

**FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN
WASHINGTON STATE IMPACTS
Updated January 24, 2019**

KEY DATES

- **February 18:** Letters may need to be sent to low-income families notifying them of a potential disruption in their monthly cash assistance through the TANF program.
- **March 1:** Potential disruption to the following federal programs in Washington state:
 - **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**, also known as food stamps, threatening basic food for more than 900,000 individuals in Washington, more than 59 percent of whom are in families with children.
 - **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)**, threatening income security for more than 56,000 low-income Washingtonians, 73 percent of whom are children.
 - **Crime Victims Programs**, including programs to end violence against women, prevent sexual assault and provide domestic violence legal advocacy, which depend on the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) cash disbursement system that will become inoperable.
- **March 4:** Potential further disruption to Alaska Airlines' passenger service at Paine Field, which has already been postponed due to the shutdown from the original start date of February 11.
- **April 1:** Potential disruption to food benefits in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, threatening access for 265,000 women who are pregnant or breastfeeding, infants, and children.

NEW OR UPDATED IMPACTS TO STATE PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Threatening Disruption to Washington State Ferry Service. Furloughs have left the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) operating with extremely limited staff in Washington, putting service at risk for several vessels in the Washington State Ferries (WSF) fleet that are up for inspection during the months of January and February. In order to sail, each vessel is required to undergo an annual inspection by USCG to ensure full compliance with federal and state laws and continue to carry passengers. Already, one WSF vessel has had its annual inspection canceled due to the shutdown — MV Chimacum, which was due for inspection January 22-23. Thankfully, its certificate of inspection (COI) does not expire until March, and therefore remains able to sail for now. Four additional vessels are due for inspection later this month and early February: MV Chelan, MV Salish, MV Tillikum and MV Elwha. These vessels currently service the Seattle/Bremerton, Fauntleroy/Vashon/Southworth, Port Townsend/Keystone and San Juans routes. If the annual inspections on these boats are not completed before their COIs expire, they would need to be removed from service and ferry service could be impacted. Additionally, if another vessel is removed from service due to a mechanical or system malfunction, an inspection may be required by the USCG before the vessel is cleared to return to service, which could further impact ferry service.

Shutdown of Food Monitoring Program. On January 15, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) halted all activities through the Pesticide Data Program (PDP), a national effort to monitor pesticide residue on foods consumed in Washington state and across the United States, with an emphasis on those commodities highly consumed by infants and children. Here in Washington, that means a wide range of commodities — including rice, frozen spinach, frozen strawberries, bananas, cilantro, kiwis, radishes, cabbage, jalapeños, mustard greens, oats, frozen sweet peas, and dried garbanzo beans — will not be tested as part of this national survey. During this quarter, the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) had planned to test about 1,400 samples for about 220 pesticides each as part of the PDP program. Staff have ceased activities due to lack of funding until further notice.

Hurting Operations and Basic Services Across Indian Country. Washington's tribal nations are highly impacted by the partial federal shutdown as it directly affects funding for programs through the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Indian Health Service (IHS), threatening the rights, economies, health, safety and well-being of our tribal communities. The federal government owes treaty and trust obligations to tribes and tribal members in Washington including medical clinic services, social services, Individuals Indian Money (IIM) account management services, timber and forestry-related services, and irrigation and restoration projects. Among the impacts being felt among our tribes are:

- Forcing tribes to backfill funding for programs and services that are a federal responsibility;
- Putting healthcare at-risk through IHS facilities and urban Indian health programs due to widespread IHS furloughs and disruption in Urban Indian Health Program (UIHP) payments;
- Creating a 23 percent budget shortfall at the Seattle Indian Health Board due to the lapse in UIHP payments;
- Preventing timber sales due to widespread furloughs at BIA's forestry office, putting at risk 270 employees at Yakama Nation's mill and causing estimated losses to Colville Confederated Tribes of \$1.5 million per week; and
- Leaving tribal communities without assistance in the event of catastrophic natural disasters due to furloughed personnel at BIA's Portland Area Office.

Depending on the length of the shutdown, the impacts on the health, safety and economic well-being of Washington's tribal communities is expected to become even more severe.

Threatening Health Security for Low-Income Women, Infants, and Children. Federal appropriations for Washington's Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program is only sufficient to cover benefits through the end of March, unless additional federal funding is allocated to Washington state. The loss of WIC funding threatens access to a supplemental food program for 265,000 women who are pregnant or breastfeeding, infants and children, and also disruption to health screening and other services.

Increasing Strain on Sea-Tac Operations. The shutdown has now forced TSA workers at Sea-Tac to work without pay for more than 30 days, creating financial anxiety for hundreds of TSA employees in Washington and increasing strain on the airport's operations. To address increasing wait times and rates of TSA absenteeism — often a result of employees' financial inability to work — the Port of Seattle has been forced to increase their role in staffing non-regulatory TSA functions, including exit lane staffing and TSA Pre-Check confirmations and checkpoint divesting.

Delaying Passenger Service at Paine Field. Due to furloughs of FAA personnel, who conduct crucial certification and oversight work required for the start of commercial air service at Paine Field, Alaska Airlines has been forced to delay the launch of passenger service out of Everett. Washingtonians who had been planning to travel using the new passenger service beginning on February 11 will now have to wait until March 4 — at least. Further delays remain possible if the shutdown doesn't end in time for the

airport to obtain all required government approvals. United Airlines, who plans to begin passenger service on March 31, could also be impacted if the shutdown is extended.

