

# DOD Taking Prudent Steps in Face of Government Shutdown

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American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Sept. 26, 2013 – The Defense Department is taking prudent steps to plan for a possible government shutdown Oct. 1, Deputy Secretary of Defense Ash Carter said in a memo (<http://www.defense.gov/documents/Potential%20Government%20Shutdown%20%282%29.pdf>) signed today.

The deputy secretary believes there is still time for Congress to enact legislation to avoid a shutdown. “The administration is willing to work with Congress to enact a short-term continuing resolution to fund critical government operations and allow Congress the time to complete the full year 2014 appropriations,” he said.

Still the threat of a shutdown remains and department leaders must prepare in case a lapse in appropriations occurs. If a funding lapse occurs it will affect the entire government.

Carter explained how a funding lapse would affect Defense Department personnel. DOD leaders took their guidance from the U.S. Attorney General and the Justice Department. “We have worked to determine which of our activities may continue under these legal requirements,” Carter wrote. “Similarly, we have worked to determine which of our employees would continue to report to work in the event of a lapse in funding, and which employees would be placed on furlough.”

These determinations may change if the lapse in appropriations lasts for a long time, he said.

“All military personnel would continue in a normal duty status; however, a large number of our civilian employees would be temporarily furloughed,” Carter said.

“The categorization of employees and whether or not someone is furloughed is not a reflection on the quality of their work, nor of their importance to our agency,” Carter said. “It is merely a reflection of the legal requirements that we must operate under should a lapse occur.”

Commanders and supervisors will give specifics to employees, but these conversations are not the formal notification of a furlough. “Official furlough notices will only be issued on October 1st if a lapse in funding has occurred,” Carter wrote.

The deputy secretary said the uncertainty has put the DOD workforce in a difficult position. “Should a lapse occur, it could impose hardships on many employees, as well as the people that we serve every day,” he said.

OPM has information at <http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/furlough-guidance/#url=Shutdown-Furlough>. (<http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/furlough-guidance/#url=Shutdown-Furlough>)

**Related Sites:**

Carter Memo - Sept. 26, 2013 (<http://www.defense.gov/documents/Potential%20Government%20Shutdown%20%282%29.pdf>)