

Responses to Questions Raised During Back Pay Webinars

#	Question	Answer	Category
1	When will all the adjustments and changes be made?	The majority of shutdown related adjustments should be completed by PP 04 (Pay date: 2/26/19). But more adjustments may be needed, on a case by case basis, after PP 04. If any discrepancies persist, please contact the HR Help Desk at HRPAYHELP@epa.gov .	Pay
2	What is the definition of Advance Pay?	The off-cycle interim back pay payment is called "advance pay" on the LES as a way to identify it as a special payment. Please refer to the "Explanation of Employee Express Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) for Pay Period (PP) 03" for more information.	Pay
3	What is the difference between advance pay and government shutdown retroactive pay?	The advance pay is a percentage of the regular gross pay used to provide short term payment between pay cycles. The government shutdown retroactive pay is the pay received as part of a normal pay cycle reconciliation of the advanced pay. Please refer to the Explanation of Employee Express Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) for Pay Period (PP) 03	Pay
4	Why is gross pay larger than year to date pay?	The differences between the year to date gross pay and the current pay period pay result from the way that the interim off-cycle back pay payments are recalculated. The interim off-cycle back pay payments are reflected on the LESs in both the "Earnings" section and in the "Deductions" section. In the recalculation process, the payroll system is reconciling the differences between what was paid in the off-cycle payments compared to what you normally would have been paid.	Pay
5	What should I do if I think I received too much or too little pay?	If you think you received too much or too little pay, please contact the Help Desk at HRPAYHELP@epa.gov .	Pay

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6	Is an updated LES (Leave and Earnings Statement) going to be issued for pay periods PP01 and PP02?	No, you will not receive an updated LES for PP 01 and 02.	Pay
7	Were any deductions made from off cycle payments in PP01 or PP02?	Please refer to the Explanation of Employee Express Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) for Pay Period (PP) 03 .	Pay
8	Are 2018 W-2s accurate?	Yes. The 2018 W-2s are accurate.	Pay
9	Is there a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)?	As of PP 03, Congress has not passed a budget that includes a Cost of Living Adjustment.	Pay
10	Since net pay for PP 03 will be higher, will I be taxed a higher tax bracket?	With no pretax disbursements made in the advance pay for PP01 and 02, the taxes will increase based on your gross pay. If an employee does not change their regular tax withholdings, they should not see a higher tax bracket. Any tax implications would have been reconciled in PP1903 for the advance pay.	Pay
11	Am I expected to correct hours for the week of January 28th?	Possibly. Because your standard schedule was applied, you may need to make corrections for any deviations (leave, overtime, site specific work, etc.). However, corrections should only be made for time actually worked, not for time you were furloughed. Please refer to the PeoplePlus Time Card Correction Guidance for more information.	Time and Attendance

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12	What is the process to make corrections on timecards for pay periods during the shutdown?	<p>A. Excepted-designated employees who conducted excepted work during the shutdown may make time card corrections for the time period, Saturday, December 29, 2018, through Friday, January 25, 2019. Corrections should include any approved overtime or premium pay time worked to carry out their excepted duties. Employees should use normal overtime and/or premium pay time reporting codes in PeoplePlus. Note: overtime and or premium pay will be subject to biweekly pay cap thresholds.</p> <p>B. Furlough-designated employees should not make any time card corrections for Saturday, December 29, 2018, through Friday, January 25, 2019.</p> <p>C. All employees may make time card corrections to hours worked either prior to or after the shutdown. There are no restrictions.</p> <p>Please refer to the PeoplePlus Time Card Correction Guidance for more information.</p>	Time and Attendance
13	Why are adjusted hours different for employees who were all furloughed?	The adjusted hours on the LES are a result of the schedule for each employee based on hours worked/paid for PP 01. For example, some employees had compressed days during the first half of the pay period before the shutdown while others had compressed days that during the second half, which was affected by the shutdown.	Time and Attendance
14	How should we code hours for excepted employees who worked the furlough?	For those excepted employees, they should report their time as FURWK. FURWK should be used also for intermittent. Please refer to the PeoplePlus Time Card Correction Guidance for more information.	Time and Attendance
15	If I was an excepted employee, why I am I not able to enter the FURWK code in PeoplePlus?	Submit a HR Help Desk ticket at HRPAYHELP@epa.gov so that they can be added and therefore will be able to use the TRC.	Time and Attendance
16	I worked on January 26 and 27, when the government was re-opened. Why am I not able to enter my hours in PeoplePlus?	Submit a HR Help Desk Ticket at HRPAYHELP@epa.gov	Time and Attendance
17	Did we earn leave during the shutdown?	Yes. Statement for PP 1902 shows no leave accrual, because this pay period was considered “non pay status.” Once backpay was authorized, leave that would have accrued in this pay cycle was restored in your YTD balance. Please refer to the Explanation of Employee Express Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) for Pay Period (PP) 03 for more information.	Leave