Disrupting Assistance for Victims of Crime and Domestic Violence. The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has notified the state that cash disbursement systems will not be operational beyond the month of February for crime victims programs, including programs to end violence against women, sexual assault prevention programs, and domestic violence legal advocacy programs — leaving the state responsible for backfilling funding to continue these important programs that should be a federal responsibility. Federal reimbursements to the state will be disrupted on March 1.

ONGOING IMPACTS TO STATE PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Delaying NTSB Final Report on DuPont Amtrak Derailment. Furloughs of accident investigators at the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) have forced the agency to halt investigations into transportation accidents across the country, including the Amtrak train derailment that occurred near DuPont, Washington, in December 2017. The agency's preliminary report into the accident was released in January 2018, and its final report is expected sometime this spring. Amtrak train service has been suspended along the route until the final report is released. A potential delay of NTSB's work could further delay passenger service along the Point Defiance Bypass route.

Putting Basic Food Assistance at Risk. If the shutdown continues past February 28, low-income Washingtonians who rely on basic food through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are at risk of losing benefits they need to put food on the table. Although USDA has instructed states to take extraordinary steps to disburse SNAP benefits early for the month of February, they have not identified federal appropriations necessary to continue the program beyond that — threatening disruption to basic food for over 900,000 individuals in Washington, more than 59 percent of whom are in families with children.

Threatening Financial Security for Low-Income Washingtonians. Federal appropriations for Washington's families in need through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is only sufficient to cover benefits through the end of February. Although state funding may be available to continue providing some TANF assistance through part of March, it cannot cover full benefits for another month — meaning the state may be forced to send out 10-day notice letters on February 18 notifying families of a cut-off for their monthly issuance. The program currently provides cash assistance to households covering more than 56,000 people in Washington, 73 percent of whom are children.

Delaying Hanford Cleanup Efforts. Furloughs of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) personnel, who serve as partner regulators alongside our state Department of Ecology, are causing current and near-term delays to cleanup decision processes at Hanford. These include changes to Tri-Party Agreement milestones and a potential enforcement action that would require coordination with EPA. The delays are associated with unavailability of EPA staff to brief EPA Region 10 Administrator for certain required EPA approvals. The delays will directly impact issuance of regulatory decisions, delaying initiation of cleanup processes for mixed low level and transuranic mixed waste.

Disrupting Environmental Restoration. Furloughs of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) staff is delaying work on environmental restoration efforts by our state Department of Ecology,

such as work on Chehalis Basin aquatic restoration plans and state and federal environmental impact statements (EIS), which depend on NOAA staff to work on integral fish and habitat monitoring.

Halting Applications for Federal Financial Student Aid. Students' applications for federal financial aid submitted after the shutdown began on December 22 have been disrupted by the closed federal agencies — including IRS and the Department of Homeland Security — which are necessary for data-verification of FAFSA forms. These students have received a comment code that denotes, "One or more federal agency matches were not performed." The disruptions could delay Pell grants, student loans, parent PLUS loans and other forms of federal financial aid from reaching students. New students planning on attending our state's public universities starting in the spring or next fall may be impacted. It may also impact our public universities' ability to process financial aid for these low and middle-income families. To date, little to no guidance has been issued by the U.S. Department of Education to this situation.

Threatening the Emergency Food Supply for Hungry Families. The lapse in appropriations for USDA will impact Washingtonians who rely on our state's emergency food system and contractors' ability to provide distribution and warehousing services to food pantries and meal programs. We anticipate that food commodities *ordered* by USDA before the shutdown, but not yet purchased, will not be delivered during the shutdown. For Washingtonians, that means approximately 324,000 pounds of commodity foods with a value of \$201,000 were ordered but USDA had not completed the purchasing process — leaving food pantries with less food to distribute and diminishing basic food for families who need it. The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) has also been forced to place limits on the amount of operational funding that contractors' can be reimbursed for their participation in the federal food assistance programs. Across the board, the emergency food system is experiencing reduced financial support and increased demand as furloughed workers seek resources to keep food on the table and SNAP benefits are spent early, leaving more cupboards bare.

Putting Food Safety at Risk. Due to furloughs of Food and Drug Administration (FDA) staff, the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) is unable to receive technical assistance from the FDA. Lack of federal food safety inspections may be increasing food safety risks in the state. FDA training that our state agency staff were planning to attend has also been cancelled.

Disrupting Ecosystem Restoration Projects. Furloughs and federal agency closures are delaying and threatening to disrupt projects in progress. Among those include the Leque Island Estuary Restoration Project, which has been awarded \$3.2 million in federal grant money but requires the funds to be disbursed and federal permits to be obtained by April 1 for the project to be constructed as planned this summer. According to the state Department of Fish and Wildlife, there is an urgency to proceed with the project due to the failing dikes; if they fail before the project is completed, it will be very expensive to build a wave protection berm on the site that is needed to protect the adjacent City of Stanwood from coastal flooding.

Disrupting Washington Fisheries. Efforts that have been or may be disrupted during the shutdown include: National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) participation in the North of Falcon process to set recreational and commercial salmon setting seasons while considering Chinook and concurrently Southern Resident Killer Whale recovery objectives; NMFS's enforcement capability and oversight integral to the conservation of Washington's fisheries; and the rulemaking processes pertinent to the establishment of catch limits for the Pacific whiting midwater trawl fisheries and the Pacific halibut fishery. These actions are not only critical to the conservation of various fish stocks, but also to the

economic welfare of the recreational and commercial fishing communities that are dependent upon the processes.