

## TORONTO TO LAYOFF HUNDREDS



Bad news is coming to the city of Toronto, and it is coming in the form of job losses. The administration of Mayor Rob Ford is getting ready to hand out some pink slips to about 1,200 of the employees under his administrative control, right in time for the holidays. Officials representing the city made an announcement on Wednesday that exactly 1,190 people will be out of a job if the city council makes the decision to go ahead with a budget plan that will cut out the 2,338 jobs identified for elimination in the 2012 city budget. If you're wondering how those numbers jive exactly, don't worry. There is not a higher number of job losses, though a number of positions will have to go unfilled in order to make that number work. Roughly 1,148 vacant jobs that the city would normally hire for are being eliminated. These jobs will come from the police force and other municipal agencies. Mike Del Grande, the budget chief for the city says that this is being done in response to the city's financial problems. His exact statement to a local reporter was, "When you have efficiencies, then obviously you need less people for those efficiencies. It is a message also to all the people that work in here — we mean what we say, times are tough." The proposed budget for the city of Toronto will, in addition to the cuts to the city staff this new budget proposal, includes a 2.5% tax hike and a 10-cent fare hike to public transportation programs. We do not have a lot of the specifics about the layoffs, but we do know some things about what is to come. Of the jobs to be cut 666 of those positions are union workers. 152 of the workers will come from the Toronto Public Library employees, and 324 of the employees will come from the public transit systems. The city's Deputy Mayor, Doug Holyday, had this to say about the layoffs to a local reporter, "I know it is probably unheard of for a municipality to get into reducing its workforce and getting to the point of laying people off. It has come to this because over the years the workforce has been built up to an extent that we've got people that we don't really need anymore and we just can't keep paying them." Of course, the city of Toronto tried other plans before they moved right to layoffs. In our [earlier coverage](#) we talked about the city's failed plan for voluntary layoffs. "The City of Toronto tried a voluntary layoff plan this year, which recently ended. The city was hoping that this program would help them to shed 700 positions. If that sounds more than a little pie in the sky to you then you are not alone. The harsh light of reality has come shining in on that number. As the program came to a close the city found that it had not the desired 700 workers lining up to be laid off but instead only 230 employees who were willing to give up their civil service jobs and take part in voluntary layoff program."

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