

Pact ends boycott of Andiamo restaurants

Tim Devaney / The Detroit News

The Restaurant Opportunities Center of Michigan has resolved a 15-month dispute and ended a boycott with Andiamo Restaurant Group over allegations of discrimination and wage violations at the company's Dearborn location.

The settlement announced Tuesday between the center — a labor group representing some Andiamo workers — and Andiamo includes unspecified new restaurant [policies](#) about break times, resolution procedures, anti-bias measures and translation of employment materials for non-English speakers, according to a news release.

It was not clear whether the agreement includes a cash sum, but complaining workers had asked for up to \$125,000 in owed wages. Terms of the deal were not disclosed for legal reasons.

The United [Auto](#) Workers and Metropolitan AFL-CIO greeted the news by ending a boycott started in September of all Andiamo outlets.

"The UAW is committed to continued involvement in struggles for workers' rights and social justice regardless of industry or union membership," UAW President Bob King said.

Andiamo denies any wrongdoing at its Dearborn location.

"The restaurant is pleased with the outcome and continues, in its longstanding tradition, to provide equal opportunity and a positive working environment for all of its employees, as well as rewarding hard work and dedication," Joe Vicari, president and CEO of the restaurant chain, said in a statement.

In July, the restaurant also settled with the National Labor Relations Board over allegations about illegal retaliation against two former employees. That agreement included \$30 in back pay to one worker. It also resulted in the restaurant posting a list of 15 actions management must avoid, including "call our employees liars" or "not engage in surveillance" of the workers.

The plaintiffs alleged they were not paid for all the hours they worked and, in some cases, that their pay was less than minimum wage. Some said the restaurant withheld workers' tips.

The UAW and Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO said they hope the pact will set a precedent.

"All workers anywhere should have the ability to have a voice in their workplace," said Rory Gamble, director of UAW Region 1A. "They should have the ability to speak out and raise attention to the injustices that occur — and without fear of any repercussions."