



Lost Bite At The Apple: Workers Withdraw Union Petition At Tech Giant

June 1, 2022 | [Labor And Employment, Union Organizing](#)



**David J.
Pryzbylski**
Partner

Anyone who has been paying any attention to labor relations in the U.S. knows union organizing has [taken off this year](#) – up nearly 60 percent over the last six months. While [Starbucks has seen the greatest volume](#) in organizing drives – over [250 election petitions](#) have been filed – other big-name companies have seen unionization pushes as well, such as Apple.

[Apple recently saw employees](#) at two of its iconic retail stores in Georgia and Maryland file for union election petitions, and reports about unionization campaigns in New York and Kentucky have emerged as well.

It appears, however, that the union effort at the Atlanta, site is falling short. According to a [recent article from Bloomberg](#): “The labor group trying to organize Apple Inc. employees at an Atlanta store is withdrawing its request for an election, citing what it alleges are illegal union-busting tactics by the company. The Communications Workers of America [CWA] ... cited Covid-19 infections among staff at the store, located at the city’s Cumberland Mall, which it said ‘have raised concerns about the ability of eligible employees to vote and the safety of in-person voting.’”

In addition to COVID-19 absences, the CWA also alleges the company violated the National Labor Relations Act in relation to the campaign it has run regarding unionization. It remains to be seen if that is the case, as that is likely to be litigated in front of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

Regardless, this is a big setback for the CWA at Apple. Under applicable

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NLRB procedures, if a union withdraws an election petition after it's been filed but before a vote takes place, the union must wait at least six months to get "another bite at the apple" (i.e., file another election petition). We'll see what happens at that store.

The ongoing union push at Starbucks and the apparent swell of activity at Apple are signs the current organizing wave sweeping the country is not slowing down – and maybe just getting started. Employers desiring to remain union-free should monitor these developments, keep their guard up, and consider proactive measures on the employee relations front, as 2022 is already looking to be unlike anything we've seen in decades in terms of union organizing. Stay tuned.