

## Study shows how California employers avoid paying lawful claims to workers

July 2 2013, by Mike Fricano

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Restaurant workers protest over unpaid wages. Credit: Stefanie Ritroper

Thousands of low-wage workers in California have been unable to collect unpaid wages from their employers, even after state authorities have ordered the employers to pay, according to a study co-authored by researchers at the UCLA Center for Labor Research and Education.

The study, "Hollow Victories: The Crisis in Collecting Unpaid Wages for California's Workers," found that from 2008 to 2011, [workers](#) who filed complaints collected on only 17 percent of the court-ordered

claims.

Only \$165 million out of \$390 million worth of fines had been collected, even after agreements were reached between state labor authorities and the companies. The employers were able to avoid paying the fines by using legal methods, such as dissolving and reforming under new names, the report said.

Most of the workers are [immigrants](#) in minimum-wage or low-paying jobs cleaning homes and businesses, washing cars, picking crops or sewing garments.

**More information:**

[nelp.3cdn.net/f6fc363a30266f0cd3\\_pzm6id1xa.pdf](http://nelp.3cdn.net/f6fc363a30266f0cd3_pzm6id1xa.pdf)

Provided by University of California, Los Angeles

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