



# Effects of the Trump Shutdown In North Carolina

By Saharra Griffin

January 9, 2019

President Donald Trump's shutdown of the federal government over demands for billions of dollars in new border wall funding is already having profound consequences for hundreds of thousands of working Americans and a wide range of vital services. And each day the impasse continues, as funding dries up and more agencies exhaust emergency measures, these harmful effects will only be exacerbated.

Although the new Democratic House majority passed legislation to reopen the government, the president has continued to stall negotiations.<sup>1</sup> To enable the stalemate, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and other Republican senators reversed their earlier opposition to the shutdown just days after the chamber unanimously passed a similar deal.

Due to Trump's shutdown, an estimated 7,000 federal employees in North Carolina are furloughed or working without pay.<sup>2</sup> Below is a breakdown of affected federal employees and agencies in the state.

---

## U.S. Department of Agriculture: 1,900 employees

In North Carolina, an estimated 1,900 Department of Agriculture employees, including those working for the following agencies, are furloughed or working without pay.<sup>3</sup>

- **The Farm Service Agency** office in Raleigh supports the state's 50,000 agricultural operations and facilitates new assistance programs under the farm bill.
- **The Food Safety and Inspection Service** prevents foodborne illness by ensuring that meat, poultry, and egg products produced in Colorado are safe and accurately labeled.
- **The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service** defends the state's agricultural resources from pests and diseases.
- **The Office of Rural Development** offers loans and grants to help create jobs and support economic development in rural communities.
- **The Forest Service** protects and manages the state's four national forests.

*“Disaster relief payments from the USDA are delayed due to the shutdown, so some farmers who lost much of their crops to Hurricanes Florence and Michael have uncertainty about the upcoming season. The fall storms caused more than \$1 billion in crop damage.” –WNCN, January 4, 2019<sup>4</sup>*

---

## U.S. Department of the Interior: 665 employees

In North Carolina, an estimated 665 Interior Department employees, including those working for the following agencies, are furloughed or working without pay.

- **The National Park Service** supports Great Smoky Mountains National Park, the Appalachian Trail, and the Blue Ridge Parkway.
- **The Bureau of Indian Affairs** funds critical services for the 100,000 American Indians based in North Carolina, including health care, law enforcement, housing, disaster relief, and infrastructure maintenance.<sup>5</sup>
- **The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** manages the state’s 10 national wildlife refuges.
- **The U.S. Geological Survey** conducts research on natural resource issues, including the pattern and effects of flooding due to recent hurricanes.<sup>6</sup>

*“Park rangers, deemed essential in order for safety, were not all furloughed for the duration of the shutdown, but park maintenance workers were, leading to the problems that Murphy, Scargill and hundreds of other motorists encountered on Saturday alone.” –The Asheville Citizen Times, January 6, 2019<sup>7</sup>*

---

## Additional agencies

The Trump shutdown is also harming the following workers and agencies:

- An estimated 1,200 Environmental Protection Agency employees
- An estimated 700 Federal Bureau of Prisons employees at North Carolina’s Federal Correctional Facility, Butner
- An estimated 630 members of the U.S. Coast Guard based at Cape Hatteras, Fort Macon, and Oak Island
- An estimated 580 Federal Aviation Administration and Transportation Security Administration employees at the state’s 10 commercial airports
- An estimated 220 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration employees, including the Office for Coastal Management and the National Marine Fisheries Service
- Federal Emergency Management Agency employees facilitating recovery efforts after September’s Hurricane Florence
- U.S. Attorneys’ Offices in Raleigh, Greensboro, Winston Salem, Charlotte, and Asheville

If the partial government shutdown continues, tax filing season could be more difficult for North Carolina families and small businesses. Because IRS offices are closed and the agency is operating with a skeletal staff, taxpayers and preparers may have trouble accessing needed guidance.<sup>8</sup> Last year, the agency processed 6.1 million refunds within the first week of filing season in January.<sup>9</sup>

*“[Jon] Franklin is concerned about paying the mortgage on his brand new home ... ‘I’ve already reached out to my creditors and everything. But still, they’re not getting paid and I’m not getting any money so that I can pay them,’ he said ... [He] and his union are pushing Congress and the White House to not just end the shutdown—but then immediately pass legislation to get them back pay.” –WTVD, January 2, 2019<sup>10</sup>*

Already reeling from the effects of retaliatory tariffs and Trump’s incoherent trade policy, North Carolina’s farmers are now being needlessly harmed by Trump’s government shutdown. The Department of Agriculture’s loan and financial aid department is closed, so farmers who have not yet filed tariff mitigation will not receive payments until the shutdown ends.<sup>11</sup> The department has also delayed the release of major crop forecasts—the Crop Production Report and World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimate—on which farmers and traders rely to plan production.<sup>12</sup> Farmers must decide whether to wait for the shutdown to end or make decisions based on less dependable information.

