

Work Now, Grieve Later

What should I do if my boss tells me to do something that is not part of my regular job?

Work now, grieve later!

“Work now, grieve later,” also known as “obey now, grieve later,” is a basic rule that is followed in labor-management relations. All union members must understand and follow this rule in order to avoid discipline for **insubordination**.

Insubordination is a deliberate refusal to obey an order or to do work as directed by a supervisor or management.

When your supervisor tells you to do something that is not part of your regular job, **you should NOT refuse**. If you refuse to work as directed by a supervisor, you can be disciplined or even fired.

Tell your supervisor:

“I will do this job. But since I don’t believe it is part of my job description, I will contact my union representative.”

Do the work, then contact your union representative as soon as you are off the clock to let him/her know what happened.

Your union representative will investigate and work with you to correct any inappropriate actions by management. Your union representative will also file an official complaint, or **grievance**, on your behalf if needed to resolve the issue.



Are there any exceptions to the “work now, grieve later” rule?

In rare cases, refusal to work may not be considered to be insubordination when:

- orders by management are dangerously unsafe, or
- orders by management are illegal.

BE AWARE that even if you are asked to do something that *you* think is unsafe or illegal you may be disciplined or fired if you refuse.

What can you do under these circumstances?

1. **IMPORTANT: Offer to do other work;**
2. Explain why you don’t believe it is safe or legal to do the work;
3. Explain that you do not want to be insubordinate;
4. Avoid becoming argumentative; *and*
5. As soon as you are off the clock, contact your union for assistance. Your union representative can **grieve** (file an official complaint) on your behalf.