



OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO

To: GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN WORKING GROUP
From: DIANE MILLER
Date: 10/4/2013
Re: GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN CONCERNS

- The U.S. federal government officially closed for the first time in 17 years at 12:01 a.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 1 after Congress failed to pass a continuing resolution (CR) of the federal budget to fund the government for fiscal year 2014.
- There won't be much of immediate direct effect on UT, since research money is already committed but processing of reimbursements and payments might be slow.
- "Essential" government employees are still at work. Federal agencies are operating with a skeleton crew of essential staff. Programs that have already been funded, either through mandatory funding or prepaid contracts will continue, as will those that are fee for service such as passport and visa applications.
- Student loans and Pell grants will be minimally affected. Student loan servicers will continue to operate because they are paid through contracts that were funded last year. The processing of paperwork will be suspended, but automatic and online processing will continue. The Department of Education has released a Federal Student Aid Processing and Customer Service Guidance for the shutdown.
- But, there is no indication of how long a government shutdown might last. So something to note is that the Rockets are scheduled to play Navy Saturday, Oct. 19. We are planning for the game in the Glass Bowl, but in the event that there are changes, we will communicate through our website and normal media outlets.
- Treasury Secretary Jack Lew announced two weeks ago that the U.S. will hit its borrowing limit no later than Oct. 17, which means that Congress also will have to pass legislation raising the debt ceiling or else default on the U.S. government's obligations. This could extend and intensify Congress' current battle.

Some notes on areas of concern to UT, staff or students:

Health and Human Services (HHS): The agency is furloughing 40,512 workers – 52 percent of its staff – according to the shutdown plan. Activities that don't require annual appropriations and which involve

the "safety of human life and protection of properties" are top priority. First in line for furloughs: the Administration for Children and Families, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the Administration for Community Living, among others.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) will continue caring for clinical center patients and retain enough staff to keep NIH facilities and infrastructure safe. However, it won't admit most new patients or process grant applications and awards.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will maintain its 24-hour operations center and continue activities supported by mandatory funding, including AIDS and vaccination programs. Activities to be suspended: the flu shot program, certain outbreak detection monitoring and support to states for infectious disease surveillance.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will continue user fee-funded activities and maintain enough workers to handle high-risk recalls and other critical public health issues. Gone: routine establishment inspections, monitoring imports and some enforcement activities.

TRAVEL: Federal air traffic controllers would remain on the job and airport screeners would keep funneling passengers through security checkpoints. Federal inspectors would continue enforcing safety rules.

The State Department would continue processing foreign applications for visas and U.S. applications for passports, since fees are collected to finance those services. Embassies and consulates overseas would continue to provide services to American citizens.

Keep the government closure and federal employee travel restrictions in mind for any upcoming conferences or meetings that were to include federal staff or federal sites.

BENEFIT PAYMENTS: Social Security and Medicare benefits would keep coming, but there could be delays in processing new disability applications. Unemployment benefits would still go out.

NASA/SCIENCE: NASA will continue to keep workers at Mission Control in Houston and elsewhere to support the International Space Station, where two Americans and four others are deployed. (UT does have employees working at NASA that this affects.)

The National Weather Service would keep forecasting weather and issuing warnings and the National Hurricane Center would continue to track storms. The scientific work of the U.S. Geological Survey would be halted.

VETERANS SERVICES: Most services offered through the Department of Veterans Affairs will continue because lawmakers approve money one year in advance for the VA's health programs. Veterans would still be able to visit hospitals for inpatient care, get mental health counseling at vet centers or get prescriptions filled at VA health clinics. Operators would still staff the crisis hotline and claims workers would still process payments to cover disability and pension benefits. But those veterans appealing the denial of disability benefits to the Board of Veterans Appeals will have to wait longer for a decision because the board would not issue any decisions during a shutdown.

Additional information:

- The Department of Education's [2013 contingency plan](#). Specifically for financial aid administrators, the Department also has released [Federal Student Aid Processing and Customer Service Guidance](#).
- The National Science Foundation posted the [NSF Plan for Operations During a Funding Hiatus](#).
- The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued [contingency staffing and shutdown guidance](#).
- The Department of Agriculture (USDA) has posted a [Lapse in Funding](#) website.
- The Department of Energy posted an [updated website](#) of questions and answers related to a shutdown.
- The Department of Defense also has posted a [website](#) outlining its activities under a shutdown.
- NASA has posted on its [budget website](#) NASA's shutdown plan and related FAQs.
- The [Grants.gov](#) website has posted that they "will remain in an operational status, but with reduced federal support staff presence, should a lapse in appropriations occur. In addition, we anticipate that the Grants.gov Contact Center will remain available, and provide assistance to callers."
- The Office of Management and Budget has now almost fully updated its [compiled list](#) of federal agency contingency plans.