

## DETROIT TO LAYOFF LAW ENFORCEMENT



Jobs in essential community services, such as those in law enforcement, used to be the safest place to be when the layoffs came around. In the current economic crisis however things have changed and no single profession is, pardon the pun, bullet proof. This time the bad news is coming to the officers in the city of Detroit, where cuts to the city's budget for the police department mean that soon jobs will be lost. There were some rumors swirling around the department that the layoff notices had already been handed out to 108 members of the force, but the official word is that the notices will not be given out until near the end of the month. On January 23<sup>rd</sup> the officers will find out who is in and who is out of a job. While these layoffs are undoubtedly bad news, both for the city and for the police department on the whole, the city is hoping to be able to lay off less than the 108 officers who are currently expected to be out of a job. If the city can obtain extra funding from federal grants then they will be able to keep at least some of the officers. The money would come from adjustments to two existing federal grants, and currently the alterations are pending approval. If the approval goes through this will allow the city police department to keep between 75 and 100 officers on the payroll. One of the conditions of the adjustment is being able to demonstrate a fiscal hardship. In order to make a suitable demonstration the city has to issue the layoff notices to the officers. Whether or not those notices stand will depend on the grant. The officers who are going to be laid off were those that were hired by the city because of monies given to them as part of a federal grant. These federal grant hiring's represent a mix of current officers on the street and some officers in training who are still in the police academy. The police chief is working as hard as he can to get the grants changed in order to keep these officers and the jobs that they represent. In addition to the layoffs notices that are to be give the city is also making some other changes to the police department in order to save some much-needed cash. One of the most notable changes will be the closing of the police department precincts to the public during certain hours. After 4 p.m. and before 8 a.m. the public will not be allowed inside the building. They are also looking to get rid of a number of positions which include: law enforcement information network operator, report clerk, security officer, timekeeper, vehicle and building maintenance officers and desk clerk. The goal is not to cut jobs, but to get more officers out of the offices and onto the streets. The city is also consolidating all of the precinct and district investigative operations to one central location as a cost savings measure.

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