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Walgreens on State Street on Nov. 13, 2019. Walgreens is preparing to lay off 5% of its Chicago-based corporate workforce, the company confirmed Thursday. (Brian Cassella/Chicago Tribune)

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Walgreens is preparing to lay off 5% of its Chicago-based corporate workforce, the company confirmed Thursday.

The cuts amount to 267 layoffs, which will narrow down the staff at Walgreens' corporate headquarters in Deerfield.

None of the layoffs will impact retail employees at Walgreens stores. Workers at call centers and micro fulfillment centers — where prescription medications are shipped directly to pharmacies, sometimes with the aid of robots — will not be part of this round of layoffs either.

Walgreens currently has about 238,000 employees worldwide.

The layoffs are one of the pharmacy retail giant's first strategic moves under new CEO Tim Wentworth, who stepped into his role Oct. 23. Wentworth was most recently CEO of Evernorth, the health services arm of insurance company Cigna.

Walgreens spokesperson Fraser Engerman told the Chicago Tribune the layoffs were intended to "streamline (Walgreens') operations and focus on our critical

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priorities.”



“We are grateful for the many contributions by the team members who will be leaving our company and we are committed to supporting them as much as possible during this transition,” Engerman said in a statement.

Engerman declined to comment on when employees will receive word that they have been laid off.

This week’s announcement marks one of many rounds of layoffs at Walgreens in recent months, some corporate and some at the factory level, as the beleaguered corporation races to recuperate from heavy financial burdens in fiscal year 2022.

Walgreens Boots Alliance posted a \$6.4 billion loss in the first nine months of fiscal year 2022, due largely to \$5.4 billion in charges related to opioid settlements. WBA operates several companies including Duane Reade.

Walgreens laid off 10% of corporate employees in Chicago and Deerfield in May. The 504 former employees represented about 1% of Walgreens’ overall workforce at the time. The company also laid off 393 employees at its plant in Edwardsville in August, with plans to shut down the southern Illinois factory altogether.

Walgreens’ previous CEO, Rosalind “Roz” Brewer, stepped down Aug. 31.

Some Walgreens retail employees walked off the job in November, joining nonunion colleagues from CVS pharmacies to protest working conditions.

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Walgreens, a publicly traded company, has more than 8,700 drugstores in 50 states.

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