

NEWS

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OMB Expected to Send Memo to Agencies on Government Shutdown

By Ryan McCrimmon, CQ Roll Call

The Trump administration on Friday is expected to circulate its first shutdown guidance to federal agencies ahead of a government funding deadline at the end of the month, though it's unclear what else the directive might include.

The guidance is pro forma and not an indication that a partial shutdown will occur when current appropriations under a continuing resolution (PL 114-254) expire at midnight on April 28, just days after lawmakers return to the Capitol from the two-week Easter recess.

But the White House Office of Management and Budget under the law is required to issue the instructions to agencies seven days ahead of a deadline to enact new appropriations. A White House official confirmed they expect to do so Friday.

The guidance from OMB likely will direct agencies to prepare or update plans for closing down most operations in the event of a lapse of appropriations, though certain emergency functions are permitted to continue.

A shutdown is still possible, given the compressed timeline for funneling a massive spending bill through both chambers of Congress and a number of potential stumbling blocks that could trip up bipartisan negotiations. Congress has yet to pass 11 of the 12 spending bills for fiscal 2017, which began Oct. 1.

So far, Democrats and Republicans involved in the spending talks have indicated that the negotiations are proceeding smoothly.

But top Democrats like Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer of New York have warned that interference by President Donald Trump could be problematic if Trump insists on spending and policy provisions, like significant funding for his proposed U.S.-Mexico border wall, that Democrats consider toxic to an agreement.