

## **Federal Government Shutdown: Frequently Asked Questions**

Funding for the federal government expired on September 30. I am working to keep critical services up and running for families in our community while lowering health care costs. Sadly, Republicans would rather shut down the government and rip health care away from working families than work to find consensus.

This is a tough time for federal workers, their families, and our entire community. I am committed to negotiating a bipartisan compromise that reopens the government and meets the needs of the American people. My office has put together the following resources on the Republican Shutdown and will be working around the clock to ensure that all my constituents have the information and support you need to get through this shutdown. You can also contact my Charlotte office at (704) 344-9950 or my DC office at (202) 225-1510.

If you would like to share your story, please submit your story [here](#).

### **Why does the government shut down?**

The government shuts down when Congress is unable to pass appropriations bills that fund the operations of federal agencies and programs. These 12 appropriations bills are designed to fund the government until the conclusion of each fiscal year, which ends on September 30. In the absence of routine appropriations bills, Congress may pass temporary measures, known as a continuing resolution (CR). The federal government was operating under a CR that expired on September 30, 2025. In the absence of approved appropriations bills or a CR, the government faces a shutdown due to a lack of authorized funding.

### **Will I continue to receive my Social Security and SSI checks?**

Recipients will continue to receive their Social Security and SSI checks. The Social Security Administration (SSA) will continue providing limited services like issuing Social Security cards and holding appointments for benefit applications. However, SSA will stop some activities like benefit verifications and processing overpayments and the public will likely experience increased wait times for customer service.

### **Will Medicare and Medicaid benefits be affected?**

Medicare, Medicaid and disability insurance will be largely unaffected by a shutdown lasting less than three months. Current beneficiaries will continue to receive their benefits.

### **What is the impact on veterans' services?**

All Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities and clinics will remain fully operational. The VA will continue to process veterans' benefits.

### **Will military and federal retiree benefits be suspended?**

Military and federal retirees will continue to receive their retirement benefits. Processing new applications or other requested changes will be delayed.

### **Which federal employees keep working during a government shutdown?**

When the government shuts down, federal agencies are required to classify their employees whose salaries have lapsed as either "excepted" or "not excepted." The employees classified as "excepted" work without pay during the shutdown. The employees classified as "not excepted" are put on unpaid furlough. Donald Trump has threatened to needlessly fire thousands of federal workers during a shutdown, as he has been trying to do all year.

### **I am a federal employee. Will I still be paid?**

Under a government shutdown, all non-essential federal employees are placed on unpaid leave, also known as a furlough. However, essential employees who perform emergency work involving the safety of human life, the protection of property, or other exempted work must continue to report to their job. Each federal agency will determine which employees will be furloughed and which must continue to report to work. Furloughs are expected to impact the services that agencies provide to the public. Neither essential nor furloughed employees are authorized to receive compensation during a lapse in government funding. The Government Employee Fair Treatment Act of 2019, 31 U.S.C. § 1341 (GEFTA) statutorily requires retro-active pay for furloughed and essential employees following the end of a lapse in government funding. The exact timeframe for retro-active payment will depend on the length of the lapse in government funding and start date of the enacted continuing resolution or appropriations bill.

**Additional Resources for Federal Employees:**

- Find Your Union [here](#)
- Partnership For Public Service has compiled [Government Shutdown Resources](#)

**What is the impact on U.S. military personnel and federal law enforcement?**

All active-duty and Guard and Reservists on active-duty orders are excepted and therefore are required to work. On-base non-acute health care may cease, but off-base care provided through Tricare is not affected. On-base childcare is open on a case-by-case basis. Federal law enforcement was also required to work. Both military personnel and federal law enforcement will not be paid until after the shutdown is over.

**Will my mail still arrive?**

Yes. The U.S. Postal Service is not affected by a shutdown.

**Will commercial air travel be affected?**

Air traffic controllers, Transportation Security Administration (TSA) officers, and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents will remain on the job. However, like all federal employees, they will not be paid until the shutdown is over, so please be patient with any delays.

**What about international travel?**

All services at international embassies and consulates will continue during a lapse of appropriations. If you are abroad and need help, you can contact the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

**Will my passport renewal still be processed?**

The State Department will continue to process passport applications and visa requests as long as funding and the collection of fees allow. However, delayed processing times are expected.

**What is the impact on small businesses?**

The Small Business Administration (SBA) will stop processing new business loans, such as through the 7(a) and 504 programs. However, SBA's Disaster Loan Program will continue regular operations.

**What is the impact on federal housing loans?**

The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) will stop insuring some new mortgages and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) will stop processing some new loans. The Department of Agriculture (USDA) will also stop new loan and loan guarantee activity. The VA will continue to guarantee home loans.

**Will my student loans continue to be disbursed?**

The Department of Education will continue to disburse student aid such as Pell Grants and Federal Direct Student loans, and student loan borrowers will still be required to make payments on their outstanding student debt. Free Applications for Student Aid (FAFSA), Pell Grant, and Federal Direct Student Loans, and servicing of federal student loans could continue for a “very limited time” under a shutdown. There are also additional considerations with the Administration cutting the Department of Education workforce. While we don’t yet know exactly how this will impact specific programs that the Department of Education operates, we can expect delays.

**What is the impact on disaster relief efforts?**

FEMA staff will still respond to emergencies. In prior shutdowns, long-term projects were delayed due to a lack of funding in the Disaster Relief Fund.

**What is the impact on food safety activities?**

Some Food and Drug Administration (FDA) food safety activities — such as routine inspections of facilities — will be delayed.

**I rely on food programs like SNAP and WIC. Will I keep getting my payments?**

Funding for WIC will run out of remaining funding quickly and may be unable to provide food for children and parents in need. Further, the Trump Administration has taken unprecedented action to impede WIC disbursements during this shutdown, endangering the well-being of mothers and children. SNAP recipients should expect to receive their monthly allotment, and retailers will continue to accept SNAP benefits. SNAP applications and the ability for employees at the U.S. Department of Agriculture to send out new benefits could be affected by a shutdown. If the shutdown lasts more than 30 days, there could be bigger impacts on the program.

**I have an issue with a federal agency. Can I still open a case?**

Due to the lapse in funding, many agencies have furloughed workers. Please contact my Charlotte office at (704) 344-9950 or my DC office at (202) 225-1510, or visit our [Constituent Services Page](#) and we can assist you with this matter.

**I already have a case open with your office. Should I do anything during the shutdown?**

My office is continuing to submit inquiries to federal agencies, including requesting updates on constituents’ behalf and opening new cases.

**I’m coming to DC, will my tours still take place?**

Unfortunately, tour guides and visitor centers of DC’s government buildings are considered non-essential and have been closed. This means that all tours of the U.S. Capitol, White House, and FBI Building have been canceled during the shutdown. The Supreme Court and Bureau of Engraving and Printing will be open for tours; however, these tours book up far in advance and may not be available for last-minute scheduling.

**Will I still be able to visit National Parks and monuments or the Smithsonian?**

Open-air parks and monuments in Washington, D.C. will remain open. However, services that require National Park Service staff including trash removal and operating campgrounds, concessions and visitor centers may be limited. Smithsonian museums, research centers and the National Zoo will use prior-year funds to remain open to the public during the federal government shutdown at least through Monday, October 6, 2025. Updates will be posted as needed on the [Smithsonian’s website](#).

Have more questions? Please contact my Charlotte office at (704) 344-9950 or my DC office at (202) 225-1510.