



Risk Management Agency

RISK MANAGEMENT AGENCY (RMA) CONTINGENCY PLAN

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Operations during Lapse of Appropriations

RMA will not maintain any normal activities during a government shutdown. RMA will not maintain any staff to either pay contractual obligations or perform any regulatory functions such as editing data. As described below, RMA will provide staff periodically to address unforeseen questions and issues received via email or voicemail from Approved Insurance Providers (AIPs), industry partners and other government officials that could impact the protection of Federal property.

Communications

RMA communications plans include notifications to:

- Employees
- Unions
- Cooperative Agreement Partners
- Information Technology Contractors
- Other Contractors
- Approved Insurance Providers (AIPs)
- Web Page Users
- General Public

A shutdown checklist for managers to instruct them on what activities should take place the first day of a shutdown is included. The list includes completing personnel responsibilities and closing up the office. These activities should be completed as soon as possible. In rare cases, it may take up to two days to complete the necessary shutdown tasks. Normally, it will take one work day or less. In the event that activities are taking more than one day, supervisors should obtain permission from the second-level supervisor to continue shutdown activities.

Re-start instructions will be included in shutdown communications.

Activities to Be Continued

There will be no operational activities continued. There will be no RMA employees reporting to work, except as described below.

Unforeseen issues may arise during any shutdown period of time that impact the protection of Federal property, including the government's financial interests and risks associated with them. In order to adequately address these situations and minimize the impacts to the government, they will be coordinated by the following RMA employees who will periodically check email and voicemail up to two hours a day, or as necessary, and address any unforeseen or emerging issues appropriately:

- Administrator;
- Associate Administrator;
- Associate Administrator;
- Chief of Staff;
- Deputy Administrator, Product Management;
- Deputy Administrator, Insurance Services; and

- Deputy Administrator, Compliance.

In addition, Senior Management or other mission critical employees, as authorized by any of the RMA Executive Team management listed above, will monitor email and voicemail in the event that unforeseen issues arise necessitating consultation with RMA Leadership.

Preparation for Activities to be Continued during Shutdown

If any unplanned activities are determined by the Administrator to be necessary in the midst of a shutdown, appropriate personnel would be recalled to work. The supervisors of those persons will develop a detailed list of who will be working and what tasks they will be performing and provide those to FFAS HR contacts. Any recall effort should include appropriate information technology, administrative, finance, contracting, and human resources personnel. At minimum, staff will be available to track time and complete necessary personnel actions.

The callback of employees may be different depending on the time of year that shutdown occurs and the length of the shutdown (short versus long term). For example, if contract change dates are set to expire or price elections are required to be set during the shutdown period, specific employees will be contacted to return to work. Other emergency situations may require activation of Continuity of Operations team members and supporting staff to evaluate and manage emergency response. If there is an emergency situation which would require the unplanned recall of employees to work, supervisors will instruct employees to carry out authorized activities only.

When either unforeseen circumstances or an emergency dictates that employees would return to duty, they would no longer be furloughed and personnel actions should be processed to put the employees in a work status. Employees would be returned to furlough status when it is determined that they are no longer needed and would remain in that status until the shutdown is discontinued.

Requirements for potential return to work should be evaluated just prior to shutdown, and during shutdown for longer term shutdowns, to ensure adequate preparations are made.

Shutdown Implementation Procedures

Prior to Day 1, the following actions will be completed:

In advance of Anticipated Shutdown supervisors will

- Become familiar with shutdown functions including but not limited to:
 - Making necessary contacts outside the Agency to communicate status;
 - Cancelling meetings, hearings and other previously arranged Agency business;
 - Issuing notices to headquarters and field offices regarding termination of activities;
 - Protecting confidential information;
 - Documenting the status of projects so they can be resumed or otherwise appropriately handled when funding becomes available;

- Inventorying and preparing all records, personal property, real property and facilities to maintain and protect them; and
- Performing requisite administrative function such as processing payroll for that period until the expiration of funds, and taking measures necessary to ensure that employees are accorded all due personnel rights.
- Identify functions and/or employees that may later become essential on a one-time or intermittent basis (e.g., for emergencies or in support of another agency's allowable activities).
- Develop procedures required for orderly cessation of activities, including the following tasks:
 - Measures needed for brief suspension of activities; and
 - Comprehensive steps required for lengthy shutdown.
- Obtain clearance for shutdown functions expected to require more than one workday to complete.
- Identify employees whose presence at work will be required to perform functions associated with the orderly cessation of program activities. This includes employee name, title and function the employee will perform.
- Identify the employees required to perform the functions that will continue and those who are necessary for an orderly shutdown. Decisions will be based on
 - The need to limit the number of employees to the minimum necessary to achieve orderly shutdown,
 - The need for both professional and support services, and
 - Consideration of the individuals who are closest to the matters being terminated.
- Identify what Chief Information Officer systems support is needed to maintain essential services and information technology infrastructure.
- Acquaint their employees with procedures for both short-term and long-term shutdown and assign potential shutdown tasks.
- Determine what contracts would continue and to what extent they would be active. Also, that information would be in the communications to the contractor at the earliest possible time.
- Ensure that they have an accurate employee contact list and phone tree to include personal phone numbers, addresses and e-mail addresses.

