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Government Shutdown - What to do

How the federal government shutdown affects Minnesota seniors and what you can do to help

Dear Minnesota DFL Senior Caucus members:

As seniors, we are affected by the federal government shutdown in many ways. We want to let you know that we have pulled together information from experts about what seniors across the state should expect. We need your help in sharing this!

Can you help spread the word? There are 500 news outlets (print and online) in Minnesota, and we are hoping you'll write a letter

to one. We've put together a brief model letter that you can use; you should also feel free to put things in your own words. Here's a list of these news outlets [List of newspapers in Minnesota - Wikipedia](#). Following the letter draft is information you can use in the letter.

Dear Editor:

*The government shut down is affecting seniors in this way:
It is affecting me personally in the following way:
{Describe here how the shutdown affects you, your family, or
your friends}*

*Congress needs to pass a bill to fund the government. This was
supposed to get done by September 30, before the
government's fiscal year began on October 1. Since this
requires 60 votes to pass in the Senate, it means Democrats
and Republicans in Washington need to work together.*

*Please help spread the word that the government shutdown
must end.*

*Yours truly,
{Your name}*

Information you can use:

How does government shutdown affect seniors and others?

Social Security and Medicare

Social Security benefits will continue to be paid; however, staffing will be reduced at the Social Security Administration (SSA), likely resulting in delays for benefit verifications, Medicare card replacements,

disability claims processing, and new application processing. There will be delays in receiving in-person services. The official announcements of the 2026 Social Security cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) and Medicare Part B premium may also be delayed,

Unless Congress acts, Medicare premiums for the 22 million Americans who purchase health insurance through Affordable Care Act exchanges are expected to increase by as much as 114% on January 1. In Minnesota alone, there are over 1,150,000 Medicare recipients who may be severely impacted without Congressional action.

Other federal benefits and services programs that will be affected by the shutdown include:

- The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) – at risk of quickly running out of Federal funding over the next week, with Minnesota state funds running out soon thereafter
- The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits will continue through October, after which there will likely be disruptions in payments
- Cuts to Medicaid have already begun
- Head Start
- Meals on Wheels
- Telemedicine. This is so important to Minnesota's rural communities and those who whose ability to travel is impacted by winter weather. Medicare now has the ability to pay for telehealth; however, due to the budget impasse, Medicare telehealth flexibilities and the Acute Hospital Care at Home program expired on September 30. If you are impacted, check with your health care provider to see how they are handling this.

The truth about “illegal immigrants” and health care

Contrary to the “fake news” being spread, Democratic proposals DO NOT provide health care for undocumented workers, despite what the White House claims. Undocumented immigrants have never been able to purchase health care or receive health care subsidies under the Affordable Care Act, and they are ineligible for Medicare, Medicaid, and the Children's Health Program.

STATEWIDE SENIOR CAUCUS CONTACT INFO

Contact the Senior Caucus at dflseniors@gmail.com

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