

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE PENDING FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN ON THE OPERATION OF THE U.S. DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE?

If Congress is unable to pass a final FY2011 funding bill or in its absence a stop-gap continuing resolution by midnight, Friday, April 8, 2011, a lapse in appropriations will occur and the federal government will experience a shutdown in operations. Regardless of whatever information is disseminated by news sources or others, for approximately the first two weeks of a general government shutdown, we do not anticipate any significant impact on court services in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Tennessee, including both the Eastern Division based in Jackson and the Western Division based in Memphis. The United States Judiciary has non-appropriated fee accounts and no-year funds with which to temporarily provide continued operations for the first two weeks of a general shutdown of the federal government. Please see the attached link to the national news release from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts website:

http://www.uscourts.gov/News/NewsView/11-04-05/What_Happens_to_Courts_if_the_Federal_Government_Closes.aspx.

As this press release notes, services will be severely impacted if the shutdown continues beyond the initial two-week period. If the shutdown goes beyond this funded period, the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Tennessee has in place contingency plans for continued operations, and attorneys and parties litigating matters before the District Court, other state, local and federal agencies as well as the public, should monitor this website for further information about possible changes in court proceedings and conducting court business. We will use the District Court's public website, direct email notifications to attorneys registered in the CM/ECF system, print notices posted in the Jackson and Memphis court facilities, and press releases, to the extent available, to keep court users and the public fully informed.

Finally, I do want to reiterate that even if there is a general federal government shutdown starting after April 8, 2011, there will be no change in Court hours or services unless and until notice is posted otherwise.

Thomas M. Gould
Clerk of Court
April 8, 2011