

GANNETT CO. TO LAYOFF STAFF AT 3 NEW JERSEY NEWSPAPERS NEXT MONTH



Gannett Company Inc., the largest US newspaper publisher based on the total daily circulations, revealed that they will reduce the editorial staff at its three newspapers in New Jersey by almost half according to several staffers who preferred to conceal their identities. The reporters named Courier News of Bridgewater, Daily Record of Parsippany and Home News Tribune of East Brunswick to be the three newspapers affected by the layoff plan. Sources added that the cut is slated for February and only 53 positions will remain at the three newspapers. One staff member confirmed that Gannett Co. will provide severance packages to those impacted employees. "The company offered to pay staff the difference between their salary and unemployment insurance, a week for every year of service up to 26 weeks, but no less than four."

In a statement released by Thomas M. Donovan, President and publisher of New Jersey Press Media Solutions, a consortium of Gannett's four northern New Jersey newspapers, he explained that the cuts are attributed to the company's goal of focusing its resources on elevating the quality of newspaper standards particularly on local and breaking news coverage. "We are very committed to serving our customers here and by leveraging the regional reporting capabilities of our New Jersey operations, we will create greater efficiencies to provide the best possible journalism, zeroing in on the topics our readers care most about on the platforms they prefer."

The Virginia-based company has removed over 300 full-time and about 20 part-time positions at its six New Jersey newspapers since 2008. In 2009, Gannett Co. combined the copy editing and page production operations of four New Jersey newspapers into The Asbury Park Press offices in order to cut the company expenses.