



## AIR FORCE MATERIEL COMMAND SHUTDOWN FURLOUGH ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE/FAQs

### **UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION:**

#### **Q: Can I file for Unemployment?**

**A:** Yes. (OPM Guidance) It is possible that furloughed employees may become eligible for unemployment compensation. State unemployment compensation requirements differ. Some States require a 1-week waiting period before an individual qualifies for payments. In general, the law of the State in which an employee's last official duty station in Federal civilian service was located will be the State law that determines eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits. (See the Department of Labor website factsheet: [Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees](#)). Agencies or employees should submit questions to the appropriate State (or District of Columbia) office.

The Department of Labor's website provides links to individual State offices:

<https://www.usa.gov/unemployment-benefits>. States will require you to provide your Agency's Federal Identification Code when you file your application. This SF-8 has been filled in with the Air Force code: [https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/sites/default/files/sf\\_8\\_-\\_air\\_force.pdf](https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/sites/default/files/sf_8_-_air_force.pdf).

#### **Q: Are exempt or excepted employees who are working full-time eligible for Unemployment Compensation?**

**A:** No, exempt and excepted Federal employees working full-time during a lapse in appropriations are not "unemployed" for unemployment compensation purposes and are therefore ineligible to receive Unemployment Compensation benefits.

### **BENEFITS:**

#### **Q: Who can I contact regarding benefits and qualifying life events (QLE)?**

**A:** Please contact the Air Force Personnel Center Total Force Support Center (TFSC) at 1-800-525-0102 option 2 to get assistance regarding their QLE.

#### **Q: Is the Government Shutdown and furlough status a QLE?**

**A:** No. The Government Shutdown and furlough status is not considered a Qualifying Life Event (QLE). Please contact the Air Force Personnel Center Total Force Support Center (TFSC) at 1-800-525-0102 option 2 to get assistance regarding additional questions on QLEs.

### **Federal Employee Health Benefit (FEHB):**

#### **Q: To what extent does shutdown furlough affect FEHB coverage?**

**A:** The employee's FEHB coverage will continue even if an agency does not make the premium payments on time. Since the employee will be in a non-pay status, the enrollee share of the FEHB premium will accumulate and be withheld from pay upon return to pay status.

**Q: Are employees permitted to make FEHB election or changes during a furlough?**

**A:** Employees furloughed due to a lapse in appropriations are considered to be in a pay status for the purposes of enrolling or changing selections in the FEHB Program.

**Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI):**

**Q: To what extent does a shutdown furlough affect FEGLI coverage?**

**A:** FEGLI coverage continues for 12 consecutive months while in a non-pay status without cost to the employee or the agency.

**Thrift Savings Plan (TSP):**

**Q: What is the effect of a shutdown furlough on TSP contributions, investments, and loans?**

**A:** The TSP will continue its normal daily operations during a lapse in appropriations. Employees do not need to take any action. If you have a TSP loan and are an active participant (not separated from federal service or in a nonpaid status for another reason), we will automatically update your status to keep your loan in good standing, even if we do not receive repayments during the shutdown. Agencies and employees should refer to the TSP website or contact their agency representative for more information. The web address is <https://www.tsp.gov/index.html>.

**Q: Can I take a TSP loan while I'm furloughed?**

**A:** The lapse in appropriations does not prevent you from requesting a new TSP loan. The established eligibility requirements continue to apply. Read the [Loans \(333kb\)](#) booklet for more information. Agencies and employees should refer to the TSP website or contact their agency representative for more information. The web address is <https://www.tsp.gov/index.html>.

**Flexible Spending Account (FSAFEDS):**

**Q: To what extent does a shutdown furlough affect FSAFEDS coverage?**

**A:** Health Care Expenses: Payroll deductions will cease for any employee who does not receive pay. The employee remains enrolled in FSAFEDS, but eligible health care claims incurred during a non-pay status will not be reimbursed until the employee returns to a pay status and allotments are successfully restarted. The remaining allotments are recalculated over the remaining pay periods to match the participant's election amount. Dependent Care Expenses: Eligible dependent care expenses incurred during a non-pay status may be reimbursed up to whatever balance is in the employee's dependent care account--as long as the expense incurred during the non-pay status allows the employee (or spouse if married) to work, look for work or attend school full-time.

**Long Term Care (LTC):**

**Q: To what extent does a shutdown furlough affect LTC coverage?**

**A:** LTC coverage may not be cancelled as a result of nonpayment of premiums or other periodic charges due to a shutdown furlough. Payroll deductions will cease for any employee who does not receive pay. Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP) premiums will be paid from back pay or may be paid back from another source for FLTCIP enrollees who elected to

make payments directly to the Carrier. Visit the LTC website, <https://www.ltcfeds.com> for more information.

**Q: Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Plan (FEDVIP) To what extent does a shutdown furlough affect FEDVIP coverage?**

**A:** FEDVIP coverage may not be cancelled because of nonpayment of premiums or other periodic charges due to a shutdown furlough. FEDVIP premiums will be paid from back pay or may be paid back from another source for FEDVIP enrollees who elected to make payments directly to the Carrier.

Employees can mail direct bill premiums to:

BENEFEDS-FEDVIP

P.O. Box 414095

Boston, MA 02241-4095

Visit the FEDVIP website, <https://www.benefeds.com> for more information.

**CAC CARDS:**

**Q: Can I renew my CAC card while in furlough?**

**A:** Yes. If your CAC is expiring soon, you should coordinate with your servicing military personnel office to renew your CAC based on their procedures.

**RESIGNATIONS AND RETIREMENTS:**

**Q: Can I resign during the Government Shutdown?**

**A:** Yes. You can resign by submitting a written signed memorandum with your desired effective date to your immediate supervisor. Your supervisor will provide that signed notice to your servicing Civilian Personnel Office. Your resignation action will be processed as soon as possible with the effective date you established. Once the SF50 is processed, it will go into your EOPF <https://opf.opm.gov/employeeview/>. It could take additional time for your lump sum leave to pay out and may be delayed until after the shutdown. (**OPM Guidance:** In the event of a shutdown furlough, any payments incurred by the agency for an employee's lump-sum payment will be delayed until funds are available). Under 31 U.S.C. § 1341(c), after the lapse in appropriations has ended, both excepted and furloughed employees will receive retroactive pay at the employee's standard rate of pay. Under this same law, you will receive retroactive pay up through your date of resignation.

**Q: Can I retire during the Government Shutdown?**

**A:** Yes. The DAF process for filing for Immediate or projected retirement is as follows:

- Employee notifies supervisor
- Retirement RPA submitted by CPS to BEST
- Once BEST receives the RPA, we will initiate building the ORA account/invite. The employee cannot submit in ORA until an RPA is submitted, and his/her ORA account built. **IMPORTANT Note:** AFPC BEST will only use the personal email addresses to build the ORA account so employees need to ensure they have a personal email in MyFSS. The process is also explained in the following MyFSS link:

<https://myfss.us.af.mil/USAFCommunity/s/knowledge-detail?pid=kA0t00000010wj5CAA>

- Finally, it's important to note that these retirement applications will be late to AFPC and BEST works first-in/first-out so the employee's retirement counseling/processing will likely be delayed.