



Effects of the Trump Shutdown In Florida

By Saharra Griffin

January 10, 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.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 14,700 federal employees in Florida are furloughed or working without pay.² Below is a breakdown of affected federal employees and agencies in the state.

"A federal prison here in Florida's rural Panhandle lost much of its roof and fence during Hurricane Michael in October, forcing hundreds of inmates to relocate to a facility ... more than 400 miles away. Since then, corrections officers have had to commute there to work, a seven-hour drive, for two-week stints. As of this week, thanks to the partial federal government shutdown, they will be doing it without pay." –The New York Times, January 7, 2019³

U.S. Department of Agriculture: 1,495 employees

In Florida, an estimated 1,495 Department of Agriculture employees, including those working for the following agencies, are furloughed or working without pay.⁴

- **The Farm Service Agency** office in Gainesville and 67 local offices across the state facilitate new assistance programs under the farm bill.
- **The Forest Service** protects and manages Apalachicola, Osceola, and Ocala National Forests, as well as the state's 1,300-mile National Scenic Trail.

- **The Food Safety and Inspection Service** prevents foodborne illness by ensuring that meat, poultry, and egg products produced in Florida 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** collects detailed production data at the U.S. Horticultural Research Laboratory in Fort Pierce and other field stations across the state.

U.S. Department of the Interior: 1,125 employees

In Florida, an estimated 1,125 Interior Department employees, including those working for the following agencies, are furloughed or working without pay.

- **The National Park Service** supports the state's three national parks, including Everglades National Park.
- **The U.S. Geological Survey** conducts research on natural resource issues, including the red tide algal blooms that plagued southwest Florida last year.⁵
- **The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** operates 29 national wildlife refuges in the state.

“This is not a political issue for us, this is an aviation safety issue,” [Robert] Guevara said. ‘There has been a lot of rhetoric on tv about federal employees being Democrats. We are neither Democrats or Republican, in reality we are american patriots we serve the public (sic).’” –WPLG Local 10, January 8, 2019⁶

Additional agencies

- The Trump shutdown is also harming the following workers and agencies:
- An estimated 2,700 Federal Aviation Administration and Transportation Security Administration employees at the state's 20 commercial airports
- An estimated 1,960 National Aeronautics and Space Administration employees, including the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral
- An estimated 1,100 Federal Bureau of Prisons employees at Florida's six federal prisons and correctional institutions
- Federal Emergency Management Agency employees facilitating recovery efforts after October's Hurricane Michael
- An estimated 620 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration employees, including the Fisheries Southeast Regional Office, which is responsible for 20,000 miles of tidal coastline⁷
- An estimated 245 members of the U.S. Coast Guard
- An estimated 665 employees at U.S. Attorneys' Offices across the state

“Every year, the National Weather Service teams up with Federal Emergency Management Agency to offer governments of hurricane-prone areas like the Tampa Bay region a hurricane preparedness course. But without the funding to pay for the weeklong course, [Daniel] Sobien said, the government may have to cancel it.” –The Tampa Bay Times, January 9, 2019⁸

If the partial government shutdown continues, tax filing season could be more difficult for Florida 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.⁹ Last year, the agency processed 6.1 million refunds within the first week of filing season in January.¹⁰

Moreover, Florida’s 2.3 million small businesses are unable to receive guaranteed loans and technical assistance from the Small Business Administration state offices in Miami and Jacksonville.

Ironically, due to Trump’s temper tantrum for the sake of so-called border security, the state’s immigration courts in Miami and Orlando are now closed, stalling lawful asylum proceedings in an already backlogged system.¹¹

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.
- 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 Patricia Mazzei, “It’s Just Too Much’: A Florida Town Grapples With a Shutdown After a Hurricane,” *The New York Times*, January 7, 2019, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/07/us/florida-government-shutdown-marianna.html>.
- 4 U.S. Department of Agriculture, “Agencies,” available at <https://www.usda.gov/our-agency/agencies> (last accessed January 2019).
- 5 U.S. Geological Survey, “Salty water causes some freshwater harmful algae to release toxins,” October 18, 2018, available at <https://www.usgs.gov/news/salty-water-causes-some-freshwater-harmful-algae-release-toxins>.
- 6 Neki Mohan, “Florida’s federal government employees say they need the shutdown to end,” *WPLG Local 10*, January 8, 2019, available at <https://www.local10.com/news/florida/florida-s-federal-government-employees-say-they-need-shutdown-to-end>.
- 7 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries, “Southeast Regional Office,” available at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/about/southeast-regional-office>.
- 8 Kirby Wilson, “4 ways you didn’t know the government shutdown is affecting Florida,” *The Tampa Bay Times*, January 9, 2019, available at <https://www.tampabay.com/florida-politics/buzz/2019/01/09/4-ways-you-didnt-know-the-government-shutdown-is-affecting-florida/>.
- 9 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>.
- 10 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).
- 11 Lisa Riordan Seville and Hannah Rapple, “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>.