

Wayfair announces more layoffs. The impact on its Pittsfield call center is unclear

- By Tony Dobrowolski. The Berkshire Eagle
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Wayfair's call center in Pittsfield. The company announced a second round of layoffs Friday, but its effect on the company's local employees was unclear Friday.
FILE PHOTO

PITTSFIELD — Wayfair has announced its second round of layoffs since August, but how the latest action may affect the online retailer's Berkshire County employees was unclear Friday.

The Boston Globe reported that some of the 1,750 jobs Wayfair intends to eliminate are customer service positions. Wayfair spokesman Jake Johnston did not respond to an email from The Eagle seeking comment on how the layoffs might affect employees at the firm's customer call center in Pittsfield, which [opened](#) in October 2019.

The 1,750 jobs to be cut represent 10 percent of Boston-based Wayfair's workforce. Wayfair had cut 870 jobs company-wide in August.

[LOCAL NEWS](#)

Wayfair cuts 5 percent of jobs; status of Pittsfield employees unclear

Wayfair did not comment on the status of its Pittsfield workforce after that earlier job action [took place](#).

On Friday, Heather Boulger, executive director of the MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board in Pittsfield, said none of those positions were in Pittsfield. Boulger said Wayfair had not notified her regarding the second group of layoffs.

A former employee of the Pittsfield call center posted on Facebook Friday that Wayfair was closing its local facility. In a telephone interview, Mark Bissaillon said he had received that information from other company employees. He said he is in a legal dispute with Wayfair, alleging age discrimination.

David Carver, who owns the Clock Tower Business Center where Wayfair's customer call office is located, said Friday he had not heard anything from the company about the call center closing.

The layoffs and other spending reductions will save Wayfair \$1.4 billion on an annual basis in an effort to return the company to profitability, the company said. The majority of Wayfair's second round of laid-off employees, 1,200 of them, are in corporate positions, The Globe reported. The company is planning to have fewer layers of management, and also trim employees in its recruiting, supply chain and customer service positions. Cost-cutting is also expected in advertising, insurance, software licensing, and janitorial services.

Wayfair's stock price jumped more than 20 percent Friday after the layoffs were announced, according to CNBC.

Wayfair cites early bids for jobs as it zeroes in on Pittsfield site

In November, Wayfair announced plans for a [specialized job training initiative](#) with Berkshire Community College in which participants would be provided with free

classes at BCC to learn the skills needed for a service consultant career with the company.

Participants were to receive payment for on-the-job training and placement as service consultants at Wayfair's Pittsfield facility after completing the program. The application period for that program closed shortly before Christmas after the deadline had been extended by four days.

Pittsfield native Niraj Shah, Wayfair's co-founder and chief executive, admitted to over-hiring in an email to all employees Friday obtained by The Globe.

"We thrive when we are scrappy and dedicated to customer outcomes," Shah wrote in the email. "Unfortunately, along the way, we over complicated things, lost sight of some of our fundamentals and simply grew too big."

Wayfair's sales decreased by 13 percent to \$9.1 billion in the first nine months of 2022, compared to a year earlier. Analysts expect fourth quarter sales dropped by about 8 percent, according to The Globe.

Shah said sales trends in December improved from November. "Business momentum continues to strengthen," he wrote.

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