

IMPACT OF THE DHS SHUTDOWN

In February 2026, the funding for the Department of Homeland Security lapsed and, as of March 24, 2026, has yet to be restored by an act of Congress. Experts warn that this shutdown could potentially impact immigration services and domestic security efforts.

Did you know?...

- When the DHS shutdown began, 1,453 of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) 2,341 employees — approximately 62% of the workforce — were [furloughed](#). CISA is now operating at approximately 38% of its normal staffing capacity.
- National security experts [raised](#) concerns that the partial government shutdown of DHS could lead to Iran targeting the United States with acts of terrorism.
- As airports are overstretched, TSA has [received](#) support from ICE agents, who have been deployed to fill in staffing gaps. These deployments mean they cannot pursue immigration operations as they support airport travel concerns.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is [operating](#) without funding due to the shutdown. As a result, FEMA has only the funds on hand, estimated to be a few billion, to respond to major disasters.



Airports could close, Transportation Secretary warns

Wait times at airport security lines have [continued](#) to rise since the shutdown began and TSA agents stopped receiving pay, with wait times at major airports such as Houston and Atlanta reaching two hours in March 2026.

In March 2026, Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy [warned](#) some airports could close if conditions worsen under the ongoing funding debate.

Impact Of The DHS Shutdown

Executive Summary

In February 2026, the funding for the Department of Homeland Security lapsed and, as of March 24, 2026, has yet to be restored by an act of Congress. This issue, caused by an ongoing debate on immigration and national security priorities between Republicans and Democrats, has caused government services to be impacted and caused over 90% of DHS' 260,000 employees to work without pay.

The shutdown has impacted various services provided by the federal government, including TSA airport screening services leading to long wait times at airports, and a failure to send alerts through the DHS terrorism notification system. Experts warn that this shutdown could potentially impact immigration services and domestic security efforts.

Impact Of The Partial Government Shutdown

Details On The Shutdown

On February 14, 2026, the Department of Homeland Security's funding [expired](#) under a short extension after the partial government shutdown from January 31 through February 3, 2026. A new deal for DHS funding was not included due to ongoing political debate over immigration policy, so the department entered a shutdown at midnight on February 14.

The primary debate [regarding](#) DHS revolves around the Trump Administration's immigration policy, with Democrats demanding restrictions on the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency after several high-profile incidents, including the deaths of several individuals, which occurred during ICE enforcement actions. Republicans in Congress and the Trump Administration have opposed restrictions on ICE, framing the Democrat's opposition to funding DHS as impeding national security efforts.

Working Without Pay

- Of the over 260,000 employees currently working for DHS, over 90% of them are [considered](#) essential, meaning that they are required to continue working without pay. This includes but is not limited to:
 - U.S. Customs And Border Protection (CBP) And ICE
 - Transportation Security Administration (TSA)
 - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
 - Coast Guard

Airport And TSA Impacts

- Wait times at airport security lines have [continued](#) to rise since the shutdown began and TSA agents stopped receiving pay, with wait times at major airports such as Houston and Atlanta reaching two hours in March 2026.

- TSA has [reported](#) record call-out rates by their officers over non-payment, with over 3,250 officers called out on a single day (March 21), representing 11.51% of the scheduled workforce
- In March 2026, Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy [warned](#) some airports could close if conditions worsen under the ongoing funding debate.

Impact On Domestic Security During Operation Epic Fury

- On February 28, 2026, the United States commenced “Operation Epic Fury” targeting key military targets in Iran. National security experts [raised](#) concerns that the partial government shutdown of DHS could lead to Iran targeting the United States with acts of terrorism.
- Since “Operation Epic Fury” began, there have been at least four [suspected](#) terrorist attacks on the United States, [including](#) the March 1 public shooting in Austin, Texas by Ndiaga Diagne, who killing three people and injuring 15 more before being shot and killed by police. Diagne was wearing a sweatshirt reading "Property of Allah," an undershirt bearing the Iranian flag, with a Quran found in his vehicle.
- Additionally, the United States has [intercepted](#) what are believed to be operational triggers for Iranian sleeper cells to commence terrorist attacks in response to “Operation Epic Fury.”
- Since February 17, 2026, three days into the partial shutdown, there has not been an alert [issued](#) by the National Terrorism Advisory System, the DHS’s public threat advisory mechanism, with DHS analysts warning that this could be due to the shutdown.

Cybersecurity

- When the DHS shutdown began, 1,453 of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) 2,341 employees — approximately 62% of the workforce — were [furloughed](#). Earlier layoffs and personnel cuts that had already [removed](#) roughly a third of the agency's staff before the shutdown, CISA is now operating at approximately 38% of its normal staffing capacity.
- Implementation of the Cyber Incident Reporting for Critical Infrastructure Act, [requiring](#) critical infrastructure entities (including electric utilities to hospitals) to disclose ransomware attacks and cyber breaches, has been stalled due to the shutdown.

Immigration

- As airports are overstretched, TSA has [received](#) support from ICE agents, who have been deployed to fill in staffing gaps. However, these deployments mean they cannot pursue immigration operations as they support airport travel concerns.
- Over 1.5 million individuals with deportation orders, 800,000 of which have criminal convictions, [remain](#) in the U.S., and while this number has been unaffected by the shutdown, a lack of funding causes issues in ensuring those deportation orders are followed.

Disaster Response

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is [operating](#) without funding due to the shutdown. As a result, FEMA has only the funds on hand, estimated to be a few billion, to respond to major disasters
- FEMA's coordination capacity with state and local emergency management is [reduced](#) and real-world disaster risks are on the horizon as we move into storm season in the spring and summer of 2026.