

With the federal government likely to enter a partial shutdown as of 12:00 a.m. on Friday, December 21st, 2018, you may be concerned about what effect this has on your federally-funded grants or contracts. While each federal agency determines its own operational procedures for a shutdown scenario, most agencies have similar approaches for handling grant and contract administration while there continues to be a lapse in federal funding.

The following questions and answers are meant to provide general guidance for research administrators. If you have further questions related to the impact on sponsored projects, please contact Nate Martinez-Wayman in OSP or refer to agency contingency plans found [here](#). The Office of Government Relations is also providing updates to the general Duke community via their [website](#).

Which agencies are facing a potential lapse in appropriations?

The following agencies have funds appropriated through Friday, December 21:

- Department of Commerce (including NOAA)
- Department of Homeland Security
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Science related programs (the National Science Foundation and NASA)

Which agencies will not have a lapse in funding on December 21, 2018?

The following agencies have funds appropriated through September 30, 2019 and will not have a lapse in funding on December 21, 2018:

- Department of Defense
- Department of Education
- Department of Energy
- Department of Health and Human Services (including the National Institutes of Health)

Therefore, the following information does not apply to these agencies. They will continue normal operations.

Should work continue on federally-funded grants or contracts?

In general, researchers may continue work on grants that have been awarded, unless the project requires significant involvement of federal employees. Contracts that do not receive specific instructions to stop work (in the form of a “stop work order”) should also continue work. If you manage a federally-funded grant or contract, please be on the lookout for specific guidance from your sponsor. *If you receive any communication, notify the appropriate pre-award office immediately.*

Researchers on grants and contracts that have not yet received federal funding, or where there are not currently funds available, and the awarding agency will be a part of the shut down should not continue work. This includes any projects that are relying on 90 day pre-award spending or are waiting for on renewal or extensions. If you are uncertain about whether your project has obligated funds, contact Nate Martinez-Wayman in the Office of Sponsored Projects for clarification.

Can the project continue to use funds?

Yes, as long as the period of performance remains open and you have project funds to spend, you may

continue to spend on your existing federal awards. If you have any questions regarding specific projects, please contact your OSP liaison.

What if I have a progress report due or require a rebudget or no-cost extension?

During a lapse in federal funding, services of affected agencies are limited to emergency or essential operations only. This means that federal employees will generally not be able to perform routine management of awards during a shutdown. Therefore, if your existing project with available funds requires prior approval to make a change in budget or personnel, these changes may not take effect until after the federal government reopens and approval is able to be granted.

The submission of progress reports also falls under the umbrella of routine project management. Most agencies will not be accepting progress reports during the shutdown; for example, the National Science Foundation's Fastlane will likely be unavailable. The NIH eRA Commons will be available.

Will I be able to submit a project proposal during the shutdown?

While the answer may vary by agency, most agencies affected by the shutdown will not accept proposals while the shutdown continues. Grants.gov will remain open.

But what if there is a submission deadline during the shutdown?

In past shutdowns, any impacted deadlines were revised and republished. We anticipate the same to occur with this shutdown. Once the specific agency has received funds and reopens, please watch for revisions and notifications regarding impacted deadlines.

Will new awards or no-cost extensions be issued during a shutdown?

No new awards or no-cost extensions will be issued during the shutdown from affected agencies. Any new appropriations will be delayed, and the length of the delay will be determined by the length of the shutdown.

What if we're in the midst of the hiring process for an employee?

E-verify, which is used to determine the eligibility of new employees to work in the United States, will be unavailable during the shutdown. However, Duke will continue to keep a record of I-9 forms for new employees hired during the shutdown, and employees will go through the E-verify system once it is reinstated. Any eligibility issues will be addressed at that time.

However, the temporary and permanent labor certification function at the Office of Foreign Labor Certification (OFLC) will cease processing applications entirely, and associated personnel will not be available to respond to inquiries until the office reopens.

An employee is waiting on a visa application. Will that be processed during the shutdown?

Visa applications are fee-funded activities that will continue throughout a federal government shutdown. However, application processing may be delayed. Likewise, Immigration Services will continue to process Green Card applications throughout the shutdown.