

PRESS RELEASE
December 4, 2023



Media Contact:
Somos Un Pueblo Unido
(505) 424-7832
somos@somosunpueblounido.org

**First New Mexico Resident Receives Deferred Action Status for Workers
Under New Program by the US Department of Homeland Security**

Santa Fe, NM- On Monday, Mariana Gomez, New Mexico's first deferred action recipient under new rules by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), joined *Somos Un Pueblo Unido* and the NM Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS) to provide information on how undocumented workers who are subject to workplace violations can apply for deferred action and a temporary work permit.

In 2022, DHS announced noncitizen workers who are victims of, or witnesses to, the violation of labor rights, could apply for deferred action status in order to proceed with employment violation claims without fear of immigration-related retaliation by their employers.

Somos, a statewide immigrant and workers' rights organization, has since worked with state and federal agencies to help streamline this process in New Mexico, as well as to inform immigrant workers of their right to apply for this status. DWS is aiding workers in the process by providing a letter certifying they are part of an investigation, a requirement of a worker's deferred action application.

"I was a victim of wage theft because I wasn't paid the minimum or overtime wages. I went to *Somos*' worker center to learn my rights and filed a complaint at DWS. While the investigation was underway, I applied for and received deferred action status. This has provided me with protection from deportation and a temporary work permit," said Mariana Gomez, member of *Somos Un Pueblo Unido*. "This will allow me to have a dignified job with opportunities for professional growth and I received my stolen wages."

"We want every workplace to be safe and to be fair. We want every worker to be paid and to get the benefits and treatment they deserve by law. That's what we know this program enables us to do. I want to thank everybody who has come forward with a wage claim, not just for protecting your own interests, but protecting the interest of all workers," said DWS Secretary Sarita Nair at Monday's press conference.

Another worker, Obdulia Guerrero said on Monday: "I was a victim of discrimination by the manager at the cleaning company where I worked. I notified my supervisors of this abuse and I was fired from my job. I filed a

discrimination complaint at DWS. I am a worker who will benefit from this immigration protection and will apply with the help of Somos worker's committee."

***Somos Un Pueblo Unido* will hold a worker's rights and citizenship forum on Thursday, December 7th at 7 PM at Guadalupe Credit Union Airport Branch, 3721 Academy Rd., in Santa Fe on how to file wage and sick leave complaints and how to apply for deferred action status.**

For more information on deferred action for aggrieved workers, [click here](#).

###

Somos Un Pueblo Unido | 1804 Espinacitas St. SantaFe, NM 87505 | (505) 424-7832 |
somos@somosunpueblounido.org | somosunpueblounido.org

Connect with us

