



DataKindSF

DataKindSF One-page Summary

What are the Wage Theft Coalition and the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor?

The Wage Theft Coalition is a collection of community organizations in Santa Clara County (aka Silicon Valley); their mission is to stop wage theft.

The Department of Labor enforces the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which sets basic minimum wage and overtime pay standards; the Wage and Hour Division enforces these standards.

What is the biggest problem these organizations are currently facing?

The goal is to stop the predatory exploitation of vulnerable populations.

Wage theft is the practice of: paying less than minimum wage, failing to pay overtime, forcing work off the clock, issuing paychecks that bounce, stealing tips, denying required meal and rest breaks, misclassifying work (i.e., as independent contract work), and not paying at all. Even when a worker exercises their right, they face illegal retaliation. Even when a worker win a court award, it is hard to collect; in 2012-13 workers collected 20 cents on the dollar.

The Wage Theft Coalition needs to show public policy makers that wage theft is a problem in their jurisdiction and that they must pass ordinances to end exploitation.

Wage theft continues despite investigation and enforcement by the Department of Labor. They have the classic 'missing species' problem: The violators they have discovered are known but the violators they have not discovered are unknown. Predictions using the existing data simply predict known violators. The goal is to find the gaps in the dataset where violators are 'flying under the radar.'

What data do they have so far?

- Dataset compiled from investigation and complaint source cases; organized by NAICS and unique ID that covers a case. Each case is an event of a single company, multiple employees, and multiple violations. Each event has a new unique ID.
- Dataset with field for categorizing source of case (not available to public)
- Datasets of industry information from other departments such as OSHA, MSHA, Census, Dept of Commerce, ACS
- Datasets from advocate groups enforcement such as Building Trades Council, Foundation for Fair Contracting, and the California Labor Commission

What have they done with the data so far?

- Basic online data visualization
- Online csv download
- Data analysis such as on agricultural crops with highest complaints
- Integration of datasets from various federal departments (discussing API)
- Developed app 'Eat, Shop, Sleep' of violators

Key questions we'd like to discuss tonight

1. Identify the features of where wage theft impacts vulnerable populations
2. Formalize estimating to what degree wage theft impacts a population
3. In what way to communicate/visualize the dataset so advocates can A) draw conclusions and B) host a