

# FSU's Autism Institute moves to Killearn location



**Byron Dobson**, Democrat senior writer 7:06 p.m. EDT July 5, 2016

*All 1,500 state employees in Northwood Centre have been relocated as of June 24*



*(Photo: Glenn Beil, Democrat files)*

Florida State University's Autism Institute has completed its move from the Northwood Centre to new offices in Killearn.

The institute, which operates under FSU's College of Medicine, offers several research and outreach programs serving more than 3,000 people, from toddlers to adults. The former mall location housed the FSU Center for Autism and Related Disabilities, the First Words Project and other entities.

The move to 2312 Killearn Center Blvd. puts all components of the institute under one location, rather than having them in three separate locations in Northwood, said David Thayer, assistant director for facilities planning and space management at FSU.

"We were able to find a place to lease in the Edgewater facility," Thayer said. The move was completed June 30th and a final walk-through was done at Northwood on July 1, he said.

The institute was forced to find a new location after all state agencies with locations at Northwood were required to leave by the end of June, when the Legislature decided against continuing its leases at Northwood following reports of unhealthy conditions.

The move left FSU scrambling to find a location that was large enough to accommodate staff. Another important factor was finding a location near Interstate 10 since many of its clients come from throughout the region.

Thayer said in March that no FSU employees had reported health issues after working at Northwood.

Maggie Mickler, communications director for the Department of Management Services, said Tuesday there were approximately 1,500 state employees in Northwood Centre and all have been relocated as of June 24.

"As always, the well-being of state employees remains DMS's top priority, and we will continue to work alongside our sister agencies to ensure the safety and security of our public servants," Mickler said.

Thayer said the institute's new location is a combined 20,000 square feet compared to the 10,800 square feet at Northwood, which means there's an opportunity to grow.

The annual lease rate for 2016-2017 is about \$268,000, compared to last year's payment of \$214,000 in Northwood.

The institute employs between 40 and 60 people at the new location.

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