



Shutdown Plan for the Postal Regulatory Commission

In the event of a lapse in appropriations leading to a shutdown of the Federal Government, the Postal Regulatory Commission (Commission) intends to remain open by utilizing its no-year funds available to it in accordance with a 2015 Government Accountability Office opinion¹, acknowledged by the Office of Management and Budget².

In the event that the Federal Government remains shutdown and the Commission's funds are completely exhausted, all employees, except as noted below, will be furloughed for the duration of the shutdown (hereinafter Furloughed Employees or non-excepted employees). Non-excepted employees will be given up to 4 hours on the first business day following the effectiveness of the shutdown to complete the shutdown process. Most non-excepted employees will perform these shutdown activities from a remote location, even without an existing telework agreement. For these employees, shutdown activities will be de minimis (i.e., can be completed in approximately 15 minutes). For example, such activities would include receiving and acknowledging receipt of an electronic furlough notice. Certain non-excepted employees will be expected to report to work on their next scheduled work day to carry out orderly shutdown activities.

Total number of employees expected to be on-board before implementation of the plan: 74

Total number of employees to be retained under the plan: 9

- Five Presidentially appointed Commissioners not covered by the furlough.
- Three support staff from the Office of Secretary and Administration (OSA) will work approximately 6 hours per day each to maintain and protect critical information technology infrastructure, servers, and property of the Commission and to ensure necessary budget and accounting-related hiatus activities. One member of the General Counsel's staff will be on-call as warranted (but not on site) for legal advice on all aspects of the shutdown and excepted operations. These employees are necessary to protect life and property and to perform activities necessarily implied by law.
- For shutdowns longer than 1-5 days, in addition to those employees listed above, the Commissioners, in consultation with the lead excepted staff from OSA, may call additional employees as warranted to ensure the safety of human life, the protection of property, or as otherwise authorized by law.

¹ U.S. Government Accountability Office. "Postal Regulatory Commission – Amounts Appropriated by Transfer from the Postal Service Fund" File B-327122. November 30, 2015

² Gates, Thomas. Postal OIG / Postal Regulatory Commission Funding Period Of Availability. 2016. E-mail.

Implementation Plan

Should the Federal Government shut down as a result of failure of appropriations and the Commission exhaust its no-year funds balance:

- A furlough letter will be issued to each Furloughed Employee per OMB guidance.
- Most furloughed employees will perform these shutdown activities from a remote location, even without an existing telework agreement. For these employees, shutdown activities will be de minimis (i.e., can be completed in approximately 15 minutes). For example, such activities would include receiving and acknowledging receipt of an electronic furlough notice.
- A few non-excepted employees will be given up to 4 hours the first workday following the shutdown to complete the shutdown process.
- Furloughed Employees will be instructed not to work during the furlough.
- Furloughed Employees will be placed in a leave without pay status for the duration of the furlough.
- Arrangements with the United States Postal Service (USPS), in the role of accounting and human resource shared service provider, will be in place to stop all payments to vendors, contractors, suppliers, and the like, except payments will be arranged for certain recurring obligations, *e.g.*, rent, telephone.
- No new expenditures will be authorized.
- Any Commission employee who is on travel will be recalled and required to submit his or her travel expense voucher within 24 hours of his or her return.
- Remote access to the Commission network for Furloughed Employees will be disabled during the furlough.
- Service to Commission-provided mobile devices, such as a Blackberry will be disabled during the furlough.
- Access to Commission offices for Furloughed Employees will be disabled during the furlough.
- Employees who receive a notice that they are to report to duty during the furlough will remain on duty and continue to report for duty, unless they subsequently receive a written notice of furlough.

- The Commission's emergency phone line, 202-789-6870, will be kept up to date with respect to the Federal Government's operating status. Employees who receive a notice of furlough will thus be instructed to monitor the emergency line and media outlets, and when they hear that a continuing resolution or appropriation has been signed by the President, they will be expected to return to work on their next scheduled duty day. Based on our experience, notification through the emergency line and the media provides sufficient notice for employees.