

Community Guidelines For Loss of Major Employer

1. **Provide Enhanced Opportunities for Dialogue** among community leaders and citizens about impacts, opportunities, and alternative futures.
2. **Quantify the Nature and Scope of Impacts, Needs, and Opportunities** of affected local workers and businesses in the community and region.
3. **Establish Community-wide Response Structure** to organize task forces for addressing specific needs and opportunities, investigate response strategies, and request external expertise and resources as needed.
4. **Beef-Up Counseling and Transition Assistance.** Many affected workers and families will want counseling and information to address family needs and transition to available job opportunities in the region. Some will want job training to learn new skills for new jobs.
5. **Market the Community's Available Facilities and Opportunities.** Vacated facilities become potential assets for recruiting new companies to the community or for accommodating growth of existing local firms.
6. **Provide "Economic Gardening" Assistance for Remaining Firms in the Affected Local Supply and Marketing Clusters.** Firms that formerly supplied products and services for the major employer will need to find new customers, research ways to serve new markets, and perhaps develop new products.
7. **Enhance Community Support for Entrepreneurial Training, Technical Assistance, and Mentoring Networks.** About 10 percent of the adult population engages in entrepreneurial activities. Displaced workers with unique skills and professional expertise often use the opportunity to start new businesses.
8. **Explore Opportunities for New Basic Sectors.** Businesses that bring in new external dollars to the community add to the community's capacity for growth. Leaders may want to examine new basic industry sectors, entrepreneurial projects and ventures with potential to enhance and diversify the local economic base.

To increase average local income and wealth, jobs with above average pay for the community must be added. Leaders and citizens should ask what investments are critical for providing the income, employment, and wealth generation outcomes desired for the community 20 to 30 years into the future.

Rural Communities that lack cohesive leadership and organized responses after the loss of a major employer are less likely to sustain the economic base and population.

Source: Community Vitality Center, 2006