

FREDS INC  
Form 8-K  
April 11, 2019

**UNITED STATES**

**SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**

**Washington, D.C. 20549**

**FORM 8-K**

**CURRENT REPORT**

Pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

Date of Report (Date of earliest event reported): April 11, 2019 (April 5, 2019)

**FRED'S, INC.**

(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in Charter)

Commission  
File  
Number  
001-14565

Tennessee  
(State or other Jurisdiction

62-0634010  
(IRS Employer

of Incorporation)

Identification No.)

4300 New Getwell Road, Memphis, Tennessee 38118

(Address of principal executive offices)

(901) 365-8880

Registrant's telephone number, including area code

Not Applicable

(Former name or former address, if changed since last report)

Check the appropriate box below if the Form 8-K filing is intended to simultaneously satisfy the filing obligation of the registrant under any of the following provisions:

Written communications pursuant to Rule 425 under the Securities Act (17 CFR 230.425)

Soliciting material pursuant to Rule 14a-12 under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14a-12)

Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14d-2(b))

Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 13e-4(c) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.13e-4(c))

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is an emerging growth company as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act of 1933 (§230.405 of this chapter) or Rule 12b-2 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (§240.12b-2 of this chapter).

If an emerging growth company, indicate by check mark if the registrant has elected not to use the extended transition period for complying with any new or revised financing accounting standards provided pursuant to Section 13(a) of the Exchange Act.

**Item 2.05. Costs Associated with Exit or Disposal Activities.**

On April 5, 2019, the Board of Directors (the “Board”) of Fred’s, Inc. (the “Company”) approved a plan to close 159 underperforming stores (the “Plan”). The decision to close these stores is the result of a comprehensive evaluation of the Company’s store portfolio, which examined historical and recent store performance and the timing of lease expirations, among other factors. The Company intends to close the stores by the end of May 2019.

The Company is currently unable in good faith to make a determination of an estimate of the amount or range of amounts expected to be incurred in connection with the Plan, both with respect to each major type of cost associated therewith and with respect to the total cost, or an estimate of the amount or range of amounts that will result in future cash expenditures. The Company will file an amendment to this Current Report on Form 8-K after it determines such estimates or ranges of estimates.

The timing of the store closures is subject to change until finalized. The actual timing may vary materially based on various factors. See “Forward Looking Statements” below.

**Item 2.06. Material Impairments.**

The information set forth in Item 2.05 is incorporated herein by reference. On April 5, 2019, the Company concluded that a material charge for impairment is required in connection with the Plan. The Company is currently unable in good faith to make a determination of an estimate of the amount or range of amounts of impairment charge to be incurred in connection with the Plan, or an estimate of the amount or range of amounts of the impairment charge that will result in future cash expenditures. The Company will file an amendment to this Current Report on Form 8-K after it determines such estimates or ranges of estimates.

**Item 7.01 Regulation FD Disclosure.**

On April 11, 2019, the Company issued a press release announcing the Plan and the retention of PJ Solomon in connection with the evaluation of strategic alternatives as more fully described under Item 8.01 below. A copy of that press release is furnished as Exhibit 99.1 to this Current Report on Form 8-K.

**Item 8.01. Other Events.**

On April 10, 2019, the Company retained PJ Solomon to assist the Board in undertaking a comprehensive review of the full range of strategic alternatives available to the Company, which may include an evaluation of the Company's current operating plan, as well as potential alternatives to maximize value.

The Company has not set a timetable for completion of the evaluation process. As the Company indicated in its press release, no decision has been made to pursue any specific strategic transaction or any other strategic alternative, and there can be no assurance that the Board's exploration of strategic alternatives will result in the completion of any transaction or other alternative. The Company does not intend to discuss or disclose developments with respect to this process unless and until the Board has approved a specific transaction, or otherwise deems further disclosure is appropriate or if disclosure is required by applicable law.

