



SHUTDOWN FAQ

The federal government has entered into a partial shutdown – key agencies remain unfunded due to the inaction of the Trump Administration and Senate Majority Leader McConnell.

During a government shutdown, you can expect many essential functions of the government to continue - like our nation's defense, law enforcement, and mail delivery. Though these essential functions will continue, we know that the livelihoods of many families in our district are at stake and over 800,000 federal employees are furloughed with pay.

This manufactured crisis is putting undue burden on workers and many of the most vulnerable members of our community. House Democrats and I are working day and night to reach a solution and end this shutdown.

In the meantime, our office has created this guide to ensure that you have access to the information that you need during this shutdown.

Please know that our office is here to serve and support you during this uncertain time. We can be reached at 202-225-5111.

- **General**
- **Mail Services**
- **Food Assistance Programs**
- **Small Business**
- **Immigration Services**
- **Travel**
- **Housing and Urban Development**
- **Healthcare and Social Services**
- **Veterans Affairs**
- **Taxes and IRS**



GENERAL

Which federal departments are affected by the Trump Shutdown?

There are nine federal departments affected by the Trump Shutdown: Homeland Security, Treasury, Agriculture, Interior, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, Commerce, Transportation, and State.

There are a handful of smaller impacted agencies as well, including: Environmental Protection Agency, the Small Business Administration, and NASA.

Six federal departments are already fully funded for 2019 and are not affected by the Trump Shutdown: Defense, Veterans Affairs, Health and Human Services, Education, Labor, and Energy.

How many federal employees have to work without pay during the Trump Shutdown?

Approximately 420,000 federal employees, deemed “essential,” are being required to work without pay during the Trump Shutdown. In our district, this includes TSA agents, Coast Guard members, air traffic controllers, federal contractors and others. None of these workers will receive a paycheck until the Trump shutdown ends and the government is reopened. An additional 400,000 plus workers are furloughed.

Will federal employees receive pay for furloughed days?

Yes, on January 16 a bill was signed that guarantees backpay to furloughed federal workers not receiving paychecks during the Trump shutdown. While that may provide some level of peace of mind to impacted families it doesn't alleviate the day to day burden of making hard choices about food, childcare, medication or any other necessity.



Will federal contract employees receive pay for furloughed days?

This is an issue that I have been working tirelessly to address. I am an original cosponsor of H.R. 339 the Low Wage Federal Contractor Employee Back Pay Act of 2019, which will ensure that Federal Contractor Employees receive Back Pay once the government re-opens. Additionally, I introduced the first bi-cameral proposal H.R. 678 the Low-Wage Federal Employee Contractor Employee Act which would ensure that low-wage contract employees receive backpay and leave benefits lost over the shutdown.

MAIL SERVICES

Will my mail delivery continue?

Yes. The U.S. Postal Service is self-funded, and 500,000 employees will continue to deliver mail.

FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

My family and I rely on food assistance programs like SNAP. Are those programs still funded?

- In the short term, the following programs will continue operations, but the situation may change depending on the length of the shutdown:
 - The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) will continue operations and eligible households will still receive monthly benefits through February.
 - February benefits will be issued early between January 17th and 20th, ensuring that SNAP participants and those newly applying have access to food assistance in January and February.
 - These early allocated funds are intended for February use. The USDA will not retract these funds.



- For more information you can call the Boston-based FoodSource Hotline at 1-800-645-8333 or visit www.GettingSNAP.org
- The Child Nutrition (CN) Programs, including School Lunch, School Breakfast, Child and Adult Care Feeding, Summer Food Service and Special Milk will continue operations at least until February.
- WIC (Women Children and Infants) benefits will continue at least until February.
 - Massachusetts WIC is open for all eligible families to Receive program benefits and services.
 - WIC food/formula benefits should continue to be redeemed at all authorized retailers.
 - If you are a WIC participant you should keep your appointment and continue your participation in the program.

SMALL BUSINESS

What is the impact of the Trump Shutdown on small businesses?

- A shutdown halts federal loans to small businesses. During a shutdown, the Small Business Administration stops approving applications for small businesses to obtain loans and guarantees. Businesses seeking SBA loans should contact their lender immediately.
- A short-term government shutdown should not affect loans from the Office of Disaster Assistance.

IMMIGRATION SERVICES



If I have an interview or appointment with U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS), should I attend? Can I still apply for a visa?

