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Governor Orders Incident Command Structure to Address Potential Government Shutdown

June 8, 2017 JUNEAU—To prepare for the crisis that an unprecedented government shutdown would impose upon Alaska, Governor Bill Walker ordered today that the Walker-Mallott Administration set up an incident command structure to prepare for a potential government shutdown. Given the legislature’s failure to pass a budget, Alaskans are facing a shutdown of government services in 22 days.

“I remain hopeful that both legislative bodies will come to a compromise in the next nine days of this special session,” Governor Walker. “However, my team and I must be prepared for a worst-case scenario. That is why I have ordered that an incident command structure be set up—much like we implemented to address the opioid crisis.”

Governor Walker will hold regular meetings with members of his Cabinet and those who are critical to addressing the potential impacts of the shutdown—many of which are not yet known. The Department of Law and the Office of Management and Budget have already begun analyzing the potential effects, and will continue to have leading roles under this new structure.

Some of the services provided by the governor’s and lieutenant governor’s staff at risk of being shut down, delayed or interrupted if the legislature fails to pass a budget before July 1:

- Responses to constituents’ requests for assistance and proclamations
- Human Rights Commission investigations into human rights complaints
- Authentication of signatures for Alaska companies doing business in foreign countries
- Authentication certification of paperwork for Alaskans hoping to adopt children from other countries
- Authentication paperwork to return the bodies of foreign nationals who die in Alaska

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.

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