

DOROTHEA DIX PSYCHIATRIC CENTER TO LAYOFF 45

Dorothea Dix Psychiatric Center

Maine Department of Health and Human Services

The odds are that you probably don't know much about the Dorothea Dix Psychiatric Center, unless that is you have had a reason to visit the facility. The facility in Maine is, described as: "...located in Bangor, Maine is one of two State psychiatric hospitals under the Maine State Department of Health and Human Services. DDPC is a 100 bed psychiatric hospital serving two-thirds of the State's geographic area that provides services for people with severe mental illness. The Hospital is governed under laws established by the Maine Legislature to provide care and treatment for inpatients, both voluntary and court committed inpatients, as well as outpatients." The mental health facility is looking to cut back on its budget and they are getting ready to get rid of about 91 positions. Some of these cuts will be made through attrition, but the rest of them will come from layoffs. About 45 workers who are currently employed by the facility will be let go in order to make room in the budget. The company spent the last year trying to get as many of the positions that need to be released from this year's budget by not filling open positions when people retire. Most of the jobs are expected to come from direct care staff, since they make up the majority of the staff at the facility. The layoffs are the direct result of a \$2.5 million cut in funding from the state, which is also looking to shore up its budget. These cuts will undoubtedly have an impact on the level of clinical care. This is not the only facility that is having to cut back on their workers in order to make ends meet. For those of you who missed out on our [earlier coverage](#) of the cuts in California here is an excerpt that will get you up to speed: "Today the need for balance between those things is playing out in the city of Sacramento, California where the California Department of Mental Health is getting ready to cut jobs despite the safety recommendations by another state agency. The agency issuing the safety recommendations, the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA) issued what amounts to a demand to the California Department of Mental Health that mandated an increase in the number of staffers in state mental health facilities. This increase was put into place because of recent violent attacks against workers in these facilities. Instead of hiring more workers, which would have been good news for state health workers the California Department of Mental Health instead issued layoff notices to their workers. Hundreds of workers have been given notice that they may be short of a job in the near future. Groups such as Safety Now, which is dedicated to the well being of California mental health workers, have already come out against the move. They have petitioned the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health, asking them to put a stop to the layoffs planned by the California Department of Mental Health, citing the logic that having fewer workers in the facilities would make working conditions less safe for employees."

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