

DoD reduces number of furlough days

DoD reduces number of furlough days

UPDATE as of March 28-- 11:42 A.M.

The Defense Department has revised from 22 to 14 the number of days hundreds of thousands of civilian employees could be furloughed this year because of the budget sequester, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel announced today.

In addition, a senior Defense Department official speaking on background told reporters the start of the furloughs will be delayed until mid-to-late June, after more than 700,000 department employees receive furlough notices now set to go out in early May. Furloughs would happen over seven two-week pay periods until the end of September, when the current fiscal year ends, the senior official said, with employees likely to be told not to come to work for two days during each of those pay periods.

Department officials say they are still working to determine which employees might be exempted.

Hagel characterized the reduced furloughs as well as a revised estimate of sequestration's impact on the defense budget as good news. The changes follow Congressional approval last week of a defense appropriations bill that prevented an additional six billion dollars in cuts, ordered under sequestration, from taking effect.

"It reduces a shortfall at least in the operations budget," the secretary told reporters at a Pentagon news conference. "We came out better than we went in under the sequester, where it looks like our number is \$41 billion [in cuts] now versus the \$46 billion."

The Army War College will host a town hall meeting in the future to address the furloughs.

UPDATE as of 3:08 this afternoon

The Department of Defense has decided to delay the issuance of civilian employee furlough notices for approximately two weeks. This delay will allow the department to carefully analyze the impact of pending continuing resolution legislation on the department's resources. We have not made any decisions on whether or not the total number of planned furlough days for fiscal 2013 will change as a result of this delay.

We believe the delay is a responsible step to take in order to assure our civilian employees that we do not take lightly the prospect of furloughs and the resulting decrease in employee pay.

Carlisle Barracks Town Hall

Today, March 21, Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, commanding general of the U.S. Army War College, spoke with the civilian employees and supervisors of Carlisle Barracks in a town hall meeting.

Leadership of the Army War College and Carlisle Barracks organizations have planned for the possibility of furlough of DoD civilian employees. The town hall meeting communicated the planning to those who would be affected if the Army issues guidance to furlough. Responsible planning for the possible furlough is intended to clarify how a furlough if implemented would affect DoD civilian workers, and in turn the changes in schedules and services for the workforce, base residents, and the Reserve, National Guard, and Military Retired personnel, and community who frequent Carlisle Barracks.

The town hall meeting was provided for informational purpose only. No action has been taken to issue any notice of proposed furlough to employees.

IF the Department of Defense implements a Civilian Furlough, it will be to help DoD meet funding reductions associated with sequestration.

Given the possibility of a furlough of DoD Civilians, Maj. Gen. Cucolo outlined command priorities: first, to maintain the health and safety of residents, workforce, and those who frequent our post and its services; and, to execute the U.S. Army War College core educational mission effectively and efficiently; to communicate to the workforce quickly and accurately; and to apply policies consistently throughout our organizations with equivalent impact across the workforce.

IF a DoD Civilian Furlough were to be enacted, impact on employees of Carlisle Barracks includes --

- Civilian Employees paid by DoD appropriate funds would be required to take 22 days of leave without pay, i.e., furlough days before September 30, 2103
- Individual impact would be a 20 percent salary cut for 5.5 months
- Employees to be furloughed would receive a 30-day Notification of Proposed Furlough letter

- Approximately 700 civilian employees would be affected, out of the 1700-person workforce (includes military faculty and staff, Army War College students, and Morale, Welfare and Recreation workers)
- Exemptions: civilians in the International Fellows Office and full/part/flex time workers in Morale Welfare Recreation jobs
- Furlough days at Carlisle Barracks would be the 1st day of the work week
- Specific furlough days may be adjusted due to mission requirements on a case-by-case basis
- Benefits tied to salary will be affected, e.g., TSP contributions to retirement, and leave earned.

IF a DoD Civilian Furlough were to be enacted, schedules and services would change –

- Ashburn Gate – to close daily; all traffic routed through Claremont Gate
- Firefighters will maintain continued 24/7 presence with reduced capability/capacity, and with greater reliance on local volunteer fire companies
- Dunham Army Health Clinic – to close Mondays
- Carlisle Barracks Commissary -- to close Wednesdays [in addition to the current Monday closures for stocking]
- Legal assistance/ claims - to suspend Monday services
- Military retiree services and ID card services -- to close Mondays
- Army Education Center -- to close Mondays
- Army Community Service, Substance Abuse Program – to close Mondays
- Army Family Housing – to close Mondays
- Civilian Personnel Office – to close Mondays
- Garrison Headquarters – to close Mondays

Army War College classes continue with schedule to accommodate DoD Civilian students and Civilian faculty, who would be subject to furlough.

Military personnel and contractors' are not affected by a possible furlough.

IF a DoD Civilian Furlough were to be enacted, hours for the gyms, pool, bowling center, auto/crafts shop may change.

IF and when the Department of Defense decides to implement the furlough, a follow-on media advisory will update timeline and service impacts.

In planning for a possible furlough, supervisors and the Civilian Personnel Office are prepared to guide employees. The resource for Administrative Furlough Guidance and Procedures:

www.opm.gov/furlough

What's next? Secretary of the Army guidance for decision & date to issue Notices of Proposed Furlough to individual employees; supervisors would issue letters and 30 days later, supervisors issue

Decision letters to employees.

U.S. Army War College Archives - News Article - 29 March 2013