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**Peggy Fletcher Stack** has been producing stories for The Salt Lake Tribune's award-winning Faith section for nearly two decades. Writing about contemporary faith, rituals, and spirituality as well as religion's conflicts and cohesion has always been Stack's passion. Follow her at [facebook.com/peggy.fletcherstack](https://facebook.com/peggy.fletcherstack), [Twitter @religiongal](https://twitter.com/religiongal)

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# Mormon-owned DI cuts workers' hours, avoids Obamacare rule

Published on May 29, 2013 08:01AM

As the nation anticipates further implementation in January 2014 of the Affordable Care Act, which requires companies with 50 or more employees to provide insurance for their full-time employees, LDS Church-owned Deseret Industries has cut its workers' hours to fewer than 30.

In doing so, DI, as it is known, will not have to provide health coverage for these employees.

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In recent years, the DI has become one of the premier places in Utah where refugees and others can find work.

Its one-year training program allows people fleeing from any number of war-torn countries to learn the skills, including English, to find better employment. The workers are given an hourly wage, starting at \$7.25 and increasing incrementally depending on quickness at sorting clothes.

But they do not get health insurance, according to LDS Church spokeswoman Ruth Todd.

Todd explained the cuts as a way "to serve as many people as possible."

Reducing the trainees' hours, she said, "has allowed for a dramatic increase in participants."

Other large employers — public and private — have been adjusting workers' hours in advance of the Obamacare coverage requirement.

Granite School District, for instance, will be trimming the hours for hundreds of part-time workers. Granite officials note the district has never provided health benefits for part-time hourly workers, and they deemed the price tag too steep to begin doing so.

Judi Hilman, executive director of Utah Health Policy Project, said that refugees, like all citizens, are eligible for premium tax subsidies and Medicaid, depending on their income.

But, Hilman added, "we wish large employers would not do this."

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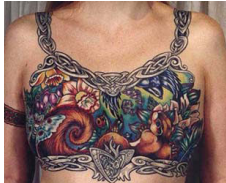
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Peggy Fletcher Stack

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Loved this: http://www.mormonnewsroom.org/article/mormonism-news-getting-it-right-30-may-2013

To summarize, the people whose hours were cut slightly were non-benefited "associates" in the first place. The hours weren't cut to avoid Obamacare. They weren't getting or even eligible in the first place because they were part of a temporary work training program. Another fact that is missing from this story is that DI has HIRED up to 60 more full time benefited positions in order to handle the increase in program participants.

This story reminded me why I cancelled my subscription to the trib. Thanks for the reminder.

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clarasanta

You have to suspect that the doctors and hospitals won't let ObamaCare work properly, they have a pretty strong union that just hates healthy Americans. (medical) business would go down with a healthy America, ask the AMA, they know pot has plenty of healthy attributes but lo and hold on, they can't find any. No science there. I just stumbled onto pot from using it for fun in the sixties. The war (of choice) then and the war on pot is lost (reality). The pot helped me through my personal PTSD that the medical profession at the time was still suffering from the Reefer Madness. Nowadays they just fill the remaining PTSDers with pharmaceutical at the rate of 22 suicides a effin day. We thank you for your effin service, now get lost.

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