- Yes. Although the Department of Homeland Security funding lapsed, USCIS is fee-funded, so it remains open and continues to process applications. You should attend interviews and appointments as scheduled. Please call 1-800-375-5283 for additional information.

TRAVEL

Can I Travel from Boston Logan or other nearby airports?

- Yes, but air travel and security are impacted by the shutdown so travelers should arrive early for any departures and prepare for delays in clearing customs.
- Air traffic controllers are working without pay, and the Federal Aviation Administration is asking furloughed aviation safety inspectors to resume their work.
- All aviation security workers – air traffic controllers, animal and plant inspectors, aviation safety experts, Customs and Border Patrol officials, and Transportation Security Agency (TSA) officers – are working without pay.

I am planning to travel and need a passport. What should I expect?

- The U.S. Passport Agency remains open during the shutdown and continues to issue passports. However, depending on where you live, the State Department could curtail issuing passports where those passport services are offered in buildings run by another agency that is shut down.
- Although State Department operations may be closed, you should confirm your appointment since the shutdown might impact the facility housing a local passport agency.



- If you have a scheduled appointment at a U.S. Department of State passport agency or center, please plan on keeping your appointment.
- If you need to cancel your appointment, you may do so by visiting the [Online Passport Appointment System](#) or by calling 1-877-487-2778.

HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

I am in the middle of buying a home, will this process be impacted?

- Unfortunately, the Department of Housing and Urban Development is included in the partial government shutdown, and you should contact your lender immediately.
- The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) urged mortgagees and lenders to be sensitive to approved borrowers, which includes requests for late fee waivers and the suspension of credit reporting on affected borrowers.
- FHA may have staff reductions during the shutdown; as a result, there may be a delay processing FHA-insured loans. The length of the shutdown will affect the severity of any delays.
- HUD has furloughed 95% of employees and will have a limited number of employees to answer emergency questions during a shutdown and will not be able to answer case specific questions.
- The HUD/ FHA Information Resources Center may be reached at (800) CALL-FHA (1-800-225-5342) or answers@hud.gov.
- If you call or email field offices or headquarters' staff, you may hear a voicemail or receive a return email indicating that the federal government is closed.
- All HUD regional, field offices, and headquarters will be closed. There will be exceptions for a limited range of activities.

I am facing foreclosure on an FHA-backed loan. Is that process halted?



- No. Most loss mitigation for homeowners facing foreclosure (including FHA loan modifications, FHA-HAMP, etc.) will continue. You should contact your lender, who will make the decision about foreclosures.
- For a variety of housing questions, the HUD/FHA Resource Center: (800) CALL-FHA (225-5342), and the HUD/FHA National Servicing Center: (877) 622-8525 will be available.

HEALTHCARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES

I am on Medicare. Will I still be able to see my doctor?

- Yes, existing Medicare patients can still see their health care providers, and those providers will continue to submit bills and receive payment for their services.

Will I receive my Social Security payments?

- Yes. The Social Security Administration will continue to process and mail checks. Congress already funded the agency for fiscal year 2019.
- Individuals should check Social Security [Online Services](#) for updates.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Will Veterans and military hospitals continue to operate?

- Yes, VA hospitals will remain open.
- Similarly, the Military Health System (MHS) will continue to operate, as will the private sector under TRICARE. Patients should contact their hospitals or clinics to confirm appointments. There may be delays in scheduling new appointments.

I am a veteran and/or military retiree. Will I receive my pension?



- Most likely, yes. Congress fully funded the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2019.

I am a disabled veteran. Will I receive my benefits on time?

- Most likely, yes. Congress fully funded the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2019.

I receive Veterans Affairs (VA) life insurance payments. Can I expect to receive my VA life insurance payments on time?

- Most likely, yes. Congress fully funded the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2019.

I am a veteran student who receives benefits under the GI Bill or the Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP). Will I continue to receive payments on time?

- Most likely, yes. Congress fully funded the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2019.

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TAXES and IRS

It is tax filing season, can I get taxpayer assistance from the IRS personnel during the shutdown?

- Unfortunately, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is affected by this partial government shutdown as 90% of IRS staff has been furloughed. As early as last week, the White House has said IRS employees will be working without pay to ensure that there is as little interruption as possible as we head in to tax filing season.
- An updated plan is in the works, but in the interim taxpayers may call 1-800-829-1040 for general information.
- All tax filing deadlines still apply.