

Cowlitz Family Health Center workers join Machinists Union

Support staff at the Cowlitz Family Health Center-Drug Abuse Prevention Centers in Longview, Washington voted 22-10 on Aug. 16-17 to join the Machinists Union.

The bargaining unit, consisting of full-time, regular part-time, and on-call residential assistants, case managers, cooks, maintenance assistants, office assistants, child care workers, and billing clerks in the center's behavioral health division, will join Longview Local Lodge W536. The local is an affiliate of Machinists District Lodge W24 headquartered in Gladstone, Oregon.

The election was conducted by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

Machinists grand lodge representative Matthew McKinnon told the Longview Daily News that workers unionized in response to unfair treatment from management, explaining that some people in leadership roles yelled, screamed and berated employees.

"It's outrageous, and the workers are just tired of it," he told the newspaper, adding that there are also concerns about inadequate pay.

In a separate election conducted by the NLRB, chemical dependency professionals and trainees at the Family Health Center voted 6-0 against the union.

Machinists Lodge W536 represents a separate unit at the health center consisting of medical and dental assistants, clerks, and community health workers. They organized in 2014.

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