

ROCKLAND COUNTY TO LAYOFF WORKERS

County of Rockland

New York

Until now the workers of Rockland County, New York, have been in a fairly safe position. After all the county has not seen layoffs in several decades, even with the turbulent times we have been going through in recent years their jobs have remained steady. The first wave of these unfortunate civil servants will be out of a job near the end of the month, Jan 28th to be exact. In a rather odd situation the exact number of job losses is unknown. What should have been a simple process has instead been complicated by two different forces. Lets start at the beginning, when 48 workers were put on notice that they may find themselves out of a job near the end of January. Between then and now came the first complication, the retirement of just over two dozen county employees. Under the current union contract sonority matters in the layoff process and the removal of these longer standing employees may change who is expected to be out of a job in the near future. The second complication is the set of laws regarding the treatment of civil service workers in the state of New York. In order to appease these laws there was a layoff cushion. This means that 48 workers were notified that they may be out of a job, when only 29 positions are actually going to be eliminated. This set of issues have put the decisions makers in the Rockland County Department of Personnel left with a lot of questions about who exactly is supposed to be out of a job, and who should stay. Add to that the practice of bumping and things get even more complicated. For those of you who are not familiar with the practice bumping is goes something like this. A civil service worker is given a layoff notice. In order to keep their job they have the option to push out a worker with less seniority and effectively take their job from them. While this does allow the worker who has been with the county to keep a job it also means that you will be putting someone else out of work in order to keep your own job. As you can imagine many of the workers who may be laid off are struggling with the idea of putting another person out of a job in order to keep their own in this long-term economic downturn. While many people do not want to lose their own jobs, they do not want to hurt a person that they may have worked beside for years in order to keep it. Workers from the Rockland County Department of Personnel are offering the soon to be displaced workers a series of workshops designed to help them find new work as soon as possible. The workshops cover topics such as how to write a resume, searching for a job online and applying for other county jobs. The first of these three seminars was held on Wednesday, but two others will follow when workers have a better idea of who will actually be in need of the services.

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