NEWS | POSTED SEPTEMBER 29, 2025

U.S. Government Shutdown 2025: What it Means for SRCD Members

SRCD's actions and what to do if you have a federal research grant

Last updated: November 13th, 2025

After a 43-day shutdown, federal lawmakers and the Administration have reached an agreement on a short-term funding package that keeps the government open through January 30, 2026. As operations gradually resume, we encourage SRCD members to reconnect with project managers at federal research agencies to discuss the status of their contracts and grants. SRCD's Policy Department will continue working with coalition partners and federal lawmakers to advocate for robust science funding as spending negotiations move forward.

What's included in the short-term "minibus"?

The enacted legislation provides full-year funding through September 30, 2026 for military construction, veterans' affairs, the legislative branch, and the Department of Agriculture, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). However, the remainder of the federal government, including research-focused agencies, is only funded through January 30th, 2026. This sets up the potential for renewed partisan negotiations and the risk of another government shutdown early next year.

What to do if you are affected.

If you have a federal grant or contract, or if your work relies on coordination with federal programs, **we strongly recommend you contact your program officer immediately to get more information about what resources and services may be interrupted because of a potential shutdown**. If a shutdown occurs, federal staff will not be able to communicate with you, so it's important to reach out to them early to get specific support.

Every shutdown is different, so we've prepared a memo that has more information about different possible scenarios and resource links.

Government Shutdown Memo

Federal Agencies Contingency Plans

Federal agency contingency plan is a document that outlines how a federal agency will operate during a lapse in appropriations, in other words, during a federal government shutdown. These plans typically include procedures for orderly shutdowns, details on how the agency will communicate with employees, the public and other interested parties, as well as budget justifications.

See below contingency plans for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Science Foundation (NSF):

- National Institutes of Health
- National Science Foundation

Memo from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

It has been reported that the OMB has circulated a memo that directs federal agencies to prepare not only for furloughs during a lapse in appropriations, but also to consider issuing Reduction in Force (RIF) notices for employees in programs that rely solely on discretionary funding and are not covered by mandatory appropriations. This represents a significant escalation from past shutdown planning, raising concerns about long-term disruption to federal research programs and the stability of the scientific workforce. Programs without protected funding—such as research grants funded by the National Institutes of Health

(NIH) and the National Science Foundation (NSF), Head Start centers with grants set to renew on October 1st, and national education data collections at the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), to name a few—are especially vulnerable to these disruptions.

SRCD Advocates for our Members

SRCD has been working hard to ensure that the critical science that our members do is funded in Congress. We have met with over 75 Congressional offices and appropriations committee staff to highlight the importance of research funding. SRCD members have flown to D.C. to share their stories and SRCD staff work in coalition with dozens of scientific societies to amplify our voices.

We have also signed on to eight letters to the U.S. Congress to request much needed investments on science-based programs that would increase research capacity and expand on existing projects.

However, there is still much to do! U.S. federal government shutdowns have a negative effect on the economy, and it's our children and underserved members of our communities who suffer the most. Alongside rising child poverty rates, millions of children and their families now face the uncertainty of not having federal safety nets that provide shelter, food, and basic services. We know how impactful child poverty and insecurity can be on child development. SRCD stands ready to support our members and advocate to Congress if a shutdown occurs.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. Please make sure to visit our website for more information and to follow our social media channels for updates.

Government Shutdown Memo