

SIDC to lose 1,400 jobs in next two years

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The workforce at Staten Island Developmental Center (SIDC) will be reduced by almost 80 percent over the next two years, with a loss of more than 1,400 jobs, the state Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) disclosed last night.

The job reduction will be accomplished through layoffs beginning May 22 and attrition,

Louis Ganim, an OMRDD spokesman, told the Advance. Officials for the Civil Service Employees Association and the Public Employees Federation, which represent the SIDC workers, were briefed on the layoffs yesterday and today, Ganim said.

The layoffs are necessary because of the institution's dwindling client population. Once housing more than 6,000 mentally retarded residents, SIDC

now has 696 clients, and that number is expected to drop to 250 by April 1986. The institution is scheduled to close by the end of 1987, and the remaining residents will be transferred to the proposed Richmond Complex on the SIDC campus, which will house 148 clients.

Ganim noted that although the client census has been dropping dramatically at SIDC — there were more than 1,000 clients in early 1984 — there have been no

layoffs for two years. "The layoffs have been lagging behind the census reduction," he said.

While the announcement of layoffs did not come as a surprise, union officials said they were shocked to learn that 80 percent of the workforce would be gone in two years.

"Frankly, I didn't think the layoffs would be that large," said Tyrone Daniels, president of the SIDC local of the Civil Service Employees Association,

which represents the non-professional staff. "It's a devastating thing. People who have been here 25, 30 years are going to lose their jobs."

He noted that 40 percent of his membership are the sole supporters of their families. About 75 percent of his membership lives on Staten Island, he added.

The SIDC has 1,832 workers, according to Ganim, who said 699 employee positions will be eliminated in the 1985-86 fiscal

year and 734 positions will be eliminated in 1986-87. The remaining 399 employees eventually will be assigned to jobs in the Richmond Complex.

Ganim added that some of the laid-off employees may obtain jobs at other state facilities for the mentally retarded and mentally ill in the metropolitan area. "We are trying to find as many jobs as we-possible can,"

(See LAYOFFS, Page A 6)