



News Release

THE HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Union votes for privatized hospital workers to be counted after 16-month delay

Privatized hospital workers at three Lower Mainland facilities who cast ballots on union membership more than 16 months ago will finally learn the results of their vote.

The BC Labour Relations Board today ruled that an application by the Hospital Employees' Union to represent more than 350 dietary workers and cleaners employed by UK-based Compass Group can proceed.

The ballots had been sealed by the LRB pending the resolution of legal objections to HEU's application raised by both Compass Group and a Langley-based local 1-3567 of the United Steelworkers of America.

The LRB decision also designates a single bargaining unit covering all Compass workers at Children's and Women's Hospital, Sunnyhill Health Centre and the Vancouver site of the BC Cancer Agency.

A date for the vote count has not yet been set by the LRB but is expected to occur within the next few days.

"This has been a long and difficult wait for Compass workers," says assistant secretary-business manager Zorica Bosancic.

"But this outcome is a very positive one. Workers' democratic right to choose their own union will finally be respected and we can now get down to the hard work of improving wages and working conditions."

In similar votes held throughout the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley among the recently privatized hospital workforce, HEU has been the overwhelming choice of workers.

The union now represents more than 3,000 employees of Sodexo, Aramark and Compass – the three foreign corporations that have signed hundreds of millions of dollars in privatization deals with public health authorities and other health employers.

HEU is currently organizing Compass hospital workers in the Victoria area where a vote on union membership is expected to be held in the near future.

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