

# HOSPITALS - DOMINICAN HOSPITAL Dominican Hospital workers petition NLRB for union vote

By DENISE FRANKLIN  
Sentinel staff writer

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SANTA CRUZ — A petition has been filed with the National Labor Relations Board to conduct a union election at Dominican Hospital.

Officials from the International Union of Operating Engineers Local No. 3 collected authorization cards from more than the required 30 percent of the approximately 1,400 non-management hospital workers, according to union spokesman Merton Dushkes.

The petition was filed May 24.

Upon learning of the petition, Sister Julie Hyer, the hospital president and chief executive officer, issued the following statement:

"We have been aware that Local 3 has been campaigning to represent our employees for over a year.

"While we do not feel that union repre-

sentation is in the best interests of our employees, we respect their right to make an informed choice. Our management staff will take an active role in a free-speech campaign prior to any election."

A similar unionization effort is under way by the California Nurses Association, which would like to organize the approximately 400 registered nurses at Dominican in a separate union.

It was not known whether the CNA has collected enough authorization cards yet from nurses to file a petition with the NLRB.

The Local No. 3 effort is to organize most non-management employees, including registered nurses, according to Dushkes. About 19 engineers at the hospital already are unionized.

The next step is for the NLRB to set a hearing during which anyone interested

can present arguments, Dushkes said. Dominican management can't argue against unionization in front of the board, but it can argue against the nature of the union and who should be included.

For example, Dushkes said, the hospital could argue that certain employees it considers supervisors should be excluded from the union because they are management. The union would argue that supervisors are not defined by the hospital, but by the National Labor Relations Act, he explained.

If the CNA files petitions for a separate union for registered nurses, then both union requests would be considered at the same hearing, Dushkes said. Then it would be up to the NLRB to decide whether employees will vote for a union to represent all non-management employees or for two separate unions.