



Does An Apple A Day Keep The Union At Bay? Nope.

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Big news at Apple: The tech giant has joined the list of household name companies facing successful unionization efforts. Labor is currently resurging: Employees at [more than 100 Starbucks locations](#), for example, have voted to unionize.

[According to CNBC](#), Apple's employees at a store in Towson, Maryland, voted 65-33 in favor of joining the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers. The vote made the Towson location Apple's first unionized store in the United States. However, it is [unlikely to be the last](#), as employees at other locations – including flagship stores in New York City – have indicated that organization is in progress.

Once the NLRB certifies the results of the election, contract negotiations between the union and Apple can begin. As reported by CNBC, the Apple store employees “are seeking more input over pay and working conditions, like how the stores handle Covid safety and other operations.” The organizers, according to an [open letter to Apple CEO Tim Cook](#) from the unionization group AppleCORE posted on the IAM website, include “the Specialists, the Experts, the Geniuses, the Pros, the Creatives, and the Leads.”

Employers may be wise to keep their eyes on Towson to see whether Apple files any objections to the election, and, if so, how the NLRB resolves them. Either party may file objections to an election on various grounds to challenge

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the result. It's also worth noting the variety of positions and specialized training among the Apple employees who voted to unionize. Particularly for employers in the tech space, or whose locations contain diverse roles (and who do not operate with quite the same low barrier to entry, high employee turnover model as Starbucks), the aftermath of the Towson vote may provide a useful illustration of what to expect from current labor negotiations.

Kickstarter United, the [crowdfunding platform](#) that became one of the first major tech companies to see a successful union effort, recently announced its own bargaining results. These include annual cost of living raises; just cause requirements for discipline and termination; a \$3,000 stipend for wellness, education, and remote work expenses; and increased leaves of absence. No doubt many will be watching Towson to see if similar terms emerge, suggesting a new baseline in tech-space bargaining.

What's more, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) announced that in the first half of fiscal year 2022, [union representation petitions were up 57 percent](#) compared to the year prior.

Things remain hot on the union organizing front. Employers should remain on guard.

Summer associate Anna Bninski co-authored this blog post.