## Forward Looking Statements

Comments in this Current Report on Form 8-K that are not historical facts are forward-looking statements within the meaning of the safe harbor provisions of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 that involve risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from those projected in the forward-looking statements. A reader can identify forward-looking statements because they are not limited to historical facts or they use such words as “outlook,” “guidance,” “may,” “should,” “could,” “believe,” “anticipate,” “project,” “plan,” “expect,” “estimate,” “forecast,” “goal,” “intend,” “committed,” “continue,” or “will likely result” and similar expressions that concern the Company’s strategy, plans, intentions or beliefs about future occurrences or results. Forward-looking statements involve estimates, expectations, projections, goals, forecasts, assumptions, risks and uncertainties. Forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, statements about future financial and operating results, the Company’s plans, objectives, business outlook, priorities, expectations and intentions, expectations for sales growth, comparable sales, earnings and performance, shareholder value, capital expenditures, cash flows, demand for products, share repurchases, strategic initiatives, including those relating to store closures and acquisitions and dispositions by the Company and the expected impact of such transactions on our strategic and operational plans and financial results, and any statement of an assumption underlying any of the foregoing and other statements that are not historical facts. Although we believe that the expectations, opinions, projections and comments reflected in these forward-looking statements are reasonable, such statements involve risks and uncertainties and we can give no assurance that such statements will prove to be correct. A wide variety of potential risks, uncertainties and other factors could materially affect our ability to achieve the results either expressed or implied by these forward-looking statements including, but not limited to risks and uncertainties associated with: (i) the competitive nature of the industries in which we operate; (ii) our turnaround plan and the implementation of our strategic initiatives, and their impact on our sales, costs and operations; (iii) our store closures and the related sales of inventory and real estate issues; (iv) our divestitures; (v) utilizing our existing and new stores and the extent of our pharmacy department presence in new and existing stores; (vi) conditions affecting the retail sector as a whole; (vii) our reliance on a single supplier of pharmaceutical products; (viii) our pharmaceutical drug pricing; (ix) reimbursement rates and the terms of our agreements with pharmacy benefit management companies; (x) consolidation in the healthcare industry; (xi) our private brands; (xii) the seasonality of our business and the impact of adverse weather conditions; (xiii) operational, supply chain and distribution difficulties; (xiv) merchandise supply and pricing; (xv) consumer demand and product mix; (xvi) delayed openings and operating new stores and distribution facilities; (xvii) our employees; (xviii) risks relating to payment processing; (xix) our computer systems, and the processes supported by our information technology infrastructure; (xx) our ability to protect the personal information of our customers and employees; (xxi) cyber-attacks; (xxii) changes in governmental regulations; (xxiii) the outcome of legal proceedings, including claims of product liability; (xxiv) insurance costs; (xxv) tax assessments and unclaimed property audits; (xxvi) current economic conditions; (xxvii) our indebtedness and our ability to satisfy our debt obligations; (xxviii) the terms of our existing and future indebtedness, including the covenants set forth in the documents governing such indebtedness; (xxix) any acquisitions we may pursue and the ability to effectively integrate businesses that we acquire; (xxx) our ability to maintain effective internal controls over financial reporting; (xxxi) our largest stockholder holding a significant percentage of our outstanding equity; (xxxii) our ability to pay dividends and/or repurchase shares of our Class A voting common stock; (xxxiii) our ability to attract and retain talented executives; (xxxiv) any strategic alternatives that we decide to pursue, if any; and (xxxv) the factors listed under “Risk Factors” in the Company’s most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and any subsequent quarterly filings on Form 10-Q filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Forward-looking statements speak only as of the date made. The Company undertakes no obligation to release revisions to these forward-looking statements to reflect events or circumstances after the date hereof or to reflect the occurrence of unforeseen events, except as required to be reported under the rules and regulations of the Securities and

Exchange Commission.

**Item 9.01. Financial Statements and Exhibits.**

(d) Exhibits.

99.1 Press Release of Fred's, Inc. dated April 11, 2019.

**SIGNATURES**

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned hereunto duly authorized.

**FRED'S INC.**

Date: April 11, 2019 By: /s/ Joseph Anto  
Name: Joseph Anto  
Title: Chief Executive Officer

**EXHIBIT INDEX**

**Exhibit Number Description**

99.1            Press Release of Fred's, Inc. dated April 11, 2019.