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My Name is Silvia



Short story based on “Rolando’s Rights”

We Speak NYC • Season 2

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My name is Silvia.

I am from the Dominican Republic.

I live in New York now.

I live with my family.



I am a working mother.
I am a home health aide.
I take care of senior citizens.



This is my husband.

His name is Rolando.

He is a construction worker.

He also has a part-time job at a parking garage.



**This is our son.
His name is Lionel.
His nickname is “Lion.”
Lionel is in second grade.**



Recently, Lionel was sick.

I stayed at home to take care of him.

But, I got paid because I receive *paid sick leave*.



What is *paid sick leave*?

I will tell you what it is.

I will also tell you how I learned about it.

This is the story...



**Rolando's coworkers are important in this story.
They helped each other to win their rights.**



This is Rolando's coworker.

His name is Janus.

Janus told Rolando about paid sick leave.

**Rolando asked Janus,
"What is paid sick leave?"**



**Janus said, “In New York City, if you are sick,
you don’t have to go to work,
but you still get paid.
It’s called paid sick leave.”**



But, there was a problem.

Their company was not giving them paid sick leave.



This is Cecilia.

She is a construction worker too.

She works with Rolando and Janus.



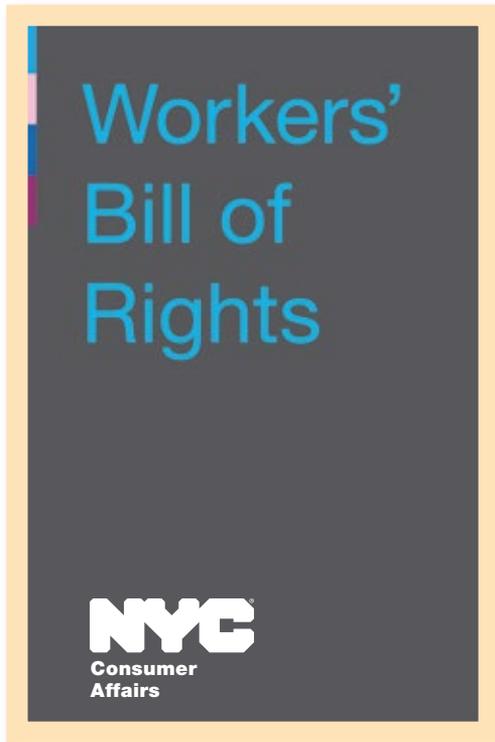
Rolando, Janus and Cecilia talked about the problem.

They decided to call 311 to get help.

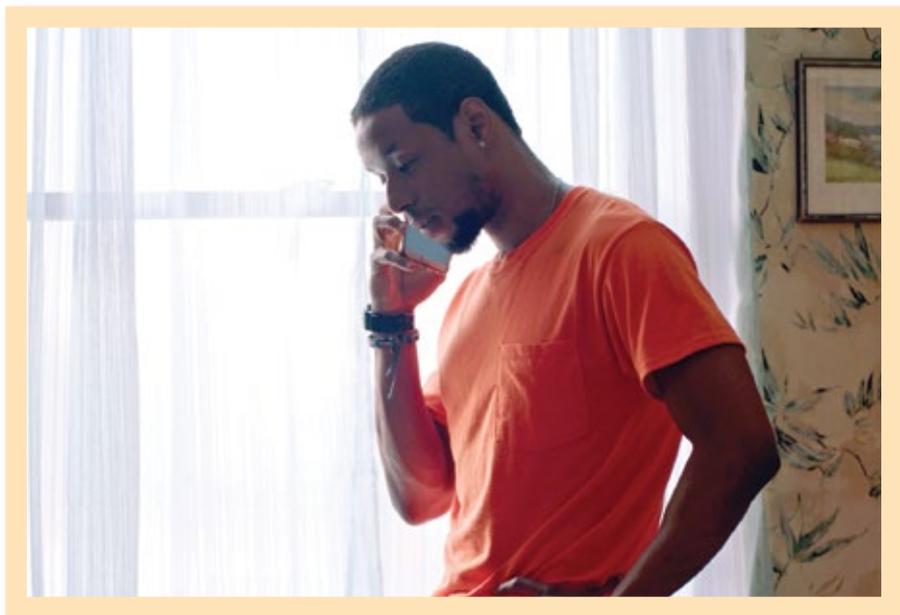
They wanted more information about paid sick leave.

