



Supporting our communities starts with supporting workers

We delivered our message to Compass management that meaningful wage increases and affordable healthcare are critical to recruit and retain quality behavioral health workers. This was reiterated at our last bargaining session on Monday July 8. We provide an important resource to our community, and the time has come to engage our friends, families, and neighbors in our fight for a fair contract.

Ready for action!

The contract action team is rolling up our sleeves to assist the bargaining team in getting us ready for action! We are talking with coworkers, one by one, about what is at stake and how we are going to win. Over half of us have had a chance to have this important conversation with a member of the bargaining team or the contract action team. We are in a final push to hear from everyone else!



“My coworkers see why it is important that we take action so that we can continue to do good for our clients, and we feel ready. We have to stand together in this fight for a great contract, because we deserve a career that feels sustainable. Being united is the key to winning. We will be there!”

— **Melysa Allen, Clinician II, WISE Silver**



“Lobby day was powerful. We connected with legislators who were interested in our lived experiences, asking us how are we affording to live? How often do we have to go to the food bank? It was so important to be heard. They said they would pass this because they know how much we are affected.”

— **Chelsey Dyer, WISE Case Manager**

We have support from our elected representatives

We met with Joe Timmons, our 42nd district Washington State Representative. He heard our concerns and agrees that we should not see an increase in our healthcare costs and that the 15% increase to Medicaid reimbursement rates needs to be passed directly to workers.

Back in 2023, many of us went to Olympia and explained to our legislators how important a significant pay increase would be to us and our patients across Washington state. He agreed with us then, and voted yes to increase the Medicaid reimbursement rates by 15%, an amount we knew was ambitious. Compass has been receiving 15% more in reimbursements from Medicaid since January 1, 2024. Other community behavioral health providers, including our Catholic Community Services neighbors in Northwest Washington, began passing that increase directly to the workers on January 1, 2024. When we told representative Timmons that we have not yet seen this increase from Compass, he committed to stand with us in our contract fight.



Our path to winning

Our strength is growing every day. We are engaging our community with our public petition. Compass needs to hear loud and clear that our community stands with behavioral health workers. Who do you know who lives in any of the counties where Compass operates? Probably lots of people, right? We get closer to winning a great contract with every signature! We are asking our friends, family, barbers and bartenders to sign.

We are caring for you and fighting for us.

Scan the QR code for the community petition: (<https://1199nw.org/4daYiFL>)



Local businesses stand with us!

Our signs are up all over our community. Local businesses know what the stakes are and understand that the care we offer to our community must start with taking good care of us, the workers. Local businesses are showing that they stand with Compass workers by posting signs in support. You can find our signs, saying “Supporting Communities Starts With Supporting Workers”, all over Whatcom County, including at Bakerview Starbucks, Woods Coffee in Ferndale, Ferndale Public Library, Chocolate Necessities, Boundary Bay Brewing, Third Planet, The Stone Moon, Are You My Human, and our community bulletin board.



Upper management receives big raises while we struggle

Compass management gave themselves \$319,342 more in base compensation in the last publicly available fiscal years. They each received a 30% to 50% raise from 2021 to 2022 in base compensation alone. They also allocated \$141,575 in bonus and incentive pay in 2022 and \$139,098 in 2021.

- Tom S. made \$315,844 in base compensation in 2022, up 30% from 2021. That means in 2022 he made \$115.85/hour assuming he works 40 hours in a week. That is nearly 9 times more than the lowest wage worker at Compass who currently makes \$17/hour.
- Stacey made \$237,973 in base compensation in 2022, up 43% from 2021. That means in 2022 she made \$114.41/hour assuming she works 40 hours in a week. That is nearly 7 times more than the lowest wage worker at Compass who currently makes \$17/hour.
- Connie made \$226,523 in base compensation in 2022. That means in 2022 she made \$108.91/hour assuming she works 40 hours in a week. That is nearly 6 times more than the lowest wage worker at Compass who currently makes \$17/hour.



“All through covid we showed up in person to work. Every time we needed to talk with management they zoomed from home. How much more do they need when the rank and file are struggling?”

— Vince DeJoia, MHT III Aurora House

A tale of two employers

Last year, we filled buses and headed to Olympia for an important day of citizen lobbying to push for better funding for behavioral health. We spoke with dozens of our elected representatives to help them understand what we do and why it is important, and why they need to put more of the state's budget toward our work. Our main message was that we need our employers to receive an increase in funding because our ability to recruit and retain great co-workers depends on increasing our pay. We were there with behavioral health workers from all over the state: Behavioral Health Resources, Catholic Community Services, Sound Health, Downtown Emergency Services, and of course, us, Compass Health. We also invited the CEOs of these organizations to join us. We have found that standing together with the employers on issues we agree on sends a powerful message. Here is a tale of two employers, about what unfolded on lobby day 2023.

