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Jackson Health System cutting 1,115 jobs

South Florida Business Journal by Brian Bandell, Senior Reporter

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Jackson Health System notified Miami-Dade County officials on Tuesday that it plans to lay off 1,115 workers, or about 10 percent of its employees.

The public health system, which operates Florida's largest hospital, hopes to save \$69 million a year by removing those employees. Of those positions, 920 are currently filled and 195 have been vacated since December, JHS President and CEO [Carlos A. Migoya](#) wrote in a letter to county officials. However, JHS will create 350 part-time positions to cover some critical missions.

"These decisions are based upon department-by-department reviews designed to properly align our workforce to our patient volumes and business plan," Migoya wrote. "At all times, of course, we will have the proper staffing levels to provide excellent medical care and customer service for our patients."

No service lines at JHS will close, he added.

"We are appalled with today's announcement of massive layoffs at Jackson," said Jackson nurse [Martha Baker](#), president of Service Employees International Union Local 991. "This is what you get when you hire a billionaire banker and then cut him loose to take a chainsaw to health care in Miami-Dade County. It's unbelievable that he wouldn't consult the nurses, doctors and health care professionals – who have sacrificed out of their pockets to keep Jackson afloat – about how his plan to 'right size' the system might harm patient care. We have no idea how Mr. Migoya thinks patient care can be maintained with such drastic cuts to front-line caregivers."

Only weeks ago, JHS [announced a deal with its health care workers union](#) to save \$150 million in salary and benefits over the next three years. It cut 187 employees last year.

Apparently, those savings were not enough. JHS lost \$95.1 million for the fiscal year ended Sept. 30, 2010 as it funded charity and uncompensated care along with inmate health in Miami-Dade County. Its preliminary results for the following fiscal year indicate a moderately reduced loss. Now, it appears the Florida Legislature is going to slash its Medicaid funding.

All the while, JHS has been experiencing a decline in its patient volumes.

Migoya said union employees at JHS will be notified of layoffs by April 6 and be given 21 days' notice.

"We are confident that Jackson will emerge as a stronger and more nimble organization that is better positioned to reach its strategic goals," Migoya wrote in his letter. "There can be no doubt that Jackson is changing for the better and will soon be the kind of next-generation health care system that our community deserves."

Brian Bandell covers banking, finance, health care and education. [Get the latest banking industry news here.](#)

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