They wanted to know their rights.





**311 told Rolando about DCA—
the Department of Consumer Affairs.
DCA has a special office for worker rights.
Worker rights are the rights of workers.**



**311 told Rolando that he can
“file a complaint” online or on the phone.
“File a complaint” means to report a problem.**



**Janus and Cecilia called 311 too.
311 said that they can go to the DCA office.
You don't need an appointment.**

**Workers' rights
apply regardless
of immigration
status.**



NYC
Consumer
Affairs

nyc.gov/dca | [#WorkersRightsNYC](https://twitter.com/WorkersRightsNYC)

**When you file a complaint,
DCA will contact the company
to get your money.**

**DCA helps all workers,
with or without immigration papers.**

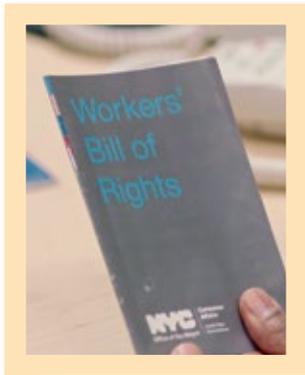


**Rolando and his coworkers visited DCA.
They met with a DCA representative.
She explained the rules.
She explained the rights of workers.**



She also explained *wage theft*.

She said, “The company is required to pay your wages for every hour that you work.”



She gave Rolando the Workers' Bill of Rights.

**Every worker has rights,
with immigration papers or without.**

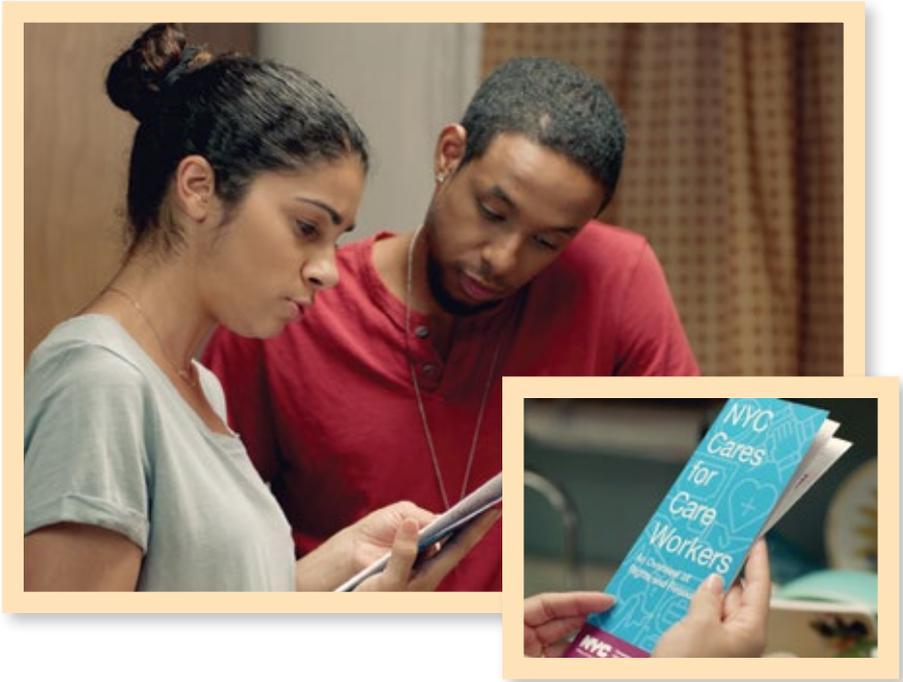


“Do you want to file a complaint?” she asked.

Rolando was not sure.

He wanted to think about it.

**He wanted to talk about it with his coworkers
and with me.**



**At home, Rolando gave me the information
about paid sick leave.**

I learned that paid sick leave is for care workers too.

That was very good news for me.



