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Greil Psychiatric Hospital Closes Doors

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Friday was the last day for workers at Greil Psychiatric Hospital in Montgomery.

Patients have already been moved out leaving more than 100 employees to move on.

Some have jobs but more than half of them don't.

It's a sad day for employees at Greil Hospital. Many will miss their work friends, some don't know where their next job will be and all are concerned for the patients they leave behind.

For many of the employees, leaving Greil behind is like leaving a part of their life behind. Janice Rich was a night shift nurse here.

"Love everybody it was great working here and I'm sad because 19 years is a long time," said Rich.

Teresa Thomas has worked here 26 years.

"People you've known all these years and are used to seeing everyday people gradually pulled apart when they're not working together and make the time to see each other it will very hard for me," said Thomas.

Janet Holmes has worked at Greil ever since Hurricane Katrina forced her to leave New Orleans.

"It's really disheartening that we've been here for this period of time and then we find out this facility is closing," said Holmes.

Holmes is still looking for work and so is Ava Dirickson.

"I've never been unemployed before and I'm a little leary just jumping on something I want to find a good position and this was a wonderful job," said Dirickson.

As concerned as they are for their own futures their even more worried about their former patients.

"I truly think at least this was more of a structured environment and had a system in place and now they're going out into the community and this is all new," said Dirickson.

Mental Health Commissioner Jim Reddoch says the future of this facility is uncertain. The state leased it from the Greil Foundation for next to nothing. He says if they do not find another health use for it, it will probably be turned back over to the foundation.

Most of The former patients will be getting services through community programs rather than traditional hospitals.