

TRANSFORM SOLAR TO LAYOFF 250 WORKERS



Are you familiar with a company called Transform Solar? If you have not then have no fear, you are not alone. Here is a look at how the company describes itself, "Our company started on solid footing through a cooperative effort between two long-time leaders in energy and semiconductor manufacturing: **Origin Energy** and **Micron Technology**. They brought together their respective expertise in green energy and semiconductor manufacturing to contribute stability and strength to a visionary company with a leading new technology." Now that we know who are talking about let's talk about the closures that the company is instating and the jobs that will be lost in the process. The company is getting ready to shut down both a production plant that they have in Nampa and some offices that the company have in Boise. These closures will result in the loss of more than 200 jobs as the facilities begin to shut. The layoffs, which will impact about 250 workers in total, will be more than enough to qualify as a mass layoff action. For those of you who are not familiar with the concept of a mass layoff action here is a look at how the federal government defines the term, "Monthly mass layoff numbers are from establishments which have at least 50 initial claims for unemployment insurance (UI) filed against them during a 5-week period. Extended mass layoff numbers (issued quarterly) are from a subset of such establishments—where private sector nonfarm employers indicate that 50 or more workers were separated from their jobs for at least 31 days." Under the terms of a mass layoff action the company must give workers extra notification time before cutting them loose into the job market. This time is designed to help the workers to find new work before they have to file for unemployment and disrupt the local economy with their decreased purchasing power. The company is going to implementing their layoffs in stages. The company has not outlined those stages in detail, but we do know that the layoffs will begin in June of this year. The process of closing down the facilities is expected to take about three months, but the company expects that it may run a bit long if it needs to. Interestingly enough the production at the plant was close down on Tuesday and the company has already begun to look for a seller for the building. The company is hoping to help at least some of the displaced workers positions with one of the parent companies of Transform Solar before they are put out of a job completely. They are also working with the local Department of Labor to help workers find new positions as quickly as possible, which is important in the current economy. For those workers who cannot find new positions the company is offering a severance package. The workers who cannot find other positions with the parent company will be given nine weeks of severance pay, along with a continuation of their health benefits, while they look to find a new job.

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