

Message from the Administrator

We are all passionately dedicated to the USAID mission. Right now, I know performing that mission is more difficult. The lapse in appropriations is unsettling, and some of you are experiencing hardship and uncertainty. You and your families are in our thoughts each day. We appreciate all that you do and recognize that you would like nothing more than to get back to work. As the lapse in appropriations continues, I will regularly reach out to you.

A reminder and update on important topics follow.

Reminder of Limitations on Activities during the Funding Lapse

During the lapse in funding, only designated staff on the “excepted” list may perform “excepted” activities. Exempt employees may perform regular duties as assigned. You can find the entire [Lapse Plan](#) and other updates on the Agency’s external website. Furloughed employees are not permitted legally to engage in any official U.S. Government activities. This is a broad restriction, and includes using your official or personal phones for any Agency business, or logging into the Agency’s email system to check your email (even if you do not actually respond to emails).

Staff Care

Our colleagues who are managing the email box shutdown_info@usaid.gov briefed me that they have received several questions about whether Staff Care remains open. Yes, it does. Staff Care is available to the USAID workforce throughout the funding lapse. Staff Care does great work, and we encourage you to reach out whenever necessary. As we have heard about some of the challenges our colleagues are facing at this time, we encourage you to share this message broadly. Information on accessing Staff Care support appears below.

Payroll

The National Finance Center (NFC) within the U.S. Department of Agriculture processed payroll for all USAID employees for Pay Period (PP) 2018/25, and all employees should have received their paychecks by now. NFC will process payroll for PP 2018/26, which ended January 5, 2019, only for “exempt” employees. At this time, NFC will not process any payroll for employees affected by the lapse in appropriation (“excepted” or “furloughed”).

Time and Attendance

The following is specific information regarding the processing of time and attendance:

- **“Excepted” employees** who are serving during the lapse are to record their specific hours worked in WebTA. **However, do not validate or certify any time and attendance information for PP 26 until directed to do so.**
- **“Exempt” employees** (e.g., multi-year or no-year funded positions) should follow normal processing procedures for PP 26. The Bureau for Management (M) will process these timecards and forward them to NFC for payment.
- **Personal Service Contractors (PSCs):** For those U.S.-based and Third Country National (TCN) PSC positions funded through this period, Operating Units should follow normal processing procedures for PP 26. The M Bureau will process these timecards and forward them to the NFC for payment.
- **“Furloughed” employees** should not submit any Time-and-Attendance information for PP 26 until directed to do so.
- **Foreign Service National (FSN) employees** should note that the Chief of Mission (COM) governs guidance and processes for time and attendance for FSNs.

Please refer to the [shutdown guidance](#) and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for detailed information.

Training and Travel

All training and education activities sponsored by the Office of Human Capital and Talent Management (HCTM) are postponed until funding becomes available. As such, all HCTM-managed training during the lapse in appropriations is cancelled. USAID staff should not perform any HCTM-sponsored training-related travel nor should they initiate TAs for such training during the lapse in appropriations. For other types of training, USAID staff should work with their Operating Unit to determine if such training and/or related travel is authorized in accordance with previous USAID Guidance. Upon resuming normal operations, HCTM intends to reschedule cancelled training courses. The U.S. Department of State’s Foreign Affairs Counter Threat (FACT) training is taking place during the lapse in appropriations.

If you are scheduled to travel to attend a training event at the Federal Executive Institute (FEI), the Washington Learning Center (WLC), or an HCTM-sponsored event at a Mission, please do not proceed until you receive further guidance. For questions about specific Mission-sponsored training, please contact the hosting mission for details. Once funding is restored, HCTM personnel will contact affected individuals about new training dates and information.

For additional information on all other travel please refer to the [shutdown guidance](#) and FAQs.

Unemployment

If you are a “furloughed” employee during the lapse in appropriations, you might want to consider applying for unemployment insurance. For USAID Direct-Hire staff, if your official duty station is Washington, D.C., you should file your unemployment applications with the Unemployment Office of the District of Columbia Department of Employment Services (DOES).

