

NEW HAMPSHIRE TO CUT UNEMPLOYMENT STAFF

New Hampshire



It seems like lately whenever there is good news; there is also bad news to come along with it on the job market front. So, let's begin with the good news, which is that the state of New Hampshire is one of the lowest in the nation. While that is not the only news it is good for the people who live there. The bad news is that people who work in the unemployment offices in the state are not as needed as workers in other states and that means that some of them are going to be out of a job. More than 50 workers, enough to qualify as a mass layoff action, in the New Hampshire state Employment Security Office have been given notice that they are going to lose their jobs because the state does not have the money to pay them to continue processing a small number of claims. Since the claims are down the state cannot afford to pay for all of the workers. To that end the department will be cut down by 53 full-time and 19 part-time workers. Tara Reardon, the Commissioner of the New Hampshire state Employment Security Office had the following to say about the layoffs to a reporter for [WMUR](#) the following about the job cuts, "We have some incredible, hard-working employees here, and it's very tough to let them go. When unemployment is high, that's when we're hiring and bringing people on, and unfortunately, when unemployment goes down and the rate of claims go down -- we literally have one-third the claims we had 18 months ago -- that means we have the same amount of staff. We can't afford to pay all of the staff anymore." This has happened because the amount of federal funding for unemployment services is determined directly by the number of claims that people in the state file. When the number of filed claims goes down, so does the amount of funding given, and those workers who were paid with the enhanced funding need to be let go. Diana Lacey, president of the State Employees Association, told the same reporter that, "The commissioner said the cuts are being distributed across the department, and none of the 12 offices across the state will close. We're going to be having workshops at two of their offices next week to really talk with them after they've had a few days to process about what their rights are after a layoff, what their benefits are." So at this time the workers from the unemployment office have the no idea exactly what their unemployment benefits will be, which is kind of ironic. She also went on to say that, "If this was the right climate in New Hampshire to have a conversation about supplementing these programs with state funds, these positions could have been saved." The layoffs will not take immediate effect. Most of the layoffs will occur sometime during the middle of the month of February, in order to give employees time to prepare for the loss of income.

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