



FMCS

FEDERAL MEDIATION & CONCILIATION SERVICE

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## FMCS FACILITATES STATEWIDE GROCERY AGREEMENTS COVERING 100,000 WORKERS ACROSS CALIFORNIA

The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) assisted in securing a series of groundbreaking agreements between United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Locals and the state’s largest grocery employers – including Ralphs/Vons/Albertsons, Safeway, Stater Bros, SaveMart/Lucks/Food Maxx, and Food for Less. Together, these settlements cover nearly 100,000 workers across more than 1,000 stores statewide. Mediation began in late 2024 and concluded with a final settlement on August 6, 2025, ensuring labor peace in a sector essential to California’s economy and communities.



California Population Density by County  
Source: 2020 Census - U.S. Census Bureau

People per square mile

- 500.0 or more
- 200.0 to 499.9
- 100.0 to 199.9
- 25.0 to 99.9
- 10.0 to 24.9
- Less than 10.0

Total State Population:  
39,538,223

## IMPACT, ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTITUENT BENEFITS

Over the past year, nearly every major grocery contract in California came up for renewal, involving tens of thousands of workers across Northern and Southern California. These negotiations occurred against a backdrop of strikes and disputes in other states, raising the risk of significant disruption to food access and local economies. For the first time in agency history, FMCS mediators were involved in every major grocery contract negotiation in California, with several parties requesting federal mediation for the first time.



Between December 2024 and August 2025, FMCS facilitated dozens of bargaining sessions across five major negotiations:

- Ralphs/Vons/Albertsons (SoCal, 45,000 workers, 527 stores) – Over a dozen sessions culminating in a 40-hour marathon mediation to reach agreement in April 2025.
- Safeway (NorCal, 25,000 workers, 243 stores) – After tensions escalated, FMCS urged parties to delay a strike and extended two days of talks into five, reaching a deal in July 2025.
- Stater Bros (SoCal, 16,000 workers, 171 stores) – First-time mediation, six sessions leading to agreement in August 2025.
- SaveMart/Lucks/Food Maxx (NorCal, 12,000 workers, 156 stores) – Six sessions, including a late-night breakthrough session in December 2024.
- Food for Less (SoCal, 7,000 workers, 90 stores) – Twelve sessions in summer 2024, where persistent mediation steered the parties through multiple near-impasses to a July 2024 settlement.



Collectively, this case illustrates FMCS’s unique ability to scale its services across multiple bargaining tables to safeguard essential industries statewide. Grocery access is a fundamental need and these agreements positively impact the more than 38.9 million<sup>1</sup> residents across California and will:

- Restore consumer access to services and protect the livelihoods of frontline food-service workers in Seattle and surrounding suburbs.
- Protect supply chains, support consumer confidence, and prevent reputational harm for employers.
- Prevent strikes and supply chain disruptions during a period of national labor unrest in the grocery sector.
- Preserve nearly 100,000 grocery jobs and help to ensure uninterrupted food access for millions of California families across the state.
- Support local economies by stabilizing a critical consumer-facing industry.

Source: <sup>1</sup>U.S. Census 2023 American Community Survey Data