FFAS HR will prepare a memo to employees advising them of potential furlough and providing answers to frequently asked questions. In addition, HRD will provide a staff plan of all RMA personnel to ensure that all employees receive proper notification.

Budget Office will prepare

- Estimates of funding for staff needed to continue non-terminating activities,
- Updated information on the impact of the shutdown, and
- Other information requested by USDA, Office of Budget and Program Analysis (OBPA).

External Affairs will prepare external communications to Stakeholders and process through the Department's Office of Communications and RMA's external communications clearance process.

Activities during Days Before Anticipated Shutdown

The Administrator will issue a memo to employees and/or forward a Department memo, if available, reporting on the status of funding.

Supervisors will plan travel so that employees return to the duty station by midnight the day that funding authorization will expire.

Communications Plans will be activated to include the following:

Notifications	Responsible Party	Time Table of Release	Trigger for Release
Union Representatives	Farm and Foreign Agriculture (FFAS) Human Resources (HR)	Draft plans are to be shared with Union representatives for comment as soon as practical.	Completion of a Draft Plan.
All Employees – Status updates from Senior RMA Management	Administrator or Designee	Beginning the week of anticipated shutdown. To continue throughout the week. More messages the closer we get to anticipated shutdown.	As soon as possible address what can be told to employees. Convey public information. Provide assurance of open dialogue.
Employees – Notification letter to discuss pay, benefits, unemployment, time and attendance procedures, telework, and return to work. This notice should be acknowledged via signature or electronic means. Supervisors – Verification of notification will be conducted and staff plan checklist will be completed.	FFAS HR will develop a memorandum to be signed by the Administrator Supervisors will send their notification checklist to both Associate Deputy Administrators.	Delivered to employees by the morning of day 1 of a shutdown. Notification checklist compiled and returned to FFAS HR by end of first day.	Release upon notification by FFAS HR. Send to FFAS HR once verification has been done on employee notifications.
Employees – Questions and Answers sheet	FFAS HR	Release along with letter to employees	Release upon notification by FFAS HR.
Cooperative Agreement Partnerships	Program Managers for Partnerships Activity	Letter to be released one or two days before shutdown	Notification by Agency Administrator
Contracts through outside Agencies including Information	Contracting Officers' Technical Representative	Notification of plan is needed at least 4 days prior to	Notification by Agency Administrator

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Notifications	Responsible Party	Time Table of Release	Trigger for Release
Technology Contracts	(COTR) will work with Contracting Officer (CO) to draft and release notification	shutdown	
Other Contracts through FFAS Procurement	COTR will work with CO to draft notification	Notification to be released by CO one or two days before shutdown	Notification by FFAS
Approved Insurance Providers	Insurance Services Standard Reinsurance authors will prepare and clear with Office of General Counsel (OGC)	Notification to be released or phone call or letter (TBD) the morning of the actual shutdown	Notification by Agency Administrator
Travel and Purchase Card Holders – Card holder do’s and don’ts	Office of the Chief Financial Officer	One to two days before anticipated shutdown	Notification by Agency Administrator
General Public (including producers and policy holders) – via Web with a standard USDA wide Notification of Agency Closure Also notify via e-mail to stakeholder mailing list a simple closure notice	External Affairs	The morning of the actual shutdown	Notification by Agency Administrator

Employees will be responsible for securing their workspace and orderly shutdown activities as described below:

- The first day, all employees will report to work in person or via telework to receive assignments of duties or other information for an orderly shutdown. For those teleworking, report may be done via telephone or e-mail.
 - If reporting via telework, employees should have the ability remotely to create out of office messages in their e-mail and to have knowledge of how to change their voice mail remotely.

Managers and supervisors will coordinate the following activities intended to terminate Agency’s operations:

- Communicate close down instructions and procedures to all employees.

- Supervisors will inform their employees of the activities in which they should engage.
- Prepare to contact any employees on leave and communicate that their leave is cancelled.
- Ensure all records; personal property and real property are secured.
- Cancel all meetings, hearings and previously arranged business.
- Validate existing communication strategy (call trees) and employee contact information for future communication need.
- Based on guidance from Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and Office of Budget and Program Analysis (OBPA), the Administrator will instruct managers to implement procedures for either short-term or long-term cessation of activities.
- FFAS HR will draft a memo from the Administrator informing employees of immediate furlough upon completion of assigned shutdown activities and advising them of the appropriate source of information on when to return to work.
- Contracting officers will notify contractors of their operating status.
- As employees are about to be released, the employee should complete time sheet entry and submit to approving authority. Supervisors will approve timesheets.
- Each cost center manager will send recurring daily status reports through the management chain reporting on the status of the shutdown.
- For continuing activities, status reports will be provided to the Administrator on a regular basis for his review and information to provide to the Secretary.
- The Administrator will provide the Secretary reports on the status of the shutdown daily.

