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**FIRST UNIONIZED ADULT-USE CANNABIS CULTIVATION AND PROCESSING FACILITY RATIFIES FIRST CONTRACT**

*Workers at Central Processors NY Win Guaranteed Wage Increases, Affordable Health Care in Industry First*

(SYRACUSE, NY) – On April 23, 2024, the workers at Central Processors NY (CPNY) in Syracuse ratified their first union contract, after the bargaining unit won voluntary recognition from their employer. The new contract secures guaranteed wage increases over the course of the contract including an increase in minimum starting rates, quality healthcare benefits for the worker and their family that are fully paid for by the employer, and generous paid time off for both part-time and full-time employees. The workers at CPNY are the first unionized cultivation and processing facility in New York’s adult-use cannabis industry. Local 338 RWDSU/UFCW represents 20 workers at the facility, who work in various job titles in cultivation and manufacturing.

“This contract met a lot of our needs. The new health benefits are very important to me personally – I had been without health insurance for a year after I left my last job. The paid time off we won is substantially more than what we had received previously, and the contract clearly outlines how using and accumulating time off works. Before this contract, the guidelines around paid time off were vague, and now we know exactly what we’ve accrued and can use. Everyone is very happy with the final contract.” – **Lucas Beauchamp, Local 338 RWDSU/UFCW Member and Manufacturer at Central Processors NY**

“Unionizing was a no-brainer; job protections and all the benefits we’ll get through this contract are really promising. The health benefits we’ll receive are a hundred times better than anything my job could have offered us, and our new contract provides specific job titles and descriptions, which was important to me.” - **David Burton, Local 338 RWDSU/UFCW Member and Lead Cultivation Tech at Central Processors NY**

“When the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act was passed in 2021, we knew that it was our responsibility to help set the standard for careers in New York’s adult-use industry, just as we have for workers in the medical cannabis field. This first collective bargaining agreement, one of many to come, is the result of over a decade of advocacy in New York’s cannabis space, and we are proud to have negotiated a contract for our members at Central Processors NY with the same high wages, strong benefits, and industry standards as the ones we’ve helped establish for workers

across the State's medical cannabis market. This first contract is historic, and we hope that other adult-use cannabis licensees will follow Central Processors NY's lead in both respecting their workers' right to form a union and investing in their workforce through a strong collective bargaining agreement." – **Joseph Fontano, Secretary-Treasurer of Local 338 RWDSU/UFCW**

"We have tremendous respect for our workers, they do a great job and we are proud to make this investment in our workforce by being the first unionized adult-use cultivation and processing facility in New York. This contract is going to change the lives of our workers, while also setting the standard for the rest of the cultivation and processing facilities in the adult-use industry. If New York's cannabis market is going to succeed, then it is vital that licensees across the industry respect, value and invest in their workforce. I look forward to working with Local 338 RWDSU/UFCW to promote the best interest of CPNY workers, this is the beginning of an important partnership." – **John Vavalo, CEO of Central Processors NY**

"Every worker deserves a union and labor should have a seat at the table as the adult-use cannabis industry takes hold in New York. I commend the Central Processors New York and RWDSU for exercising their right to organize, collectively bargain, and advocate for the rights of this new and burgeoning workforce." – **New York State Senator John W. Mannion**

"Union labor is critical to growing the thriving middle class of New York, and I am very excited that workers at Central Processors have chosen to exercise their right to organize. As this new industry continues to grow, unions should be a key piece to ensure workers have good wages and safe working conditions." – **New York State Senator Rachel May**

"In the burgeoning landscape of New York's adult cannabis program, Central Processors New York leads the charge of organized labor as the first supply-side group to work towards unionizing. Empowering workers to have a voice in this evolving field is crucial as we move forward." - **New York State Assembly Member Al Stirpe**

Central Processors NY, which produces products under the banners High Peaks, Drip, and Generic AF, is the second union shop in New York's adult-use market, joining their fellow members at the licensed dispensary Housing Works Cannabis Co. as members of Local 338 RWDSU/UFCW. Local 338 represents approximately 600 workers across both the medical and adult-use cannabis industries, including workers at all 10 registered medical cannabis operators.



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The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) represents 100,000 members throughout the United States. The RWDSU is affiliated with the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW). Local 338 RWDSU/UCFW proudly represents approximately 13,000 working men and women employed in a variety of different industries across New York State including, food retail, pharmaceutical retail, health care and human services, transportation, agriculture, and cannabis. For more information, please visit our websites at [www.rwdsu.org](http://www.rwdsu.org) or [www.local338.org](http://www.local338.org) Facebook: [/RWDSU.UFCW](https://www.facebook.com/RWDSU.UFCW) or [/Local338](https://www.facebook.com/Local338) Twitter: [@RWDSU](https://twitter.com/RWDSU) or [@Local338](https://twitter.com/Local338)