

Will the Government Shutdown Affect My Freight?

by Robert Stein - Tuesday, October 01, 2013

As more and more announcements are being made today by government agencies regarding their status during the government shutdown announced this morning, importers and exporters are left wondering what this means to them and their shipments.

While some agencies that handle imports and exports are considered “essential,” others are not. Even employees of “essential” agencies, such as U.S. Customs & Border Protection, are being furloughed.

From the many notices sent from government agencies this morning, the clear pattern seems to be reduction of staff in essential agencies and furloughs of staff in “nonessential” offices.

Industry Impact

U.S. Customs (CBP)

- Most Customs employees considered essential, no known reduction of officers at release points, import specialists, or Exodus offices.
- Closures have affected ACE portal setup, help, and other administrative aspects of Customs.
- According to Customs, there may be mild to moderate delays in transaction processing at some ports.

FDA

- [6,620](#) employees furloughed
- FDA advises importers to expect severe delays on entry reviews and *may proceed* authorizations.

EPA

- [93%](#) of workers furloughed
- Will create major delays on EPA regulated shipments where there are questions that must be answered prior to release

USDA-APHIS

- Furloughs of non-essential personnel

- Agency will continue operations where activities are “excepted” due to U.S. health concerns and where there is direct funding through user fees and trust funds to support certain functions.
- For entry purposes: the “agricultural specialists” are Customs employees, so USDA regulated imports should continue to be cleared with the delays outlined under U.S. Customs (see above).

Steel Licenses

- No new steel licenses being issued for imports
- Office of Steel Import & Monitoring and Analysis Unit has issued instructions on how to use a temporary license number on new shipments that do not yet have a proper license number.

Foreign Trade Statistics Regulations (FTSR)

Website is offline, including access to the Schedule B look-up tool.

U.S. International Trade Commission

Website is offline, including access to the online HTS tool.

We will continue to monitor this situation and post updates to our website as circumstances dictate.

See Also

[What's closed, what's open? \(CNN\)](#)

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