



Effects of the Trump Shutdown In Oklahoma

By Saharra Griffin

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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.¹ 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 5,600 federal employees in Oklahoma are furloughed or working without pay.² Below is a breakdown of affected federal employees and agencies in the state.

"Uncertainty over federal funding for transportation projects amid a partial government shutdown is forcing some states to delay contracts for new road and bridge work while others are preparing for that possibility. Transportation officials in Oklahoma this week announced plans to delay bids on 45 highway projects worth about \$137 million." –KTEN, January 9, 2019³

U.S. Department of the Interior: 875 employees

In Oklahoma, an estimated 875 Interior Department employees, including those working for the following agencies, are furloughed or working without pay.

- **The Bureau of Indian Affairs** funds critical services for the 320,000 American Indians based in Oklahoma, including health care, law enforcement, housing, disaster relief, and infrastructure maintenance.⁴

- **The U.S. Geological Survey** is responsible for monitoring earthquakes concerns in Oklahoma. Earthquakes are a major concern in Oklahoma, as nearly 2,000 magnitude 3 and larger earthquakes have occurred in the state since 2009.⁵
- **The Bureau of Land Management** supports 7.4 million acres of public lands in Oklahoma.
- **The Bureau of Reclamation** is the nation's largest wholesale water supplier and second-largest hydropower producer.
- **The National Park Service** supports the state's six national historic sites and trails.
- **The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** operates nine national wildlife refuges in the state.

“The ongoing government shutdown could soon have a negative impact on Oklahoma farmers and ranchers, who are facing limited access to important data and funding sources, according to agriculture experts. The U.S. Department of Agriculture is offering limited statistical services during the shutdown ... [T]he executive director of the Oklahoma Pork Council, said he’s concerned about data access, which is particularly important now because trade disputes have limited exports to some markets.”

–Associated Press, January 3, 2019⁶

U.S. Department of Agriculture: 800 employees

In Oklahoma, an estimated 800 Department of Agriculture employees, including those working for the following agencies, are furloughed or working without pay.⁷

- **The Farm Service Agency** office in Stillwater and 77 local offices across the state facilitate 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 Oklahoma 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 Agricultural Research Service**, including the nation's Rangeland and Pasture Research Center in Woodward, collects detailed agricultural production data for the Plains region.

Additional agencies

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

- An estimated 3,300 Federal Aviation Administration employees, including the FAA Academy in Oklahoma City, the primary training center for the nation's air traffic controllers⁸

- An estimated 260 Federal Bureau of Prisons employees at Oklahoma’s correctional institution and prison transfer center
- U.S. Attorneys’ Offices in Tulsa, Muskogee, and Oklahoma City

“While federal employees remained furloughed at several of Oklahoma City’s government offices, contractors and their employees also stayed home amid the government’s partial shutdown. The tendrils of Washington, D.C.’s budget standoff reached all the way to the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center, where civilian employees continue to face cutbacks that began the week before Christmas.”
–The Oklahoman, December 28, 2018⁹

If the partial government shutdown continues, tax filing season could be more difficult for Oklahoma 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.¹⁰ Last year, the agency processed 6.1 million refunds within the first week of filing season in January.¹¹

Moreover, Oklahoma’s 330,000 small businesses are unable to receive guaranteed loans and technical assistance from the Small Business Administration state office in Oklahoma City.

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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.
- 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 Sean Murphy, “Federal shutdown delays Oklahoma road, bridge contracts,” KTEN, January 9, 2019, available at <http://www.kten.com/story/39760175/federal-shutdown-delays-oklahoma-road-bridge-contracts>.
- 4 Bureau of Indian Affairs, “What We Do,” available at <https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots/what-we-do> (last accessed January 2019).
- 5 U.S. Geological Survey, “Oklahoma now has more earthquakes on a regular basis than California. Are they due to fracking?,” available at https://www.usgs.gov/faqs/oklahoma-now-has-more-earthquakes-a-regular-basis-california-are-they-due-fracking?qt-news_science_products=0#qt-news_science_products (last accessed January 2019).
- 6 Associated Press, “Oklahoma farmers fear effects of government shutdown,” January 3, 2019, available at <https://newsok.com/article/feed/8262851/oklahoma-farmers-fear-effects-of-government-shutdown>.
- 7 U.S. Department of Agriculture, “Agencies,” available at <https://www.usda.gov/our-agency/agencies> (last accessed January 2019).
- 8 Federal Aviation Administration, “FAA Academy,” available at https://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/arc/programs/academy/ (last accessed January 2019).
- 9 Dale Denwalt, “Contractors hit by government shutdown too,” *The Oklahoman*, December 28, 2018, available at <https://newsok.com/article/5618798/contractors-hit-by-government-shutdown-too>.
- 10 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>.
- 11 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).