



CUMBERLAND COUNTY MAY SHUT DOWN NURSING HOME AND LIBRARY

Cumberland County New Jer In some places the current economic downturn has hit harder than others. Apparently, the folks in Cumberland County have been hit really badly. The county expects to file plans with the state for some pretty serious layoffs that could leave some of the most vulnerable people in the county without the services they need. The layoff plans will include getting rid of all of the staff at the Cumberland Manor nursing home, as well as at the Cumberland County Library. The announcement of these potential cuts was made at a public meeting that was held on Tuesday. You may be wondering what will happen to these facilities after the county lays off all of the staff? Well, they are hoping to sell the nursing home and simply close the library. Though the county administrator, Ken Mecouch, was quick to point out that there were no final decisions at this point, and that the county has no potential buyers for the facility. Of course, there is the little mention of what will happen to the residents of those facilities if the county removed the staff without selling. The filing of this plan is not a good sign for these institutions. Given that the county is expected to have a massive deficit that is anticipated next year these plans may actually come to fruition. Since the plans are expected to be submitted separately either one could be rescinded at any time without affecting the other. Since each plan is independent, it means that the county could still shut down the libraries in the county, without leaving its most vulnerable population of senior citizens with nowhere to go and a lack of proper medical care. The plans were submitted to the state in order to comply with state regulations regarding layoffs of civil service workers. Once the plans are submitted to the state, the Civil Service Commission will have 30 days to review the plans and approve them. After the plans have gotten past the state review the county would have to give 45 days of notice to the workers before their jobs could end and the facilities could close. While some other regulations will apply to the closing of a nursing home, but those requirements could be met during the total 75 days of approval before the closings. How many workers will be laid off? Well if the Cumberland Manor closes down it will put 203 full-time workers out of a job. If the library closes then about a dozen of the workers will be left without jobs. While one is clearly a larger job loss than the other the library has to serves a larger segment of the county's population. The sale of the Cumberland Manor nursing home would mean that all of the staff would have to be laid off, since once the facility was sold it could no long be considered a county property. This would change all of the statuses of the staff from civil servants to private employees.

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