

SHUTDOWN 2013

What government closure means for you.

(Minor headache for some, major hassle for others)

By Garth Kant: World Net Daily Washington news editor. Previously, he spent five years writing, copy-editing and producing at "CNN Headline News," three years writing, copy-editing and training writers at MSNBC, and also served several local TV newsrooms as producer, executive producer and assistant news director. He is the author of the McGraw-Hill textbook, "How to Write Television News."



WASHINGTON – Would most people really see a difference in their daily lives if the government shuts down?

Maybe not, judging by various surveys of services that would be affected.

Social Security checks would still be mailed, Medicare and unemployment benefits would keep coming and food stamps would still be issued.

The military would still be up and running, and Congress passed legislation Monday to ensure pay for the military's 1.4 million active duty personnel, although the Pentagon could furlough 400,000 civilian workers and delay training and contracts.

The mail would still be delivered, because the U.S. Postal Service runs on income from stamps and other postal fees.

Federal meat inspections should continue as usual. The FDA would still issue high-risk recalls but might suspend routine safety inspections.

School lunches and breakfasts would still be served.

Air travel would continue as federal air traffic controllers would remain on the job. Security screening should not take much longer, because "the majority of our officers who screen passengers/luggage will remain on the job," TSA spokesman Ross Feinstein tweeted. Federal inspectors would still enforce safety rules.

Those who leave the country would still be able to get back home, as most U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers are expected to remain on duty.

Embassies and consulates overseas would stay open to provide services to American citizens. The processing of passport and visa applications are paid for by fees, so they would continue. The State Department warns that consular operations abroad would only remain open as long as "there are sufficient fees to support operations."

Also unaffected would be services for national security and human safety, border security, coastal protection, law enforcement, counter-terrorism efforts, federal prisons and Amtrak service.

The Justice Department would remain almost fully staffed. Federal courts would stay in session.

IRS audit appointments would be canceled, but taxes would still have to be paid.

The National Weather Service would continue forecasting and issuing warnings and the National Hurricane Center would keep tracking storms.

Veterans would still be able to visit hospitals, get mental health counseling and have prescriptions filled at VA health clinics.

National parks, monuments and museums would close, the Census Bureau would stop collecting data, gun permits would be delayed and applications for small business loans would be suspended.

White House press secretary Jay Carney said senior nutrition grants, which provide meals for 2.5 million elderly Americans, would not be funded in a shutdown.

Borrowers and first-time home buyers seeking government-backed mortgages could face delays. The Federal Housing Administration would not underwrite or approve new loans during a shutdown.

Processing of government-backed loans to small businesses would be suspended.

Federal occupational safety and health inspectors would probably suspend workplace inspections, except in situations in which danger is imminent.

The Environmental Protection Agency would furlough all but 1,069 of its 16,200 workers. The National Labor Relations Board would send home 1,600 of its 1,611 employees, and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission would furlough 652 of its 680 employees.

According to White House numbers, at least 825,000 of the more than 2 million federal workers would be furloughed.

The government was last shut down in early 1996, and the closure lasted almost four weeks.

Read more at <http://www.wnd.com/2013/09/what-government-closure-means-for-you/#vSfj0RWqTWM8jLjW.99>