Most USAID employees in the United States, including those who work physically in Virginia, have Washington, D.C., as their official duty station. To confirm your duty station, see item #39 on your most recent Standard Form for Notification of Personnel Actions (SF-50). For this filing, employees may call (202) 478-5937 or 1-877-319-7346, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., or file online at dcnetworks.org. For more information from the DOES, visit: <https://does.dc.gov/page/unemployment-compensation>.

For our overseas Direct-Hire staff, you should file your unemployment claims with your State of residency within the United States. Links to all State Workforce Agencies, including how to file telephonically and online, are available at the following link:

www.servicelocator.org/OWSLinks.asp

Please be advised, however, if Congress authorizes retroactive pay for furloughed employees, you would be required to pay back any unemployment benefits you received, in accordance with State law.

Restoration of Annual Leave

As long as you properly scheduled your leave in advance (i.e., in writing via WEBTA no later than November 24, 2018, in accordance with Part 630.308(a) of Title Five of the Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] and Automated Directives System [ADS] 480), any annual leave you forfeited because of the lapse in appropriations will be restored—regardless of whether you were “furloughed” or “excepted.” Any previously restored annual leave due to expire at the end of the 2018 leave year under Parts 630.306 or 630.309 of Title Five of the CFR, and subsequently forfeited, may not be restored again—even if the forfeiture was because of the lapse in appropriations.

Outside Employment

The USAID shutdown email box has received several questions from employees who asked about accepting outside employment, such as driving for a rideshare company, walking dogs, serving in a food establishment, cooking for a catering company, *etc.* USAID Washington staff may engage in outside employment without further approvals *so long as the employment does not create a conflict of interest with their position at USAID.* Outside employment like the types listed above does not create a conflict of interest for USAID employees. Overseas personnel should follow FAM 4123.2-1 and reach out to your Resident Legal Officer (RLO) for advice on conflicts of interest. You should send questions about whether a different type of outside work would create a conflict to shutdown_info@usaid.gov.

Acquisition and Assistance

Please see Section 8, “Grants & Contracts,” in the [Shutdown Guidance](#) for information related to the impact of the lapse in appropriations on procurement activities.

Available Resource Support

Several area Federal Credit Unions are offering ways/products to help members during the shutdown period. Commercial banks have also provided options for their customers. For example, the websites of the State Department, Lafayette, Commerce, Treasury, Interior, and Agriculture Federal Credit Unions* show products, such as paycheck loans, lines-of-credit and car-loan-payment deferrals, available to members. Commercial banks, such as Wells Fargo and Bank of America,* have set up 1-800 numbers so customers affected by the shutdown can discuss options related to loan payments and available money-management tools. You should research these and other options to find the best-available resource-support mechanism and institutions for you.

***Note:** The specific terms and conditions appear on each of the respective websites. This information is not intended as an endorsement or promotion of any of these institutions.

Taking Advantage of Staff Care

We encourage you and your colleagues to reach out whenever necessary to Staff Care, which will remain available throughout the lapse in appropriations. The **Staff Care Call Center** is open 24/7 and can be accessed through the toll-free phone number below or the website. The **Staff Care Services Center** in Washington, D.C., at 601 13th Street, N.W., Suite 900 South, is open for walk-ins and appointments from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday. You may make appointments for the Staff Care Services Center through the call-center line as well.

The services are available as provided below.

Staff Care Services 24 Hours a Day, 7 Days a Week, 365 Days a Year

Free Phone: [877-988-7243](tel:877-988-7243)

Direct Dial: [919-645-4960](tel:919-645-4960)

Reverse Charge Calling: [+44-0-208-987-6200](tel:+44-0-208-987-6200) (Call your international operator and request the charges be reversed to the number listed above.)

TTY: [888-262-7848](tel:888-262-7848)

SMS: [314-910-7728](tel:314-910-7728)

Email: support@usaidstaffcarecenter.net

Website: staffcare.usaid.gov

Registration code: USAID

USAID Staff Care Services Center
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Washington, D.C. 20005