
Layoffs a 'living hell' for families facing threat

By BRUCE ALPERT
Advance Albany Bureau

ALBANY — Daniel Dunn, an associate psychologist at the South Beach Psychiatric Center, says he and co-workers have been working "in a living hell" the last few weeks.

Dunn is among the thousands of state employees awaiting word on whether they are to lose their jobs, be transferred to other facilities or be demoted as the state's reduces its work force.

Their job status awaits the last-minute negotiations between Gov Mario M. Cuomo and legislative leaders. Of the 7,587 scheduled to be laid off on April 7, it now appears only about 2,000 will lose their jobs. Many of the 71 layoffs scheduled at South Beach

are also expected to averted.

But for some, the scars of the last few weeks are likely to remain for many years.

Twelve times in recent weeks, Dunn said, he has had appointments with South Beach's personnel office cancelled. When he finally got to see a personnel officer, Dunn, 31, of Brooklyn, was given "30 seconds" to decide whether to transfer to Creedmore Psychiatric Center (Queens) or Bronx Psychiatric Center.

"It's impossible to describe the feelings I and other workers had being called down for appointment after appointment and being told to come back because 'we don't know what your situation will be,' " Dunn said.

Dunn notes that he and his wife are concerned that they might not be able to meet the payments on their Brooklyn home and new car. "Everything seemed set for us and now we wonder about my possibly losing my job," he said.

But the associate psychologist said he has even more concerns for his patients, all of whom are residents of Staten Island's South Shore. He conceded that some services were substantially reduced in recent weeks as employees either awaited meetings with personnel officers about their job status or began looking elsewhere for work.

"There is no other place for them," he said. "When they ar-

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