

Willowbrook Workers OK 'Job Action'

By THOMAS RAFTERY

State workers at the Willowbrook Developmental Center in Staten Island authorized a strike, it was announced yesterday, to protest the takeover of portions of the center by a private patient caring organization. A strike date has yet to be set.

Felton King, president of Local 429 of the Civil Service Employees Association, said, "I am bound to follow the will of my membership."

King said workers voted overwhelmingly in favor of the strike, which he preferred to call a "job action" since the Taylor Law forbids state employees to strike.

Favor Walkout

About 1,000 members of the 4,000-member local voted Tuesday night, with 80% in favor of walking off their jobs, to protect their civil service status, tenure and pension rights, King said.

King said he would not call for any action until after the weekend to allow his members to be paid and because weekends are lightly staffed.

The state employees are angered over a court-mandated plan to turn over the care of 625 patients and seven buildings at the 31-building complex to the United Cerebral Palsy Association.

Meanwhile, the takeover date at the seven buildings was moved up from Sept. 23 to Monday, the day the union will most likely order its employees off their jobs, said Elin Howe, acting director at the 384-acre center for the retarded.