



DPS PR# 17-015

06/08/2017

Possible Government Shutdown Effects to DPS Services

(Anchorage, Alaska)– Commissioner Walt Monegan announced today that the Department of Public Safety is working with the Department of Law to analyze the potential effects of a government shutdown on DPS.

Below are some of the many important DPS services potentially at risk of being shut down, delayed or interrupted if a budget compromise cannot be reached within the legislature before July 1:

- Plan Examiners for building and construction, the Office of Rural Fire Protection, and the Training Bureau could potentially be affected.
- Alaska Fire Standards Council provides fire training and certifications across the state.
- Alaska Police Standards Council could suffer severe backlog of law enforcement officer approvals that would directly affect upcoming scheduled training academies.
- Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault could see delays in the ability to complete FY2018 grant award processes to mostly nonprofit organizations, which could potentially hinder victim service program operations.
- State Crime Detection Laboratory will determine sufficient staff to retain high-profile/high priority analysis. However, the backlog of requests for analysis could potentially grow. Delivery of results could be greatly delayed. This could also significantly affect court cases where analysts are needed for testimony. Furthermore, training provided for breath-alcohol operation and evidence and sexual assault kit collection could potentially be impacted.
- Statewide Information Technology Services provide critical support programs to all of DPS, including law enforcement. An extended shutdown could prove crippling to the IT support of DPS and cause auditing to fall out of regulatory compliance.
- Additional items that may be affected within DPS are the Sex Offender Registry, as well as the ability to obtain background checks necessary for employment, concealed handgun permits, and security guard licenses could all be directly affected by even a partial government shutdown.
- Fiscal instability may also hurt DPS' ability to attract and retain qualified applicants for troopers and other essential personnel.

The Department of Public Safety has a responsibility to protect the citizens of Alaska and as such, the Alaska State Troopers and Alaska Wildlife Troopers would continue to fully enforce Alaska's laws and respond to emergency calls. However, it is not fully known how a reduction in support services would affect some services provided by DPS.

This year's preparations for a government shutdown are different than in 2015, when the legislature had passed a partially funded budget. This year, money has not been appropriated for any government services. As a government shutdown in Alaska is unprecedented, Department of Law is examining **what money could be spent to continue vital state services if the legislature has not fulfilled its constitutional obligation to pass a budget.**

###