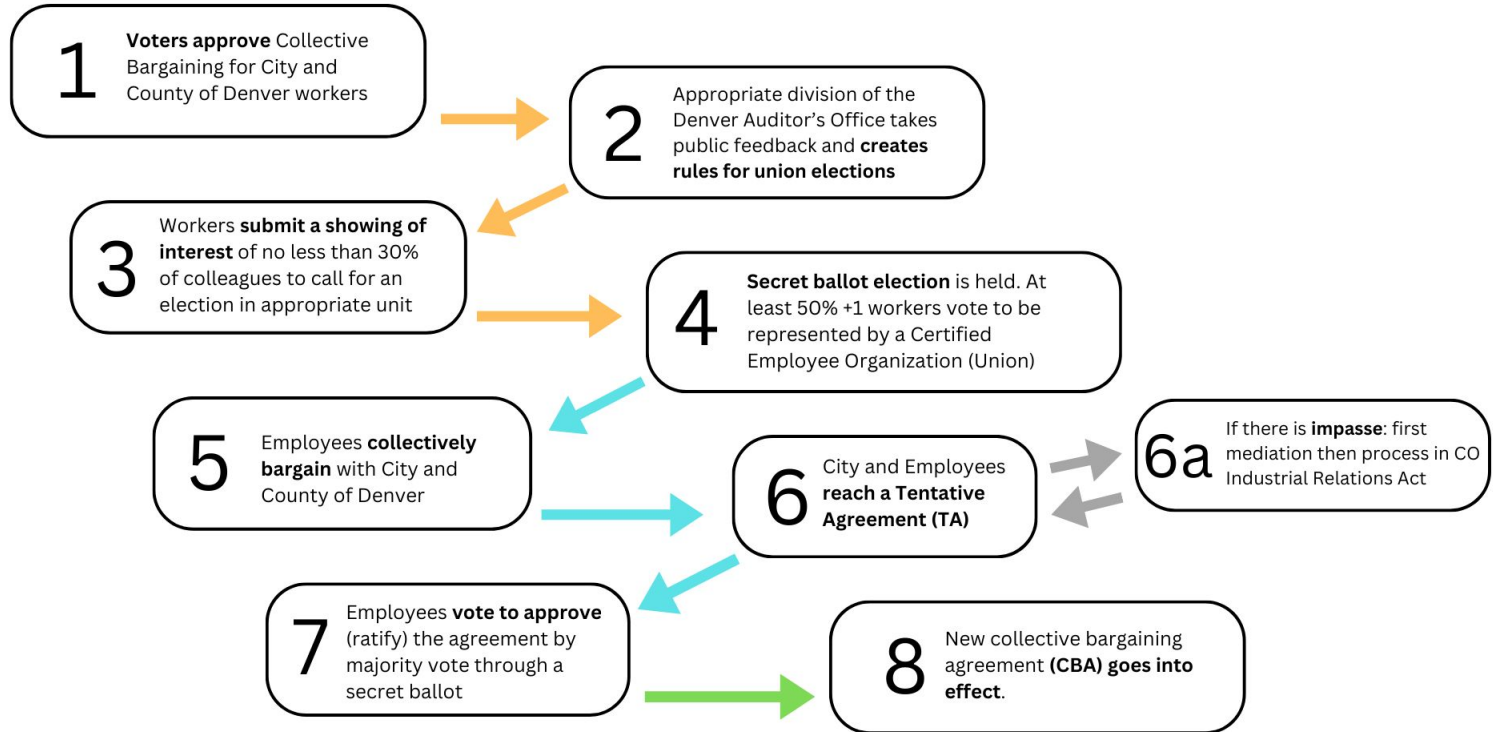
Collective bargaining rights give Denver employees the opportunity to vote for or against union representation if at least 30% of them want to pursue such a vote.

If the majority of voters in an appropriate bargaining unit vote for union representation, they will go into negotiations with the city.

When the parties come to an agreement, the workers must vote to approve, or ratify, the Collective Bargaining Agreement before it goes into effect.



# Steps for Collective Bargaining



# Who will be impacted?

- Most non-supervisory, non-confidential employees of the City and County of Denver
- Includes: library workers, parks and rec workers, public health workers, human services workers, Denver water, public works workers and more.
- Existing CBAs will not be impacted
- Some workers may never form unions





# Collective bargaining for City and County of Denver workers is long overdue.

## Coverage

Except for public safety, most of the 11,000 employees in the City and County of Denver do not have collective bargaining rights.