**At work, Rolando, Janus and Cecilia
told other workers about paid sick leave.**



**Then, Rolando and his coworkers
spoke with their boss.**

**They told the boss about their right
to paid sick leave.**



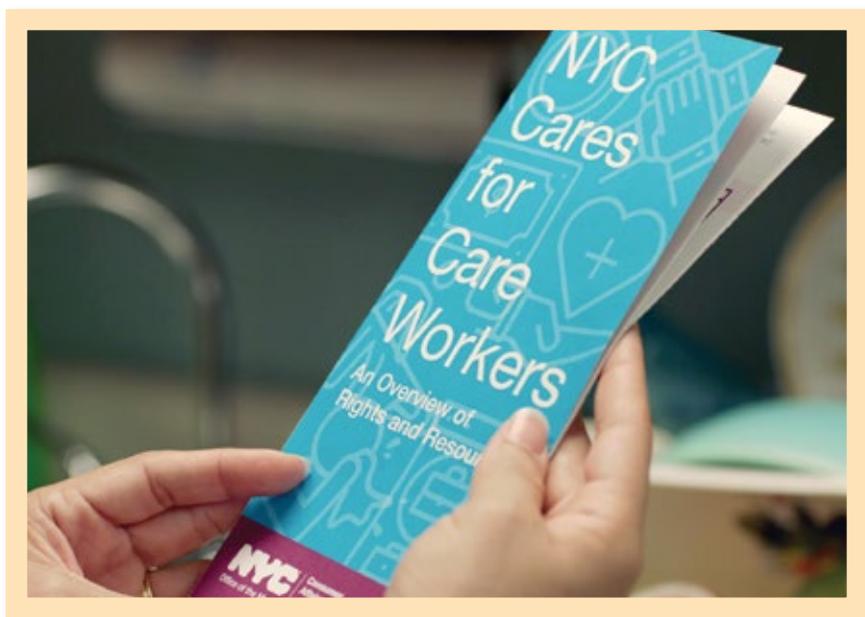
**But the company still didn't give it to them.
So, the workers filed complaints with DCA.**



A few weeks later, Rolando had good news.

The boss met with the workers.

**He said, “You were right.
Everyone who works for this company
120 days or more, gets paid sick leave.
In New York City, it’s the law.”**



I spoke with my company about paid sick leave too.

I told them that I know about paid sick leave.

I told them that I know my rights.



It's important to know your rights.

**And it is good to know
you can get help to win your rights.**

You are not alone.

Words used in this story

- 311
- alone
- am, is, are, was, were (be)
- appointment
- asked (ask)
- because
- boss
- called (call)
- can
- care, care workers
- company
- construction worker
- contact
- coworkers
- decided (decide)
- Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA)
- do, don't
- Dominican Republic
- each other
- every
- everyone
- explained (explain)
- family
- file a complaint
- gave (give)
- get help
- go
- got (get), got paid
- has (have)
- helped (help)
- home health aide
- hour
- husband
- immigration papers
- important
- information
- job
- know
- law
- learned (learn)
- lion
- live
- met (meet)
- money
- mother, working mother
- name
- need
- news, good news
- nickname
- now
- office
- online
- paid sick leave
- parking garage
- part-time job
- pay
- phone, on the phone
- receive
- recently
- report
- representative
- required (require)

-
- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> rights | <input type="checkbox"/> sure, not sure | <input type="checkbox"/> will |
| <input type="checkbox"/> rules | <input type="checkbox"/> take care of | <input type="checkbox"/> win |
| <input type="checkbox"/> said (say) | <input type="checkbox"/> talked (talk) | <input type="checkbox"/> without |
| <input type="checkbox"/> second grade | <input type="checkbox"/> think | <input type="checkbox"/> work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> senior citizens | <input type="checkbox"/> told (tell) | <input type="checkbox"/> worker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sick | <input type="checkbox"/> too | <input type="checkbox"/> worker rights |
| <input type="checkbox"/> son | <input type="checkbox"/> visited (visit) | <input type="checkbox"/> Workers' Bill
of Rights |
| <input type="checkbox"/> special | <input type="checkbox"/> wage theft | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> spoke (speak) | <input type="checkbox"/> wages | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> stayed (stay) | <input type="checkbox"/> wanted (want) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> story | <input type="checkbox"/> weeks | |

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