



Homeland
Security

January 9, 2019

Dear Colleagues,

As you are aware, the lapse in appropriations that began on December 22, 2018, is still in place. I know many of you are concerned by the length of this funding hiatus and the outlook for its resolution. The President and Congress are working toward a resolution that will include the necessary funding for stronger measures to secure our borders, and we remain hopeful an agreement can be reached soon. I want to assure you that Secretary Nielsen and I recognize the hardship this shutdown places on you and your families. We cannot thank you enough for your service and dedication to our critical mission.

While every effort is being made to reach a budget deal as rapidly as possible, I want to provide you with the current status of payroll processing for the pay period of 23 December – 5 January:

Employees who are working during the lapse because they are performing excepted functions, for example, performing activities necessary for the protection of property or safety of life, and who are paid through a DHS appropriation that has lapsed, may not receive a paycheck on time for this pay period. We continue to work with the National Finance Center (DHS's payroll provider) to allow for expeditious payment as soon as DHS has an appropriation. Once an appropriations bill for DHS is passed, employees will be paid for all hours worked.

Furloughed employees will not receive a paycheck for this pay period. We remain hopeful—and have consistently seen in previous shutdowns—that Congress authorizes back pay for furloughed employees.

If you are working and paid from accounts that have not lapsed, such as USCIS fee-funded employees, those in FEMA paid by the Disaster Relief Fund, the Federal Protective Service which is paid from receipts from other federal agencies, and limited other organizations around the Department, your payroll for this pay period will be processed on its normal schedule by the National Finance Center. This payroll will be processed to banks beginning on January 12, 2019 through the official pay date of January 17, 2019.

If you are working during the lapse and are uncertain as to whether the account that pays your salary has lapsed, please contact your supervisor to get clarification.

During this difficult time, I want to ensure you are aware of some of the resources available to help you through the lapse in appropriation.

Your Component Employee Assistance Program (EAP) (<https://www.dhs.gov/employee-assistance-program>) can provide short-term counseling and referral for issues having an impact on your life, to include budget and finances.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has several resources available to employees regarding unemployment benefits and answers to pay, leave, and benefits questions during a shutdown furlough.

- Information on Unemployment during a Shutdown: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/furlough-guidance/unemployment-compensation-for-federal-employees-fact-sheet-december-2018.pdf>
- Pay, Benefits, and other Guidance for Shutdown Furloughs: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/furlough-guidance/guidance-for-shutdown-furloughs.pdf>

Reduced or no-interest loans are being offered by some financial institutions and credit unions to federal employees impacted by this partial shutdown.

You may use the attached Letter to Creditors when discussing financial obligations with financial institutions and lenders regarding their financial obligations.

Additional Employee Resources are also at <https://www.dhs.gov/employee-resilience-family-ready-prgm>

We realize the impact and financial uncertainty and strain the lapse in appropriations has on you and your families. We are grateful for your dedication and for the work that you are doing to ensure this Nation's security and for your commitment to public service. I again want to assure you that Secretary Nielsen and I join you in a desire for a speedy conclusion to the negotiations that fund the Department and promote greater border security, and are working hard to make that happen. As developments warrant, we will continue to keep you updated.

Sincerely,

Claire M. Grady
Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security

With honor and integrity, we will safeguard the American people, our homeland, and our values.