

# 'Temporary' Workers Sue GM, UAW Over Back Pay

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WASHINGTON (AP) — A group of General Motors employees in Ohio is suing the company and the United Auto Workers, alleging that GM has unfairly denied them full pay and benefits and the union has not fought for them.

Twenty-eight employees of GM's Lordstown, Ohio, factory say they have been improperly classified as temporary employees since being hired in October 2006. They were terminated in April 2007 and then brought back six months later. The workers were briefly paid the same wage as permanent employees, but the lawsuit argues they were reclassified as temporary workers in June 2008, a move that cut their pay by more than 40 percent.

A lawyer for the workers, Ken Myers, said they are seeking back pay of between \$3 million and \$4 million. The suit also alleges that the UAW and UAW Local 1112, which represents workers at the plant, refused to press their complaints.

"The company never should've laid them off, and when they brought them back, they should have kept them at the higher pay rate," Myers said. And "the union should have filed grievances for them."

Tom Mock, communications manager for the Lordstown plant, which makes the Chevrolet Cruze small car, declined to comment on the lawsuit.

Ben Strickland, shop chairman for UAW Local 1112, disputed the workers' claims.

"We've definitely done our job," he said. "Nobody was misrepresented."

The complaint, filed in federal court in Cleveland, said there were 22 other employees hired on a temporary basis at the same time who achieved permanent status. The company's actions violated collective bargaining agreements reached between the company and the UAW in 2003 and 2007, the lawsuit said.

If the suit is successful, the company could seek to have the union reimburse it for some or all of the money, Myers said, if it can show that it wasn't notified about the employees' claims in a timely manner.

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