

Action Needed: Urge Congress to End the Shutdown

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Steven,

Congress failed to reach an agreement by the Oct. 1 deadline to ensure the Federal Government is funded and continues operating as normal. Essential government functions will continue, however, veterans, service members, federal employees and other Americans will be impacted.

What does a Government Shutdown Mean?

During a shutdown, non-essential government employees are dismissed from their work, and programs using discretionary spending are paused.

Discretionary spending includes the operating costs of most federal agencies, programs, and departments, including the National Park Service, the Department of Education, and the Department of Defense.

Federal employees whose jobs are deemed “essential” are still required to report to work as usual, but they will not receive their paychecks until the shutdown ends.

What does this Mean for the Department of Veterans' Affairs and My Benefits?

During a shutdown, VA Medical Centers, Outpatient Clinics, and Vet Centers will be open as usual and provide services.

- Veteran health care is not impacted. VA Medical Centers, Outpatient Clinics, and Vet Centers will be open.
- VA benefits will continue to be processed and delivered, including compensation, pension, education, and housing benefits.
- Burials will continue at VA national cemeteries. Applications for headstones, markers, and burial benefits processing will continue.
- The Board of Veterans' Appeals will continue decisions on veterans' cases.
- VA Contact Centers (1-800-MyVA411) and the Veterans Crisis Line (Dial 988, Press 1) are open 24/7.

Available services are subject to change depending on the length of the shutdown.

What Services are Going to be Paused During the Shutdown?

The following services will be paused during the length of the shutdown:

- VA will not provide veteran career counseling or transition assistance program activities.
- The GI Bill Hotline will be closed.
- VA regional benefits offices will be closed.
- VA will cease public affairs and outreach to veterans.
- VA will not permanently place headstones or maintain the grounds at VA national cemeteries.
- VA will not process applications for pre-need burials.
- VA will not print new presidential memorial certificates.

What is The American Legion Doing to Help?

Through the shutdown, The American Legion will provide frequent outreach containing updates on next steps, as well as updates on how national staff is working with partners to help end the shutdown.

Be on the lookout for an official statement from National Commander Dan K.

Wiley, which will include resources you can utilize if your salary is impacted by the shutdown.

What Can I Do to Help?

We are strongly urging the entire American Legion Family to contact their members of Congress ASAP to fully fund government programs and re-open the federal government.

Urge your Members of Congress to End the Government Shutdown



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