## Comparison

Denver is a solitary outlier among peer cities; every single other democratically controlled large US city in purple or blue states has CB for its municipal workforce.

## County workers

Since 2022, all county workers in Colorado have collective bargaining rights.



1	Name	Party	City	State	Population (2022 estimate)[1]	City Size Rank	Term start	Form of government	CB for Employees
2	<a href="#">Eric Adams</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">New York City</a>	<a href="#">New York</a>	8,335,897	1	January 1, 2022	<a href="#">Mayor-council</a>	Yes
3	<a href="#">Karen Bass</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">Los Angeles</a>	<a href="#">California</a>	3,822,238	2	December 11, 2022	<a href="#">Mayor-council</a>	Yes
4	<a href="#">Brandon Johnson</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">Chicago</a>	<a href="#">Illinois</a>	2,665,039	3	May 15, 2023	<a href="#">Mayor-council</a>	Yes
5	<a href="#">Cherelle Parker</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">Philadelphia</a>	<a href="#">Pennsylvania</a>	1,567,258	6	January 2, 2024	<a href="#">Mayor-council</a>	Yes
6	<a href="#">Todd Gloria</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">San Diego</a>	<a href="#">California</a>	1,381,162	8	December 10, 2020	<a href="#">Mayor-council</a>	Yes
7	<a href="#">Matt Mahan</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">San Jose</a>	<a href="#">California</a>	971,233	13	January 1, 2023	<a href="#">Council-manager</a>	Yes
8	<a href="#">Andrew Ginther</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">Columbus</a>	<a href="#">Ohio</a>	907,971	16	January 1, 2016	<a href="#">Mayor-council</a>	Yes
9	<a href="#">London Breed</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">San Francisco</a>	<a href="#">California</a>	808,437	18	July 11, 2018	<a href="#">Mayor-council</a>	Yes
10	<a href="#">Bruce Harrell</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">Seattle</a>	<a href="#">Washington</a>	749,256	20	January 1, 2022	<a href="#">Mayor-council</a>	Yes
11	<a href="#">Mike Johnston</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">Denver</a>	<a href="#">Colorado</a>	713,252	21	July 17, 2023	<a href="#">Mayor-council</a>	No
12	<a href="#">Muriel Bowser</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">Washington</a>	<a href="#">District of Columbia</a>	671,803	25	January 2, 2015	<a href="#">Mayor-council</a>	Yes
13	<a href="#">Michelle Wu</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">Boston</a>	<a href="#">Massachusetts</a>	650,706	27	November 16, 2021	<a href="#">Mayor-council</a>	Yes
14	<a href="#">Ted Wheeler</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">Portland</a>	<a href="#">Oregon</a>	635,067	28	January 1, 2017	<a href="#">Commission</a>	Yes
15	<a href="#">Mike Duggan</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">Detroit</a>	<a href="#">Michigan</a>	620,376	30	January 1, 2014	<a href="#">Mayor-council</a>	Yes
16	<a href="#">Brandon Scott</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">Baltimore</a>	<a href="#">Maryland</a>	569,931	31	December 8, 2020	<a href="#">Mayor-council</a>	Yes
17	<a href="#">Cavalier Johnson</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">Milwaukee</a>	<a href="#">Wisconsin</a>	563,305	32	December 22, 2021	<a href="#">Mayor-council</a>	Yes
18	<a href="#">Tim Keller</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">Albuquerque</a>	<a href="#">New Mexico</a>	561,008	33	December 1, 2017	<a href="#">Council-manager</a>	Yes
19	<a href="#">Darrell Steinberg</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">Sacramento</a>	<a href="#">California</a>	528,001	36	December 13, 2016	<a href="#">Council-manager</a>	Yes
20	<a href="#">Quinton Lucas</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">Kansas City</a>	<a href="#">Missouri</a>	509,297	38	August 1, 2019	<a href="#">Council-manager</a>	Yes
21	<a href="#">Rex Richardson</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">Long Beach</a>	<a href="#">California</a>	451,307	44	December 20, 2022	<a href="#">Council-manager</a>	Yes
22	<a href="#">Sheng Thao</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">Oakland</a>	<a href="#">California</a>	430,553	46	January 9, 2023	<a href="#">Mayor-council</a>	Yes
23	<a href="#">Jacob Frey</a>	Democratic	<a href="#">Minneapolis</a>	<a href="#">Minnesota</a>	425,096	47	January 2, 2018	<a href="#">Mayor-council</a>	Yes

