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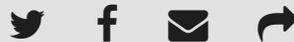
TOURISM & CRUISES

## Despite Carnival denials, workers claim jobs are being sent offshore

By Chabeli Herrera

[cherrera@miamiherald.com](mailto:cherrera@miamiherald.com)

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While workers continue to protest and assert that cruise company Carnival Corp. is outsourcing 200 IT jobs to India, the cruise company says there are no plans to replace American employees with foreign workers. ALAN DIAZ  
AP



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Just after regular work hours Wednesday evening, about a dozen Carnival Corp. workers in the cruise company's IT department gathered in front of Carnival's Doral headquarters bearing haphazardly drawn posters.

"Stop Carnival from firing us!! 4 cheap labor," one sign read, highlighting the key argument in a [battle brewing between the cruise company and 200 workers](#), who last week were told they were being transferred to new positions with a French firm called Capgemini.

The semantics are key. Carnival calls it "transferring"; the worker's lawyer, Sara Blackwell, calls it "firing." Some of the affected employees are calling it "replacing" — as in, their positions are being replaced by foreigners with visas to work in the U.S. Multiple companies have employed the practice, including [Disney](#), [EmblemHealth](#) and [Teva](#) (P) Ho

Carnival Corp. spokesman Roger Frizzell said the cruise company is transitioning the positions to “help the company keep pace with the evolving technology environment.” Sixty of the 200 affected workers are based in South Florida. The others are based around the nation and work for multiple Carnival brands, including Carnival Cruise Line, Holland America Line and Princess Cruises.

The workers moving to Capgemini, which has a considerable U.S. presence in 15 states, account for less than 1 percent of Carnival’s 120,000 employees.

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The transitioned workers will be guaranteed six months of employment at Capgemini, Frizzell said.

According to documents obtained by the Miami Herald, Capgemini’s offer letter does not mention a six-month guarantee but rather says employment will be at an “at-will basis, which means that either you or Capgemini may terminate your employment at any time, with or without cause.”

Affected employees have until Dec. 19 to sign their offer letters or find other employment. But most who accept are expected to continue being employed at Capgemini after the six months are over, Frizzell said. Currently, the French firm has about 400 open positions in North America, he said.

But Blackwell, a Sarasota-based employment attorney, says the process is similar to what she has seen in other American companies.

“They are not being transferred,” she said. “They are being fired and hired.”

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A WARN notice issued in California, where Princess Cruises is based, states 61 workers were notified on Dec. 5 of permanent layoffs. (The company did not file a WARN notice in Florida, where it was not required.)

Carnival asserts that the changes are with the company's best interests in mind and not a cost-cutting measure.

"We regularly look to experts in other fields to provide expertise and talent outside our primary area of expertise. Capgemini is widely recognized as a leader in information technology," Frizzell said. "Taking steps like this, even though they are difficult decisions, can help save jobs of others here at Carnival longer term — and ultimately create new jobs here — if we make good, sound business decisions to help the company remain successful."

But Matthew Culver, an affected employee in Carnival's IT department, said he doesn't believe Carnival is transferring the positions to improve the department. On a recent annual review, he received four stars out of five and got the maximum pro-rated bonus available to him, he said.

"It's not due to lack of qualifications or doing my job that they are moving us out," said Culver, who is not going to sign the Capgemini offer.

Culver and other employees have said they suspect their jobs are being outsourced to India, where Capgemini has nearly 50 offices, the most of any of the more than 40 countries it operates in.

Frizzell also denied claims that the company is outsourcing any of the displaced jobs to India, and said there are no plans to hire workers based outside the U.S.

"It is important to us that we always treat our employees with dignity and respect, and our goal here is to provide a transition and smooth landing for them with this

process,” Frizzell said. “We intend to stay close to the process to ensure people are treated fairly and appropriately, even after they leave our payroll.”

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