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18	What if my applied schedule is incorrect?	Submit a HR Help Desk Ticket at HRPAYHELP@epa.gov	Time and Attendance
19	What is the policy for restoring Use or Lose?	A policy from the Office of Mission Support (OMS) is forthcoming on how Use or Lose leave will be restored.	Leave
20	What happens to leave that was scheduled and approved to take during the shutdown?	For Use or Lose, the policy from OMS will be forthcoming. If it wasn't Use or Lose, it will be restored, and you do not need to cancel or take any action.	Leave
21	What is the policy for restoring Time Off Awards?	A policy from OMS is forthcoming on how Time Off Awards will be restored.	Leave
22	How is FEHB affected by the shutdown?	Deductions will be doubled in each pay period until all missed payments have been made. Please refer to the Explanation of Employee Express Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) for Pay Period (PP) 03 for more information.	Healthcare and Other Insurance
23	Why are there two health benefit deductions in one pay period?	Deductions will be doubled in each pay period until all missed payments have been made. Please refer to the Explanation of Employee Express Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) for Pay Period (PP) 03 for more information.	Healthcare and Other Insurance
24	I changed my insurance for 2019, how do I confirm the transfer occurred and how do I reconcile the payment differences?	You can confirm the transfer by looking at Employee Express or by contacting your insurance company. Payment amounts will be different in 2019, even for people who retained the same health policy. You will need to confirm the total amount taken in PP 03 and 04.	Healthcare and Other Insurance
25	How are Dental and Vision Insurance affected by the shutdown?	Benefeds (FEDVIP) premiums will be withheld from future paychecks and will be doubled starting with PP 03 until payments are reconciled. Please refer to the Explanation of Employee Express Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) for Pay Period (PP) 03 for more information.	Healthcare and Other Insurance
26	How are FSA deductions affected by the shutdown?	Your FSAFEDS payroll deductions stopped when your pay stopped. For individual questions, please refer to https://www.fsafeds.com/	Healthcare and Other Insurance
27	How is FEGLI affected by the shutdown?	Coverage continues for up to 12 consecutive months of non pay status, but premiums are collected only for pay periods for which you receive pay. Please refer to the OPM Fact Sheet for Pay and Benefits Information for Employees Affected by the Lapse in Appropriations document for more information.	Healthcare and Other Insurance

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28	How is Long Term Care Insurance affected by the shutdown?	Please refer to the OPM Fact Sheet for Pay and Benefits Information for Employees Affected by the Lapse in Appropriations document for more information. Or you may also contact your insurance provider with questions.	Healthcare and Other Insurance
29	How were TSP contributions affected by the shutdown?	For information on the effect of a furlough on your Thrift Savings Plan contributions, loans, and investments, please refer to https://www.tsp.gov/index.html .	TSP
30	Since the 2018 government shutdown started at the end of the year, will TSP deductions be maxed out?	Your 2018 TSP Contributions will not be affected.	TSP
31	How were TSP Loan Payments affected by the shutdown?	For information on the effect of a furlough on your Thrift Savings Plan contributions, loans, and investments, please refer to https://www.tsp.gov/index.html .	TSP
32	How are TSP catchup contributions affected by the shutdown?	For information on the effect of a furlough on your Thrift Savings Plan contributions, loans, and investments, please refer to https://www.tsp.gov/index.html .	TSP
33	How were Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) contributions affected by the Shutdown?	See the Mass Mailer sent out to the agency regarding the CFC.	Allotments
34	How were Union Dues affected by the Shutdown?	Please refer to Guidance on union dues is available on the EPA LAPSE website.	Allotments
35	Will previous allotments eventually be paid for pay periods affected by the shutdown?	No. Only future allotments will be paid out.	Allotments
36	Will Court Ordered Garnishments and Discretionary Allotments eventually be paid for pay periods affected by the shutdown?	Court Ordered Garnishments and Discretionary Allotments will need to be retroactively paid. Please contact the HR Help Desk at HRPAYHELP@epa.gov or IBC to ensure these transactions are made.	Allotments
37	Why don't I see allotments on my Leave and Earnings Statement?	Allotments were not taken in PP 02. If you do not see allotments in PP 03 or later, contact the HR Help Desk at HRPAYHELP@epa.gov .	Allotments
38	Why are my allotments no longer showing in Employee Express?	If allotments are missing in Employee Express, please contact the HR Help Desk at HRPAYHELP@epa.gov .	Allotments
39	How were additional withholdings for Federal, State, and Local taxes affected by the shutdown?	As a result of the advance pay for the shutdown, no additional withholdings were applied to any taxes on any level. Please look at the PP03 LES to ensure the additional taxes began in PP03.	Other
40	How is Service Computation Date for Retirement affected by the shutdown?	Your service computation date for retirement was not affected by the shutdown.	Other

