

## TERREBONNE PARISH TO LAYOFF UNKNOWN NUMBER



The odds are that, unless you happen to live in the state of Louisiana, that you have probably not heard of Terrebonne Parish. For those of you not familiar with the idea, places like Terrebonne Parish are not the literally areas surrounding a church, they are like the counties that you would find in many other states in the nation. Bad news is coming to the workers of the Terrebonne Sheriff's Office. Some of their workers are soon to be out of a job, thanks to a budget gone haywire.

It is not that this is completely news to the workers of the parish. The layoffs, which will impact an unknown number of workers in the Terrebonne Sheriff's Office, are truly the last resort of the parish. The workers would have been out of a job much sooner if the Parish had not been borrowing in order to make its payroll. Last year about \$2 million was borrowed in order to keep the workers on the payroll.

There is a proposed tax increase that would help the department to save about one million of the dollars that they will need. While this will not allow them to keep on all of the workers, it would save some of the jobs. At the current moment the details of the proposed layoffs are all sketchy and there is no official word as to what kind of positions would be cut, how many, or when the cuts will go into effect. Official word on the cuts is scarce, most likely because the parish officials are attempting to figure out all of this themselves. Knowing that cuts need to be made, and knowing which cuts are the right ones to make are two entirely different things. Few places is that more true than in law enforcement. As we have discussed in previous posts research has shown that cutting law enforcement professionals can have a serious impact on the effectiveness of that force.

For those of you who missed it, here is [an excerpt](#):

"An interesting post-layoff trend has been emerging in several different police departments in the Garden State recently. The departments in question have been cited by experts who have noticed a trend in fewer arrests for minor crimes.

While an optimist may say that maybe fewer people are simply committing small crimes, analysts are looking at it as a policing issue that crops up after the forces has been reduced to cope with budget problems. These experts think that the trend in letting more small crimes slide will lead to a larger problem with more serious crimes....

The analysis looked at data from municipal courts. This data showed that when police officers are let go the department shifts in order to focus their new lower level of resources on serious crimes, instead of on the smaller ones. This means a drop in enforcement for minor crimes and traffic violations.

At first glance you have to wonder what other choices these cities have. After all, after a police layoff you have fewer bodies on the street. While some people have concerns about these smaller crimes leading to larger ones in the future, you cannot ignore the major crimes occurring currently in order to ticket everyone who blows a stop sign."