

BUSINESS

L.A. County supervisors seek aid for hundreds of workers affected by Phillips 66 refinery closure



The Phillip 66 Los Angeles refinery produces gasoline, diesel and aviation fuels. (Carolyn Cole / Los Angeles Times)

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With a major oil refinery in Wilmington and Carson scheduled to close next year, Los Angeles County officials are looking to shore up resources for hundreds of workers who will be left without jobs.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors unanimously [passed a motion](#) Tuesday asking county staff to work with local partners such as the city of Los Angeles and the [South Bay Workforce Investment Board](#) to develop a plan to provide hiring fairs, training and other job placement resources for affected workers.

Oil giant Phillips 66 announced in October that the century-old complex, which sprawls across 650 acres and produces about 8% of the state's gasoline, [would cease operations](#) late next year. Its closure will affect some 600 employees and 300 contract workers who keep its operations running.

Supervisor Janice Hahn said at the meeting that more than half of the affected workforce is Latino and that their ranks include skilled workers such as operators, welders, engineers and safety compliance experts who would bring “years of specialized training and certifications” to other jobs. She said they should receive support to help them make the transition to similar jobs in renewable energy, infrastructure development and advanced manufacturing.

“This is a time the county needs to lean in and support them as they face this abrupt transition,” Hahn said.

Supervisors Hahn and Holly Mitchell introduced the motion, which also asks various departments to identify career pathways for “hard to hire” skilled trade positions within the county.

“We have the responsibility to ensure that displaced workers can smoothly transition ... not just by partnering with the private sector but also by opening up doors here at the county,” Mitchell said at the meeting.

The county's director of economic opportunity has 60 days to report back to the board with an action plan.

The announcement of the pending closure came amid community concerns of harmful emissions and high pollution levels. Mark Lashier, chair and chief executive

of Phillips 66, said in an October news release that the long-term sustainability of the operation was “uncertain and affected by market dynamics.”

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“We understand this decision has an impact on our employees, contractors and the broader community,” Lashier said. “We will work to help and support them through this transition.”

The closure will leave the state with eight major refineries: three in the Bay Area and five in Southern California, operated by Chevron, Valero and others.



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