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ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — A company spokesman says Darden Restaurants, Inc. is laying off a "handful" of workers at its Orlando headquarters as the restaurant company anticipates spinning off its Red Lobster chain.

Darden spokesman Rich Jeffers said Thursday the positions are at all levels of the company. He refused to say how many employees are involved.

Jeffers says the company needed to make the changes as it prepares to spin off Red Lobster.

Red Lobster has 705 restaurants in the U.S. and Canada and is the biggest full service dining seafood restaurant operator in North America.

Company officials say Red Lobster has been unable to capture high-income customers as much as its other brands have, and a separation will give Red Lobster the opportunity to focus more on its core audience.

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