

## MIAMI LAYOFFS TO AFFECT POLICE SERVICES



In the past we have discussed what can happen to a community when cuts are made to the law enforcement budget and officers are taken off of the streets. You may recall some of our [earlier coverage](#) that chronicled what happened to communities in New Jersey: "In Newark, between the months of January 2009 and November 2010 the average number of violations marked at "other", which includes things like noise complaints and curfew violations, were given about 5,100 times a month. Since the layoffs that number has been about 2,600 a month. That is slightly more than half of the number of violations as before the layoffs. While this one may seem innocuous, numbers in other cities show a different tale. In Camden a noticeable hit came in the form of traffic violations. The number of tickets issued for moving violations, such as speeding and running stoplights, dropped from 3,820 before the layoffs to 1,850 after the layoffs. In Paterson the numbers tell an even more sinister tale. The number of arrests for shoplifting or having a personal use amount of drugs dropped from a little more than 700 each month to about 545 each month after the layoffs." Now, as the axe has come to the county of Miami-Dade, and 118 police officers are being cut from the chopping block, and the city is wondering what exactly will happen to the city's services? After all these cuts represent about five percent of the total number of officers who are employed by the city. Non the less, the Police Department Director Jim Loftus, held a press conference over the weekend in order to help the residents of the town know what they can expect from the police department in the future. He said the following: "This is a big hit for us. It hurts in every possible way, but we will find a way to get through this for the betterment of the people we serve. That's our focus. The ultimate commitment is to the thing I call the road. When people call, they want someone to come." During the course of the press event he laid out the priorities of the city, which will include keeping the response times for 911 calls the same, keeping the combat violent crime units in tact, allowing for the same number of patrol cars to be out on the road, keeping coverage for the city about the same. On the whole the city police department will do the same by taking officers off of other projects, in order to put them into the patrol cars and onto the streets. Some projects that will be cut back include resources that currently help to deal with property crimes, economic crimes and other community service projects. Though, he did make some comment that these cuts may create problems in the long term, including it being harder to train more officers and managers in the future. So, on the whole the current news is good, but residents should be aware of further cuts to services.