Moreover, North Carolina’s 800,000 small businesses are unable to receive guaranteed loans and technical assistance from the Small Business Administration state office in Charlotte.

Ironically, due to Trump’s temper tantrum for the sake of so-called border security, the state’s immigration court in Charlotte is now closed, stalling lawful asylum proceedings in an already backlogged system.<sup>13</sup>

*Saharra Griffin is a special assistant at the Center for American Progress.*

---

## Endnotes

- 1 Erica Werner, Seung Min Kim, and Jeff Stein, "Congressional Democrats turn up the heat on GOP over shutdown," *The Washington Post*, January 7, 2019, available at [https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/democrats-pledge-to-paralyze-senate-as-shutdown-negotiation-tactic/2019/01/07/ed5e355e-12aa-11e9-a896-f104373c7ffd\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.31fbb6bdd0af](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/democrats-pledge-to-paralyze-senate-as-shutdown-negotiation-tactic/2019/01/07/ed5e355e-12aa-11e9-a896-f104373c7ffd_story.html?utm_term=.31fbb6bdd0af).
- 2 Seth Hanlon and Saharra Griffin, "Effects of the Trump Shutdown on Federal Workers' Paychecks: State-by-State Estimates," Center for American Progress, December 21, 2018, available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/news/2018/12/21/464638/effects-trump-shutdown-federal-workers-paychecks-state-state-estimates/>.
- 3 U.S. Department of Agriculture, "Agencies," available at <https://www.usda.gov/our-agency/agencies> (last accessed January 2019).
- 4 Robert Richardson, "NC farmers pressure lawmakers on partial government shutdown," WNCN, January 4, 2019, available at <https://www.cbs17.com/news/north-carolina-news/nc-farmers-pressure-lawmakers-on-partial-government-shutdown/1687321789>.
- 5 Bureau of Indian Affairs, "What We Do," available at <https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots/what-we-do> (last accessed January 2019).
- 6 U.S. Geological Survey, "USGS: Florence set at least 28 flood records in Carolinas," November 13 2018, available at <https://www.usgs.gov/news/usgs-florence-set-least-28-flood-records-carolinas>.
- 7 Sam DeGrave, "On the Blue Ridge Parkway, furloughs translate to road closures, a side effect of shutdown," *The Asheville Citizen Times*, January 6, 2019, available at <https://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/local/2019/01/06/government-shutdown-side-effects-furloughs-blue-ridge-parkway-road-closures-wnc-national-parks/2491672002/>.
- 8 Internal Revenue Service, "Contact Your Local IRS Office," available at <https://www.irs.gov/help/contact-your-local-irs-office>; Darla Mercado, "White House promises tax refunds will go out, but there's hardly anyone at the IRS to do the work," CNBC, January 7, 2019, available at <https://www.cnbc.com/2019/01/07/white-house-official-says-tax-refunds-will-be-sent-out-despite-government-shutdown.html>.
- 9 Internal Revenue Service, "Filing Season Statistics for Week Ending February 2, 2018," available at <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/filing-season-statistics-for-week-ending-february-2-2018> (last accessed January 2019).
- 10 Joel Brown, "'Working for free; I hate it': Government shutdown hits NC workers hard," WTVD, January 2, 2019, available at <https://abc11.com/politics/working-for-free-i-hate-it-government-shutdown-hits-nc-workers-hard/5006724/>.
- 11 Juliet Linderman, "Government shutdown could block federal aid to farmers hit by trade war," Associated Press, December 28, 2018, available at <https://www.desmoines-register.com/story/news/2018/12/28/government-shutdown-federal-aid-farmers-usda-payments-presidential-trump-trade-war-china-soybeans/2434143002/>.
- 12 Julie Ingwersen, "U.S. delays key agriculture reports due to government shutdown," Reuters, January 4, 2019, available at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-shutdown-usda/u-s-delays-key-agriculture-reports-due-to-government-shutdown-idUSKCN10Y1K9>.
- 13 Lisa Riordan Seville and Hannah Rappleye, "Shutdown nearly shuts U.S. immigration courts, but deportations continue," NBC News, January 5, 2019, available at <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/immigration/shutdown-nearly-shuts-u-s-immigration-courts-deportations-continue-n954826>.