

**Office of the Inspector General**

**CONTINGENCY PLAN**

**September 2023**



**Department of the Interior  
Office of the Inspector General  
Contingency Plan for a Potential Lapse in Appropriations  
September 2023**

**Overview**

In the event of a lapse in appropriations, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) will continue operations using its remaining funding from its two-year appropriation. When available appropriated funding is expended, the OIG will conduct an orderly shutdown placing the majority of its personnel on furlough, closing six OIG offices.

**Orderly Shutdown**

In preparing the contingency plan, staffing needs were carefully reviewed. The number of exempt, excepted, and furloughed employees can be expected to fluctuate from week to week as management makes adjustments to respond to evolving needs and developments. The plan for actions during a short lapse (1 to 5 days) is as follows:

**Lapse Plan Summary Overview**

**Short-Term Lapse**

<b>Short Lapse Plan (1-5 days) Summary Overview</b>	
Estimated time (to nearest half day) required to complete shutdown activities:	0.50
Total number of agency employees expected to be on board before implementation of the plan:	300
Total number of agency employees expected to be furloughed under the plan (unduplicated count):	291
<b>Total number of employees to be retained under the plan for each of the following categories (may include duplicated counts):</b>	
Compensation is financed by a resource other than annual appropriations:	0
Necessary to perform activities expressly authorized by law:	0
Necessary to perform activities necessarily implied by law: <sup>1</sup>	4
Necessary to the discharge of the President’s constitutional duties and powers:	0
Necessary to protect life and property: <sup>1</sup>	5

<sup>1</sup>Required activities may be performed on an on-call basis, as appropriate, as indicated by operational need.

**Brief summary of significant agency activities that will continue during a lapse:**

The OIG will continue activities necessarily implied by law, including minimal staff numbers to support essential operations, including budget, finance, acquisitions, human resources, facilities management, and other administrative functions. The OIG will also continue activities to protect life and property, including emergency management, information technology, telecommunications, data center management, and unified communications.

**Brief summary of significant agency activities that will cease during a lapse:**

The OIG is an oversight agency that accomplishes its mission by conducting investigations, audits, evaluations, and prevention activities. The OIG does not routinely provide emergency services or resource protection. Accordingly, most OIG staff will be furloughed and recalled only if their services become necessary.

All six OIG offices would close. Employees will be provided with recall procedures when provided with furlough information. All OIG employees will be notified through the Everbridge System communication process when a furlough ends and will receive information on when to report for duty and actions necessary to resume orderly operations.

The OIG identified a limited group of employees as essential to certain internal operations that may arise in emergencies or if other unpredictable circumstances arise during any furlough period. This group includes the Inspector General. The employees in this group will be notified to be on call during the furlough period so that they can be reached if their services are required. If an employee is recalled for duty, the employee will return to furlough status once the required services are completed.

OIG Special Agents are sworn law enforcement officers available for emergency response and to support other Department of Interior (DOI) law enforcement in emergencies. However, it is not expected that OIG law enforcement support will be needed during the initial period of a Department closure; therefore, all Special Agents will be furloughed and subject to call back. The OIG Office of Investigations is responsible for investigating criminal, civil, and administrative allegations regarding DOI employees and DOI programs. If the OIG has an active investigation that could compromise public safety by putting it on hold, the OIG will continue staffing that investigation as employees necessary to protect life and property. In addition, if there are active court proceedings, the Department of Justice may require support from criminal investigators.

**Shutdown activities that will not be completed within one-half day:**

N/A

**Long-Term Lapse**

<b>Extended Lapse Plan (over 5 days) Summary Overview</b>	
Estimated time (to nearest half day) required to complete shutdown activities:	0.50
Total number of agency employees expected to be on board before implementation of the plan:	300

<b>Extended Lapse Plan (over 5 days) Summary Overview</b>	
Total number of agency employees expected to be furloughed under the plan (unduplicated count):	295
<b>Total number of employees to be retained under the plan for each of the following categories (may include duplicated counts):</b>	
Compensation is financed by a resource other than annual appropriations:	0
Necessary to perform activities expressly authorized by law:	0
Necessary to perform activities necessarily implied by law: <sup>1</sup>	1
Necessary to the discharge of the President’s constitutional duties and powers:	0
Necessary to protect life and property: <sup>1</sup>	4

<sup>1</sup>Required activities may be performed on an on-call basis, as appropriate, as indicated by operational need.

**Actions to Resume Orderly Operations**

**Communications**

The OIG leadership will notify furloughed employees it is permissible to take home computers and mobile devices and check emails periodically (e.g., twice a day), noting "Shutdown Update" in the subject line. This can provide valuable information to staff, such as information that they are being called back as exempt or excepted status employees; information on benefits and pay; when the shutdown may end; and the time period of furlough is being extended.

Lead timekeepers will be available to assist non-furloughed supervisors and managers so that hours are tracked correctly in the time and attendance system as exempt, excepted, or furloughed. This helps ensure employees are correctly paid during and after shutdown.

**Flexibilities Available to Supervisors**

If an employee has an issue returning to work once the shutdown ends (for instance, due to leave planned in advance), OIG encourages supervisors to allow employees to use routine leave, such as accrued annual leave, compensatory time, credit hours, etc. Employees should coordinate this approval with the supervisor when notified of the return to work.

**Resuming Normal Operations**

Furloughed employees are expected to monitor public broadcasts and the Internet, including but not limited to DOI.gov and DOI/OIG.gov, for information and public notices relevant to any appropriation or

a continuing resolution for DOI passed by Congress and signed by the President. Absent circumstances such as those noted above, employees are expected to return to regular duty on the next workday immediately after the end of the lapse in appropriations.