Catholic Community Services Northwest	Compass Health
2023 legislative session: We invited the CEO of Catholic Community Services Northwest, Will Rice, to join us in Olympia to send a strong message to our elected officials. He said yes!	2023 legislative session: We invited the President and CEO of Compass Health, Tom Sebastian, to join us in Olympia to send a strong message to our elected officials. He declined.
CCS's CEO, Will Rice, met with us in Olympia for lobby day. We planned our meetings together and collaborated on a message. It was great to work together on things we agree about!	Tom was absent, but we understood. He had made other commitments.
We all went to meet with our elected officials together and brought a shared message that the important work we do must be compensated, that the wellbeing of the community was at stake.	We ran into Tom Sebastian in the hall of the Legislative building in Olympia. He was there after all, but speaking with elected officials on other matters he felt were more pressing than wage increases for Compass staff.
The legislature increased Medicaid reimbursement rates by 15%.	The legislature increased Medicaid reimbursement rates by 15%, no thanks to Tom.
CCS automatically agreed to a 15% increase effective Jan 1, 2024, a 3% increase July 1, 2024, and a 7% increase July 1, 2025 for a total of 25% wage increases over a year and a half.	Compass is not committed to passing through the 15% Medicaid increase to front line workers.



CEO of CCS Will Rice with workers, heading to our next lobby visit, where we bring a strong message that we are aligned on the need for more funding.



President and CEO of Compass Health Tom Sebastian, who we had just run into in the halls of the capitol. He had told us he was busy that day and couldn't join us—apparently busy with lobbying on other priorities besides wage increases for us!

**Tom and other Compass management need to understand:
Why would workers stay at Compass
if we could make more money at CCS?**

We won't stand for our healthcare benefits to be reduced

Compass Health's plan to increase our deductible from \$100 per year to \$500 per year is misguided. It amounts to a \$400 pay cut, and we can't afford this. This is a takeaway, and we will not accept it.

Employer	Deductible
Behavioral Health Resources	\$0
Compass Health	\$100 – and they are trying to increase it to \$500

We understand that finding a good, inexpensive healthcare plan is challenging for a company the size of Compass. The way BHR has managed to offer a plan with no deductible is by joining the SEIU 775 Health Benefit Trust. This trust gives us the ability to leverage higher numbers of plan members to receive better rates on health insurance. We are asking that Compass Health work with us to explore the option of joining this same trust. We also know there is a good possibility that the state will create a health benefits trust for behavioral health workers. Instead of making our deductible more expensive, Compass should pursue better options. We proposed the following memorandum of understanding at our last bargaining session.

MOU Regarding Healthcare

The employer will maintain the health benefits per the CBA, however, the parties will convene a discussion with the SEIU 775 Health Benefit Trust to pursue a less expensive health benefit package for 2026 and beyond. And if a less expensive health benefits package becomes available the parties will negotiate the terms of the new health benefit plan. In addition, should the Washington State legislature create a new health benefit plan available to behavioral health employers that is less expensive than Compass Health plan Compass Health will pursue participation in that plan and the parties will negotiate the terms of the new health benefit plan. Any health plan offered by the Employer must satisfy the maintenance of benefits requirements in Art. 13.1.

Next steps

Our planning committees are busy cooking up our next actions! Reach out to bargaining team and contract action team members to learn more. Enough is enough. We need a fair contract now.

Bargaining Team

Rebecca McClinton, Clinician 3, Whatcom McLeod
 Chelsea Dyer, Clinician 2, Child and Family Outpatient, San Juan County OP
 Charlie Bray, Care Coordinator, WISE Skagit
 Sydney Sivertsen, Clinician 2, Everett
 Mikayla Shea, Clinician 2, WISE Whatcom Cordata
 Tom Garland, DCR Skagit
 Troy Husband, DCR Skagit
 Max Whipple, RN, Whatcom Triage
 Amanda Steffen, Psych Tech, Mukilteo E&T
 Stephanie Guzman-Fix, Medical Assistant, Everett
 Gail Estes, RN, Whatcom Triage

Contract Action Team

Vince DeJoia	MHT III, Aurora House
Kristen Foster	MHT III, Aurora House
Aaron McClellan	MHT III, Aurora House
Katherine Green	CYFCT, Cordata
Melysa Allen	Clin II, WISE Silver Team, Monroe
Julie Gass	Clin III, Smokey Point
Melinda Welchert	DCR, Cordata
Maggie Romero	DCR, Coupville
Sinisa Stankovic	Care Coordinantor, WISE, Mint team
John King	PACT - Peer Counselor, Mt. Vernon
Brian Robertson	Clinician I, Mukilteo E&T
Lennea Rylander	Clinician I, CYFCT, Cordata
Elizabeth Purser	Clinician I, CYFCT, Cordata
Gemini Carman	Clinician I, CYFCT, Cordata
Nancy Buckley	Outpatient Clinician, Coupville
Kris Kelly	Peer Counselor, WISE red team
Stacey McVeigh	Peer Counselor, Marysville
Elisabeth Snare	RN, Mukilteo E&T