Shutdown Staffing and Checklist

Most RMA staff are to be sent home immediately upon reporting. Approximately, 45 supervisors and managers will remain to accomplish the orderly shutdown of offices while protecting the property and facilities of the agency. That activity will take place in the first half of the first shutdown day, but may take up to a full day, depending on time and attendance processing and other necessary shutdown activities. Additionally, headquarters and field office managers periodically need to monitor Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and OMB sources for startup instructions throughout the shutdown period.

Shutdown Checklist

Supervisors will Perform all Personnel Responsibilities Including

- **Instruct employees to fill out Time and Attendance**
- **Approve Time and Attendance**
- **Obtain signatures if necessary on shutdown memorandum**

All employees will turn off

- **Printers**
- **Faxes**
- **Computers**
- **Fans**
- **Any auxiliary heat or air conditioning**

Employees will secure all government records and safeguard Personally Identifiable Information (PII).

Employees will submit Time and Attendance.

Employees will cancel scheduled meetings.

Employees will record a standard (USDA provided) message on office and cell phones.

Employees will remove all food items and take trash to central collection locations to prevent insect and rodent infestations during shutdown.

Field Officer Managers will adjust heating ventilation and air-conditioning to conserve energy but sufficient to prevent damage of property.

Field Office Managers will post a standard (USDA provided) sign on external doors, indicating that the office is closed.

Field Office Managers will contact the landlord on leased buildings or the security in government buildings and notify them of temporary vacancy of the building due to a government shutdown.

Supervisors will turn off all lighting and close and lock all doors.

Supervisors will turn on alarms if installed.

Return to Work Procedures are addressed in the Start Up Plan.

All telework-ready employees should take government issued laptops; smart/cellphones and LincPass identification cards with them when they leave the building to facilitate authorized re-activation only.

Day 1 (First Day funds are not available):

There will be daily communications by the Administrator on the status of the close down procedures with the Department contacts previously identified.

Employees and supervisors will complete the Shutdown Checklist above.

The FFAS HR will be responsible for:

- Providing instructions and procedures to managers and supervisors for all employees during the shutdown period. This will include provisions for call back of employees in the event it is determined they are needed.
- Providing specific instructions for employees to complete final time and attendance report.
- Ensuring individual furlough notices will be prepared, reviewed and approved.
- Ensure all employees timesheets are processed by the National Finance Center.
- Delay hiring of new employees.

The Director of Acquisition Management will be responsible for:

- Coordinating with all RMA contracting officers and contracting officer technical representatives, who will notify all contractors and vendors that work is suspended.

Supervisors

- Contact any employee in travel status and direct them to return to duty station immediately.

All travel will be discontinued.

Subsequent Workdays of Shutdown

Only employees so notified that they are authorized to work will perform assigned duties.

Employees will engage in approved activities only.

When all shutdown functions are completed, the supervisor will notify the Administrator through their chain of command. If functions are not completed by close of business (local time) on Day 1 of the shutdown, supervisors will submit a status report through the chain of command to the Administrator that identifies functions completed; functions not completed, and estimated time of completion. All employees not performing authorized functions during the shutdown will be placed on furlough immediately during the first day of the shutdown.

The Administrator will provide the Under Secretary reports on the status of the shutdown.

Furloughed employees are ***prohibited*** from engaging in certain activities as listed below.

- Blackberry usage – Do not respond to any e-mails unless authorized and activated to do so.
- Laptop usage – Do not use the laptop at all if or until authorized to do so.
- Office Phone messages – Do not check your office land line phone or your office cell phone for messages until authorized to do so.
- Any work at all unless instructed directly from your supervisor as part of a recall or back to work activity.

- Furloughed employees are prohibited from performing official or unofficial duties and will not be compensated for any unauthorized work. Failure to follow these instructions may result in disciplinary action as described below.

Per the Government Accountability Office (GAO), Principles of Appropriations Law—Vol. II Chapter 6 page 36, the Anti-deficiency Act prohibits:

...Accepting voluntary services for the United States, or employing personal services in excess of that authorized by law, except in cases of emergency involving the safety of human life or the protection of property. 31 U.S.C. § 1342.

Penalties for violation of the act can include administrative discipline, fines, and imprisonment.

Plan Maintenance

This plan should be reviewed and documentation submitted to the OBPA prior to a potential shutdown to ensure a current understanding of available funding and other impacts on the plan.

Enclosures

Enclosures for this document will be provided as separate attachments and include a summary of employment, summary of agency programs and activities, and an agency start up plan.