

REAL
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FREELANCE ISN'T FREE

TOOLKIT

Tools to Organize & Mobilize

FREELANCE 
ISN'T FREE

Did you know nearly 8 in 10 freelancers struggle with nonpayment?

Freelancers across all industries encounter clients who go radio silent, promise that “the check is in the mail,” and take over 90 days to pay. But it doesn’t have to be this way.

On November 16, 2016, the first Freelance Isn’t Free act was signed into law in New York City. Led by members of Freelancers Union and a coalition of allies, the #FreelanceIsntFree campaign demonstrated that independent workers are a powerful constituency capable of organizing for change.

Freelancers signed petitions, shared their stories, attended meetings and rallies, testified at hearings, and pressured their legislators. Their efforts led to the unanimous passage of the Freelance Isn’t Free law because it’s actually a really simple issue: Everybody should get paid for the work they do.

Our goal is to get freelancers everywhere paid on time and in full. This toolkit is designed to help Freelancers Union members across the United States:

- Understand the issue of nonpayment
- Learn about the Freelance Isn’t Free law
- Start organizing your community for change

Together, we can build a movement to ensure freelancers everywhere are protected from nonpayment.

Get involved. Take action.

END NONPAYMENT.



FREELANCERS STRIKE BACK!

Join the fight against nonpayment.

Take action: A community leader's guide

Passionate about ending nonpayment for freelancers and want to be a part of the #FreelancersntFree movement? This toolkit provides the information and resources you need to start building a local campaign. Follow the steps below to help grow the movement and become a leader.

As you begin to organize, Freelancers Union will work with you to build a winning strategy!

1. Sign the petition

Go to www.FreelancersntFree.org and express your support for the movement.

2. Share the campaign with your network

Post about the issue on social media using the #FreelancersntFree hashtag and encourage others to join the movement!

Some examples:

Freelancers Strike Back! Nearly 8 in 10 freelancers have trouble getting paid what they're owed. Sign the petition to end nonpayment #FreelancersntFree www.FreelancersntFree.org

Nearly 8 in 10 freelancers (like me!) struggle to collect what they're earned from clients. #FreelancersntFree www.FreelancersntFree.org

Have a client that won't pay? You're not alone. #FreelancersntFree
I support freelancers getting paid www.FreelancersntFree.org

Here are some images you can use to post to social media.



[DOWNLOAD IMAGE](#)



[DOWNLOAD IMAGE](#)

3. Tell your story

Have you had issues with nonpayment? You're not alone—[share your story here](#).

Member stories are a powerful way we can bring attention to the issue by showing the real and significant impact nonpayment has on freelancer's lives. They help us identify where we have the best chance of building a successful local campaign.



4. Organize your community

The best way to kickstart a movement in your area? Build a local network.

Here's how:

- Check to see if there's a [Freelancers Union SPARK](#) (our monthly member meetup) in your area. Reach out to the event organizers and attend a meetup. Offer to volunteer as a Community Leader for the group.
- No SPARK in your area? [Start your own!](#) It's a great way to build your network, meet other like-minded freelancers, and organize your community for change.
- Remember, don't go it alone! As you begin to connect with your community, find other volunteers who can help, build a contact list of local freelancers, and forge connections with other community leaders and organizations who support the cause.
- Print and share the handouts from this guide for events and meetings: *Freelancers Strike Back* and *Freelancers Who Get Paid*. Use these to help raise awareness and for recruitment.

5. Identify yourself as a leader to Freelancers Union

Email advocacy@freelancersunion.org to let us know you're interested in being involved in a campaign. We'll help you get connected to our member community to organize locally and shine a national spotlight on the need to protect freelance work.

Together we can build a powerful constituency capable of creating change!

