

---

## COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS AXES 53 EMPLOYEES

---



Cook County Assessor, Joseph Berrios, removed around 53 workers in response to this year's impending budget cut proposed by County Board President, Toni Preckwinkle. Berrios' office, along with other county offices, is expected to receive a 16% cut from annual operational costs. Preckwinkle is aggressively seeking alternative ways to close a massive budget shortfall of an estimated \$487 million. Aside from debt refinancing, court fee increases and consolidation of departments, Preckwinkle has asked all county offices to slash their operational costs by 16% to help the county deal with the pressing financial crisis. Preckwinkle is expected to eliminate about 418 employees in the offices she controls, which include the assessor's office. Kelley Quinn, a spokeswoman for the Cook County Assessor, said that Berrios was saddened by the layoffs but the move is necessary. "President Preckwinkle asked us to cut 16% from our budget, and that's what we are doing. It was very, very painful to have to do that." Quinn explained the laid off workers are mixture of union and non-union members. "Of the laid-off employees, 48 were members of unions who received 30-day notices, as required under their contract. The other five held jobs that don't have those protections and had to leave Friday." Quinn added that aside from layoffs, other cost-cutting will also be employed at Berrios' office. "In addition to the layoffs, Berrios is leaving 30 jobs vacant, buying fewer office supplies and cutting printing and postage costs through greater use of the Web." As of today, Quinn noted that Berrios is still gauging the full extent of the impact brought about by the cut to his office. "How this is going to impact the public remains to be seen. Could that mean the new tax bills may be late? Yes. Does this mean there could be longer lines at the assessor's office? Yes."

<https://blog.granted.com/>