

# *Colombian Workers Begin Hunger Strike in Bogota Due to Layoffs*

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Bogota, July 2 (RHC)-- More than 300 Colombian workers from Bogota's municipality began a hunger strike on Friday after it was announced they will be laid off from their jobs.

"The Department of Housing and Urban Development has prevented District workers from working. They have illegally retained documents, and they threaten trade union leaders and harmless servers through videos and photographs," the workers' union stated on Twitter.

In total, 316 workers will be affected this week by this measure promoted by the new mayor of the Colombian capital, centrist Enrique Penalosa. These workers were employed under former leftist mayor Gustavo Petro, who ended his term in December 2015.

According to the city hall, close to 4,000 people will be laid off, since their contracts are temporary and the administration has decided not to renew them. This decision has sparked outrage in the workers' union in the city. Workers say although they were temporarily hired, their positions are essential in the development of housing and environmental projects, no matter which mayor takes office.

Recently, 25 people at the state telecommunications company were laid off as part of the new mayor's austerity agenda. The municipality said it would define how many positions will remain open, but would also begin an open competition to fill them permanently.

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