24



# Support for unions and collective bargaining is at a historic high

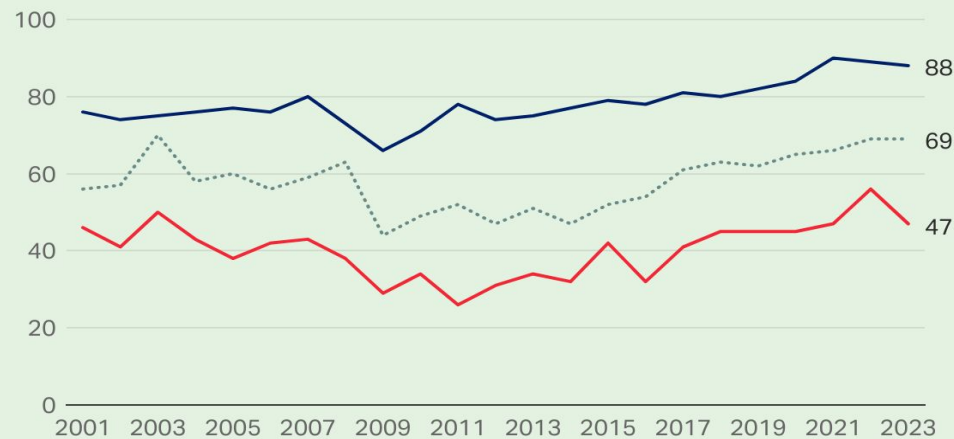
Recent polling shows strong support for collective bargaining and unions among Americans. 67% of Americans approve of unions in 2023.

## Approval of Labor Unions, by Party ID

Do you approve or disapprove of labor unions?

% Approve

— Democrats    ··· Independents    — Republicans



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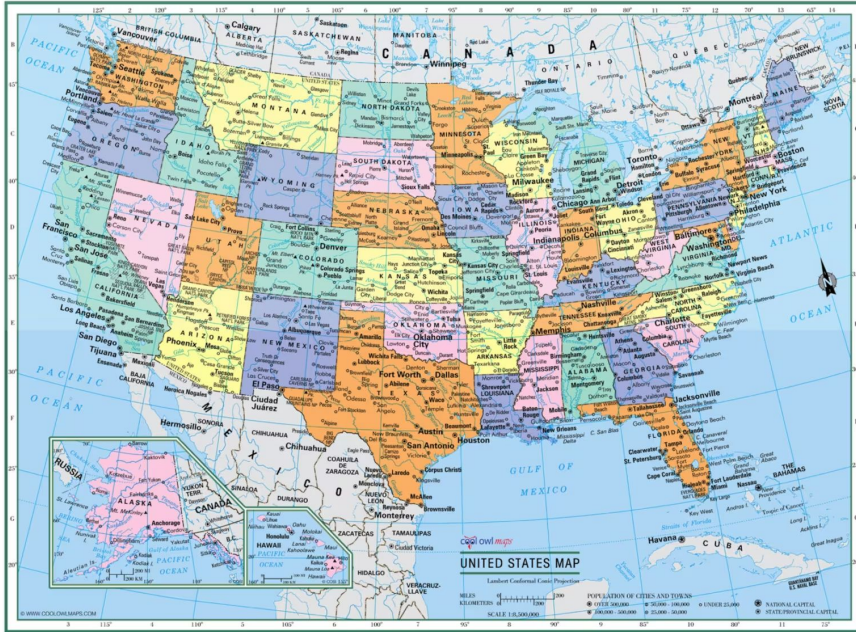


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# Career Service

- Career service rules will remain the default for now. No changes overnight; no wholesale changes.
- Workers will continue to be covered by CSA until conditions are altered through collective bargaining
- Through negotiations, workers could collectively bargain to keep CSA protections
- Some workers may never form unions or form them decades in the future, until then CSA will apply





**Collective bargaining works elsewhere.**  
**It will work here.**



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**Should Denver grant these  
basic human rights to City and  
County workers?**

**Let's let Denver voters decide.**





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# Questions?

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