

JAO Benefits Furlough Guidance 2023

SHUTDOWN INFORMATION

BENEFITS FAQs

Remember that qualifying life event changes for Health insurance can be submitted directly through Employee Express <https://www.employeeexpress.gov/> by the employee.

For Benefits Paid Through Payroll Deductions

Q. Can I file for unemployment during a furlough?

A. Yes, Federal employees who are furloughed are eligible for unemployment compensation in some states. You must return the money once the Government is funded and you receive your back pay. Also, please be aware that some states will charge interest on any money owed.

Q. What effect does the furlough have on other benefits?

A. The effect of a furlough on benefits that are paid for through payroll deductions varies. Please review OPM's fact Sheet. Fact Sheet: Pay and Benefits Information for Employees Affected by the Lapse in Appropriations (opm.gov)

<https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/furlough-guidance/fact-sheet-pay-and-benefits-information-for-employees-affected-by-the-lapse-in-appropriations.pdf>

Q. What if I have further questions on specific benefits (FLTCIP, FSAFEDS, FEDVIP, etc.)?

A. Please go here for OPM's information on shutdown furloughs

<https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/furlough-guidance/#url=Shutdown-Furlough> . CPM 2019-06 Pay and Benefits for Employees Affected by the Lapse in Appropriations <https://chcoc.gov/content/pay-and-benefits-employees-affected-lapse-appropriations-1>

Employees who have questions may obtain more information at:

- www.BENEFEDS.com (for FEDVIP deductions and FSAFEDS allotments)
- www.LTCFEDS.com (for FLTCIP)
- www.FSAFEDS.com (for FSAFEDS claims)

Q. I have questions about my TSP during a furlough, who can I contact?

A. Employees should refer to guidance on the TSP website (www.tsp.gov). For exempt or excepted who have questions please reach out via mySupport by clicking on "Need Help?" on your mySupport home page.

JAO Benefits Furlough Guidance 2023

Q. Will the Transit Subsidy Program (Transerve) continue during the shutdown?

A. Yes, for U.S. Fish and Service employees, the TRANServ Program will continue to support those personnel required to work during the shutdown.

Furloughed employees should not use Transit cards.

Q. How will my benefits be paid during a Furlough?

A. Retirement deductions and benefits premiums will be retroactively paid from the day the government shut down happened until the end of lapse in appropriations. Amounts deducted will be remitted to OPM using the normal procedures for any retroactive adjustments as necessary.

Federal Employee Health Benefits and Life Insurance

Q. Will I still have coverage under the Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) program during the furlough?

A. Yes, an 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.

For Federal Employee Group Life Insurance (FEGLI), coverage continues for 12 consecutive months in a non-pay status without cost to the employee (5 CFR 870.508(a)) or to the agency (5 CFR 870.404(c)). Please note that premium payments are required if an enrolled employee in non-pay status is receiving workers' compensation (5 CFR 870.508(a)).

Qualifying Life Events

Q. What if I have a Qualifying Life Event during the furlough?

A. Generally, new enrollments or changes in enrollment due to a Qualifying Life Event do not take effect until the employee has been back in pay status for any part of the prior pay period.

The exception is for a new enrollment or change in enrollment due to the birth or addition of a child, which is effective on the first day of the pay period in which the child is born or becomes an eligible family member. There is no requirement to be in pay status for an enrollment or change in enrollment due to birth or addition of a child to become effective.

JAO Benefits Furlough Guidance 2023

Time and Attendance FAQs

Shutdown Furlough Guidance and Frequently Asked Questions | [Shutdown Furlough Guidance and Frequently Asked Questions | IBC Customer Central \(doi.gov\)](#).

Beginning **Monday October 2** employees should use the following Quicktime Codes:

1. **Furloughed** – code **105** - Government Shutdown – Furloughed - Non-Pay Status
2. **Excepted** – code **106** - Government Shutdown – Furloughed – Retroactive Pay Status
3. **Exempt** – code **010** – Regular

All employees will receive RETROACTIVE pay. The wording in QT has not been updated at this time.

Please code accurately – we need to track all EXCEPTED hours.

Furloughed and Excepted employees should not code any other codes – including leave.

Important Website Information

Employee Express

All employees have alternative means to log into Employee Express (EEX), other than using their government computer and PIV card. The two methods to log into EEX are 1. Using a PIV card or 2. Login.gov account. If an employee already has a login.gov account established, it may be used any time to access EEX from a personal computer. If one has not already been established by an employee below are the steps to establish a login.gov account.

1. PIV card:

If you have a personal card reader or a keyboard that has a built-in card reader that can be plugged into a personal computer, EEX may be accessed from a personal computer using the card reader and PIV credential without having to use a government FWS computer or network.

2. Login.gov:

Employees can register and create a login.gov account if you do not already have one to use with multiple different U.S. Government websites and applications besides EEX. To setup your free login.gov account:

- a. Go to the EEX website at <https://www.employeeexpress.gov/> and select sign in by login.gov option of EEX
- b. If you have an existing account, sign in using login.gov email and password information. Or click “create an account”

JAO Benefits Furlough Guidance 2023

c. When prompted input your personal email address, language preference, check “accept login.gov rules of use” and submit.

d. you will receive an email to the email address provided in the account set-up

e. you will need to confirm your email by clicking the “confirm email address” button.

*NOTE: link expires after 24 hours

f. You now create a unique password for login.gov and click “continue”

g. Choose the method to authenticate such as phone (select call or text)

h. A security code will be sent to be input in web page and click “submit”

i. click “Continue & agree”

j. You have created a login.gov account through EEX and then enter identifying information in the EEX screen (ssn and DOB) to register the login.gov to your EEX account as a means of access.

k. A security code will be delivered to your home address or email address on file in EEX to confirm your identity for security purposes.

l. Once received, enter the security code in EEX as registration part 2 and the login.gov will be linked to your EEX from that point as an alternative access from a non-government computer or PIV card.

eOPF can only be access using a PIV credential and a DOI computer/ network or FWS VPN. No alternative means to access eOPF is authorized for DOI employees. Furloughed employees will not have access to eOPF while furloughed.

Guidance for Shutdown Furloughs: (<https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/furlough-guidance/guidance-for-shutdown-furloughs.pdf>) overview of how the Government prepares for and handles a shutdown.

FWS Ethics Office Link: <https://www.fws.gov/program/ethics/furlough-and-government-shutdown> provides information on unethical/prohibited activities during a shutdown.

Government Employee Fair Treatment Act of 2019:

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/24> explains how employees will be paid after a furlough.

JAO Benefits Furlough Guidance 2023

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Employees can contact EAP by calling 1-800-869-0276. Visit their website, <https://care.espyr.com/>

You can use the Espyr Connect mobile app on [IOS](#) or [Android](#) devices.

Other Considerations:

Some mortgage, loan, credit, and utility providers have indicated that customers may qualify for alternative arrangements. Please contact your providers for more information.

Interior Federal Credit Union: <https://www.interiorfcu.org/>