

LONG ISLAND TO LAYOFF 400 PEOPLE IN DECEMBER

Nassau County

Long Island, New York

It seems like workers in the state of New York may never be safe in their jobs again. Just weeks after the state governor came to agreement with the civil service union, and gaining the ratification of a new contract with some major concessions, one that had it not been passed would have meant the loss of thousands of jobs. We find out the almost the same exact same thing is happening on the county level in Nassau County, New York. The odds are that unless you live inside the five boroughs you know Nassau County by a different name, Long Island. If the county executives and the union are unable to reach an agreement 400 workers in Long Island will be let go from their jobs 11 days before the Christmas holiday. If the union and the county executives can reach an agreement some, or all of the jobs may be spared. In order to add insult to injury the proposal made by the county executives also what would allow them to demote about 200 other employees in about two weeks. The only way to keep these workers and their jobs would be for the union to agree upon a new contract. That contract would have to include \$75 million in cuts. The deadline for agreement is December 15. At the current moment many of the concessions that would make up the \$75 million have not been explicitly stated. We do know that some of those concessions would result in estimated pay cut to between \$12,000 and \$35,000 for rank and file union employees. Cuts, that many of the workers simply cannot afford to make in the current economy. Of course right now the bill has only been submitted. In order for the bill to be past members of the County legislator will have to prove the bill at their next meeting, which is scheduled for December 5. If the county tries to lay off any of their workers without approval they will be in violation of law and required to pay the wronged employees in some manner. This was recently the case in New Mexico. For those of you who missed our coverage here is a recap, excerpted from the original story, "Karen Montoya, the County Assessor for Bernalillo County, issued the pink slips to the workers with a 30-day notice period. The notice would have made the last day of the workers in question November 30th. While Montoya did also give some general information to Tom Zdunek, the County Manager, about the layoff plan including when the notices would be given out, she failed to mention some important details about the layoffs. She failed to tell the county manager about which specific positions the county, or which specific workers, the county would be letting go. Because of these omissions the County Manager says that the layoffs were never approved by his office." These layoffs are part of a plan to help Nassau County with \$310 million budget deficit that they are expecting in 2012. In addition to the changes to staffing some other radical changes of them proposed in this plan. First on the block is privatizing Long Island bus and county sewer systems. This drastic plan will also require the closure of a total of 8 police stations on Long Island, though residents have been assured that the number of officers on the street will not be diminished. Other departments that are expected to take some serious cuts include social services, recreation, museums, Parks, and the police and Public Works Department.

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