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**Steward Health Care System to cut jobs at three of its community hospitals**



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By Robert Weisman, Globe Staff

Managers at three community hospitals owned by Steward Health Care System have notified representatives of Local 1199 of the Service Employees International Union that they plan to eliminate as many as 35 service and technical jobs, union leaders said Wednesday.

Over the past week, they said, Steward officials alerted them of its intention to cut 15 union jobs at Norwood Hospital, 12 at Carney Hospital in Dorchester, and seven or eight at Morton Hospital in Taunton. Because the union is proposing alternatives to job cuts and other union members have “bumping rights,” Local 1199 officials said they expect fewer than 35 members will lose their positions. Other workers who are not Local 1199 members also could be affected by the cuts.

In an internal letter to colleagues, Norwood Hospital president Emily Holliman warned of “challenging times in our industry,” citing federal cuts to Medicare reimbursements along with the Massachusetts health care payment overhaul, which seeks to reduce costs. Steward spokesman Chris Murphy declined to discuss the number of job cuts planned at the hospitals.

“Right now, [union] members at Steward facilities are actively engaged in discussions regarding the proposed layoffs and are focused on the goals of saving jobs where possible and ensuring quality care,” said union vice president Enid Eckstein.

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