

State to help employees when mental hospital in Decatur closes

Rachel Keith | Posted: Wednesday, January 14, 2015 11:09 pm

DECATUR, Ala. (WAAY) -The Alabama Department of Mental Health said they have a plan in place to transfer or find other jobs for 149 employees when the only state-run mental hospital in the Tennessee Valley closes in late June.



North Alabama Regional Hospital

Where's the story?



4 Points Mentioned

Associate Commissioner Beverly Bell-Shambley said **North Alabama Regional Hospital** employees, that are willing to relocate, should be able to fill vacancies at the state's three remaining mental facilities in **Tuscaloosa**.

Bell-Shambley said they will also work with other state agencies to find employment for employees not willing to relocate. She said some employees have already transferred to Decatur from mental health facilities that have previously closed.

Bell-Shambley feels confident that they will be able to find employment options for most employees.

There are currently around 40 patients at the facility and those patients will be sent to community facilities across the region.

According to Bell-Shambley, the state has been transitioning patients into community-based mental health centers since October 2014. The shift has recently led to a decline in admissions at **North Alabama Regional Hospital** from its capacity of 74 patients to around 40 or 50, which has led to the facility's closure.

North Alabama Regional Hospital has been in Decatur since 1977. The state has already closed two other state mental health facilities in 2012.