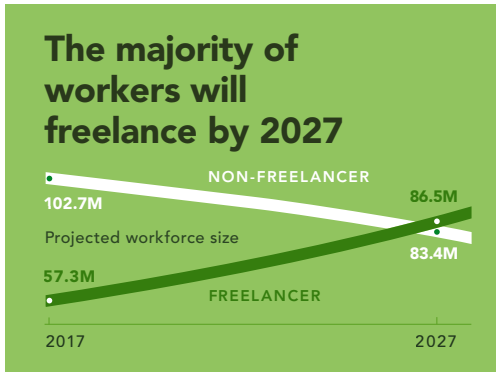


FREELANCERS STRIKE BACK!

Join the fight against nonpayment.

Freelancers are over a third of the workforce

- 57.3 million Americans freelance—including nearly half (47%) of millennials
- At the current growth rate, the majority of the US workforce will freelance within a decade
- Freelancers Union represents over 375,000 freelancers in all industries and occupations

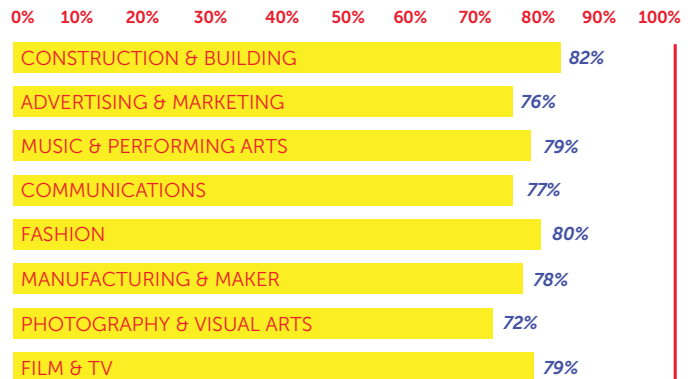


Nonpayment is an epidemic in the freelance community

- Despite the tremendous growth of this workforce...
- 71% of freelancers face nonpayment or late payment
- Freelancers who are stiffed lose an average of \$5,968 each year
- Most freelance engagements aren't protected by clear, written contracts. Only about a quarter (28%) of freelancers say they always use a contract



Nonpayment affects freelancers across all industries and types of work



*% of freelancers reporting issues getting paid on time

The impact of nonpayment is real and alarming

Freelancers struggle to get by when they are cheated out of payment. In the face of nonpayment, freelancers reported they took the following actions:

- 44% relied on credit cards
- 25% borrowed money from family and friends
- 17% took a job outside of their field
- 7% received government assistance
- 7% sold a car or other item



Learn more about the issue and how to support the #FreelanceIsntFree campaign at www.freelancersunion.org/freelance-isnt-free



FREELANCERS WHO GET PAID

Sounds pretty basic to us.

About the Freelance Isn't Free law

This groundbreaking law was a victory for Freelancers Union members in New York City and serves as a blueprint for other cities and states. Enacted in 2017, the law provides new protections for freelance work, including:

- **Mandatory contracts:** Clients must use a contract when hiring a freelancer for over \$800 of work and they can face fines if they refuse to provide one.
- **30-day payment terms:** Unless otherwise specified in a contract, clients must pay freelancers within 30 days of work completion.
- **Payment agreement protections:** Clients cannot require that freelancers accept less than they're owed in exchange for timely payment.
- **Anti-retaliation:** Clients cannot retaliate against a freelancer for pursuing payment.
- **Legal assistance:** A city agency will investigate, may try to collect on the freelancer's behalf, and will provide court navigation services if needed.
- **Double damages:** Freelancers can collect double damages and attorney's fees in court, and repeat offenders can face penalties of up to \$25,000.

Join the #FreelanceIsntFree movement

Let's work together to bring Freelance Isn't Free protections to all freelancers. Here are a few actions you can take:

1. **Sign the petition:** Go to www.FreelanceIsntFree.org to express your support—and share the campaign on social media using the #FreelanceIsntFree hashtag!
2. **Share your story:** Have you had an issue with nonpayment? Share your experience on our [blog](#) and help us bring attention to the challenges freelancers face.
3. **Organize your community:** Join a Freelancers Union SPARK meetup or organize your own to start building a local network of freelancers to advocate for the law.



Learn more about the issue and how to support the #FreelanceIsntFree campaign at www.freelancersunion.org/freelance-isnt-free