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missed four consecutive days because of illness.

"We have a contract that says a doctor's note is not required until the fourth day of sickness," said Ms. Bell, head of the local's public relations committee.

Like Felton King, the local's president, she further contended that many of those docked pay, which could amount to \$40 to \$55 a day, were out for legitimate reasons such as approved vacation days or sick days.

Irita Dennis of Grasmere, a therapy aide at Willowbrook for 10 years, said she had approved vacation days from July 24 to July 26 and yet she was docked three days' pay.

"They took \$150 from my check and I'm not about to lose this money," said Mrs. Dennis, who joined others who sat in the lobby of Building 1 and occasionally clapped and chanted, "Money, money."

Union leadership at Willowbrook presented five combinations for halting an employee sickout last month after King had charged that officially sanctioned understaffing had endangered the welfare of both workers and the 1,100 mentally retarded at Willowbrook.

Absenteeism during the job action hovered at about 20 percent or twice the norm for the summer season, according to administrators.

Shea said administrators would continue to negotiate with King and other union officials until a resolution could be reached.

Shea said any worker who could now produce a doctor's note to justify their absence during the four-day period last month would receive the money in their next check in two weeks.

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Man shot in Willowbrook

An argument over a backgammon game between two employees of the Staten Island Developmental Center erupted into violence last night, leaving one man shot and an onlooker with leg injuries, police reported.

Henry Rodriguez, 35, of 362 Willow Rd. West, Graniteville, was shot shortly after 9 p.m. in Building 9 at the center, located at 2760 Victory Blvd., Willowbrook.

He was listed in fair condition this morning in St. Vincent's Medical Center.

According to police, Rodriguez and a second employee of the center had argued over a backgammon game about an hour before the incident. Shortly after 9 o'clock, police said the second man returned and fired four shots at Rodriguez, the last one hitting him in the right leg.

The assailant then fled with two others, who were not identified, in a car that had been waiting outside.

Another employee, Audrey Skelton, 31, of East Orange, N.J., hurt her right knee after she tripped while trying to flee the shooting.