

Fellow Officers,

The message below from the Secretary does apply to Commissioned Officers of the US Public Health Service. Further details will be forthcoming through your OPDIVs and STAFFDIVs.

RADM Boris D. Lushniak, MD, MPH
Deputy Surgeon General
US Public Health Service

From: HHS News (HHS/ASPA) [<mailto:HHS.News@HHS.GOV>]
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 07:12 PM
To: HHS-NEWS-ALL@LIST.NIH.GOV <HHS-NEWS-ALL@LIST.NIH.GOV>
Subject: Important Message from Secretary Sebelius

Memorandum for All Employees

Throughout the discussions about funding for the rest of the fiscal year, the President has made it clear that he does not want a government shutdown, and the Administration is ready and willing to work day and night to find a solution with which Congress can agree. Given the realities of the calendar, however, prudent management requires that I plan for an orderly shutdown should Congress fail to pass a funding bill.

The President and I know that the uncertainty of the current situation puts federal employees in a difficult position, and are very much aware that a shutdown would impose hardships on many employees as well as the groups and individuals our Department serves. As we approach the expiration of the current CR, our leadership team will provide you with updated information as soon as it becomes available. For now, I want to provide you with information on how the potential shutdown – should it occur -- will impact Federal employees.

As soon as funding lapses, Federal departments and agencies will not be permitted to incur further financial obligations performing activities funded by annual appropriations, except those related to the orderly suspension of operations or performance of excepted activities. This means that some employees will be furloughed and unable to work. Our contingency planning for the potential funding lapse includes determining which agency functions are excepted from a furlough. Should it become necessary to implement our contingency plans, you will receive formal notice from your supervisor no later than Friday April 8th regarding the designation of your position and furlough status.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has created a document to address some of the questions that I know must be on your mind. The document can be accessed at www.opm.gov/furlough2011. OPM will provide additional pertinent information for federal employees as the week progresses. And our leadership team will do our very best to provide clear information about the status of events as the week progresses.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of all of you, HHS provides critical health services to Americans and vital human services to some of most vulnerable citizens. Your contributions touch people's lives in so many significant ways, and I want you to know how deeply I appreciate your dedication and your expertise. Thank you for your continued service to the Department and the Nation.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Sebelius