

PICKET

July 30, 2024



COMPASS

Supporting communities starts with supporting workers: We are United!

When workers are outside, it's because something is wrong inside. We kicked off our week of actions at the Compass Health McLeod location in Bellingham with an informational picket. We joined forces with our coworkers, our neighbors, and community members to urge Compass Health to invest in us.

We're calling on Compass to support us so we can deliver quality care for our clients and community.



We're not afraid of speaking out!



Across Compass, we are united TO TAKE ACTION

Over 80% of our workforce agrees that now is the time to take action, and a supermajority of us are committed to take the action needed to show Compass we are united.

Compass executives have shown that they aren't willing to agree to a contract that allows us to take care of ourselves and our families and give our clients the best care possible. As the frontline behavioral healthcare workers who care for our community, it is up to us to take action and move management in order to win what we need.

We all committed to our coworkers and community to say "I'll be there" at one of the actions this week!



"When I learned that my mental health care providers and their coworkers were in jeopardy and holding a picket, I said 'sign me up'. Don't mess with my mental health care, it keeps me alive. I've experienced the effects of short staffing when I had turnover with my prescriber. Luckily, I knew my new prescriber, but it causes a lot of anxiety to be put with a new person.

Compass workers are in the business of saving lives, and they need to be compensated accordingly. Instead of spending money on a rebrand that has no client benefits, Compass should have put that money towards better wages for workers. Whether you're a doctor in a hospital or a mental health worker, you should be paid fairly and given the resources to come to work clear-minded, rested, and with a good work-life balance. It's a matter of life or death in these offices, just as it is in hospitals."

Kendra LaFortune, Client, Compass Health McLeod

NEXT STEPS

Join us at the next picket and rally for Compass Health workers!

Mukilteo
August 1
4:00pm - 6:00 p.m.
10710 Mukilteo Speedway Mukilteo, WA 98275

Rally in Bellingham
August 3
11:00 a.m.
Maritime Heritage Park
500 W Holly Street Bellingham, WA 98225

Sign the 'I'll Be There' petition:



<https://1199nw.org/4bOJAT2>

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“Welcome everyone! Thank you so much for coming! I’m proud of you...I’m proud of us!! My name is Rebecca McClinton, therapist here at Compass Health and member of your bargaining team.

Management hasn’t listened to us at the bargaining table these last 15 months and it is past time for Compass Health to come to the table and settle a strong contract.

We are here in unity and solidarity to show through our action that our words matter.

We are here to fight for a contract that values the amazing work that we do every day serving our most vulnerable community members.

We are here to fight to RETAIN workers so that our clients can get the consistent care they need to heal and not just be in cycles of constant crises, which by the way, is what the industry makes the most money off of.

We are here to say that if executive leadership can give themselves over a 30% raise in recent years that they can certainly give us the 15% raise we went and advocated for...and WON...at the legislative level.

We are here to say that if other community mental health agencies have been able to push through that 15% to workers, Compass Health can do it too.

We are here to say that we want equity on how raises are distributed...we don’t want our highest wage earners getting the highest raises, we want the numbers to show, the DOLLARS to show, that our lowest wage earners are worth every bit as much as the highest wage earners.

Equity isn’t just how you treat your employees, it’s how you PAY them, and it’s time to flip that script. We’ve fought for that from the very beginning and are sticking to it.

I’ve been a therapist at Compass Health since October of 2012. In my 12 years here, one of my goals as a therapist has been to help individuals along their recovery journey and for them to want to graduate into doing this very work themselves if they want (and they often do).

But they need to be able to work in a field that compensates them in a way that they can care for themselves and their families...can pay for their rent and basic needs.

We’re here to fight because currently our peer counselors, community health workers, care coordinators, case managers, MA’s and psych techs can’t do that on the wages they make. They have to go to the food bank for groceries, where they run into the clients they serve. They can’t make rent on their FT wages and have to pay bills on credit. They struggle to fill their gas tanks. That’s not acceptable.

Low wages mean workers have to pick up additional jobs, leading to exhaustion, stress, and burnout. It means clients aren’t getting clinicians at their best. All of this leads to turnover which means clients have to start all over with someone new. That makes it hard to heal.

We’re also here to fight to retain our health care. We are not ok with take aways to our health care. It’s important that my coworkers who have had to fight cancer or who have needed necessary medical and surgical procedures can do so without breaking the bank or going into debt. We are NOT ok with takeaways to our healthcare.

We’re here to fight because we’ve seen Compass spend thousands on rebranding, on gadgets and widgets and employee appreciation. We’ve seen Compass spend enthusiasm and energy towards fundraising for a new building, but simultaneously have watched them close down programs and eliminate needed services in our communities.

While new buildings sound great, we don’t currently have the workers to care for the new clients that expansion would bring. We’ve made it clear to Compass what it will take to recruit and retain – a strong contract must come FIRST before any new projects.

We’re here to fight because Compass continued to increase productivity expectations, but the majority of us can’t meet the current expectations.

We are here, in unity and in solidarity together to show Compass Health and our community that we believe in the work we do, that we believe in our clients and their healing journey and that we believe in Compass Health’s ability to settle a fair contract with us and to recruit and retain us.

We’re here...we care...what we’re asking for is fair.”

Rebecca McClinton, Clinician 3, Whatcom McLeod

What is an informational picket?

An informational picket means we march, chant, and show our unity outside the clinics with our community – publicly holding Compass Health accountable to us and our patients.

- An informational picket is NOT a strike. We will picket on our breaks, before or after our shifts, or on our day off.
- On the day of the picket, we report to work and take care of our clients; we come together outside the clinics to picket and rally on our lunch, 15-minute break, before or after our shift or on our day off.
- An informational picket is not a strike or work stoppage. It’s our day to show Compass the power of our unity!
- On picket day, we bring our friends, family, and pets!
- An informational picket is all of us unifying with our co-workers to send a strong message to Compass and to alert our community about what is happening at our workplace.
- It is illegal for management to discipline us for taking part in an informational picket.
- An informational picket is an effective way of bringing our message to our community.

