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## Hilfiger Janitors Back on Job After Abrupt Layoffs

By [JAMES BARRON](#)

A week after they were told that they were being replaced by workers earning far lower wages, nine workers who clean the offices of the Tommy Hilfiger clothing company were hired by a different contractor yesterday and went back to work.

The nine workers, who had been employed by Shepard Industries, a contractor hired by the Hilfiger company, said they were laid off, with no notice, at the end of last week. The workers, who had been earning \$19 an hour, said they were replaced by employees of another company who were paid \$8 an hour.

But their union — Local 32BJ of the [Service Employees International Union](#) — said yesterday that the Hilfiger company had hired yet a third cleaning contractor, DynaServ Industries of North Bergen, N.J. DynaServ's employees are covered by the union's master contract.

The workers said they met with officials from DynaServ and the union at midday yesterday. After filling out employment forms for DynaServ, they returned to work at the Hilfiger office on West 26th Street.

"We're very happy," said one of the workers, Gustavo Aguinaga.

He said that a number of Hilfiger employees had smiled or waved and offered congratulations, and that Tommy Hilfiger himself had greeted them once they were back on the job.

"He came into the hall," Mr. Aguinaga said. "He said, 'Welcome back.'"

The workers' abrupt dismissal and news of their being replaced was described in an About New York column that ran in The New York Times on Wednesday.

A spokesman for the Hilfiger company said that it had an agreement with DynaServ to hire union workers, but that no contract had been signed yet.

Shepard Industries, which said earlier in the week that it had not been paid by the Hilfiger company for six months, said yesterday that it had not heard from the company.