



ECONOMIC IMPACT



Economic Impact of the GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN ON YELLOWSTONE COUNTY AND MONTANA

The federal government entered a shutdown on October 1, 2025, at 12:01 a.m. EDT, which remains ongoing as of November 5, 2025. This marks the second-longest full shutdown in U.S. history after the 35-day shutdown of 2018-2019. The economic impact is being felt across Montana and specifically in Yellowstone County, affecting federal workers, agricultural producers, tourism-dependent communities, and various sectors of the state economy.

ECONOMISTS ESTIMATE THAT EACH WEEK OF THE SHUTDOWN COSTS THE U.S. ECONOMY APPROXIMATELY

\$7 billion

AND REDUCES GDP GROWTH BY 0.1 PERCENTAGE POINTS

APPROXIMATELY

900,000

FEDERAL WORKERS HAVE BEEN FURLOUGHED NATIONWIDE, WITH ANOTHER 2 MILLION WORKING WITHOUT PAY.

WHO IS GOVERNMENT? A LOOK AT MONTANA'S FEDERAL WORKFORCE



FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT NUMBERS:

Montana has approximately

12,400

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Billings (Yellowstone County) has

1,689

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

SECOND ONLY TO HELENA

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is Montana's largest federal government agency, with more than

3,000 EMPLOYEES.

JobsEQ, Billings Gazette

PAYCHECK DISRUPTIONS:

- Federal workers missed their first full paycheck on October 24, 2025.
- Many federal workers earn less than **\$90,000 annually**, with **43%** of federal employees earning below this threshold according to March 2024 government data.
- While Congress passed a law in 2019 ensuring back pay for federal employees after a shutdown ends, President Trump has suggested recently that furloughed workers shouldn't count on it.



STOCKMAN BANK STEPS UP

Stockman Bank is deferring loan payments until the shutdown ends and will restructure debt afterward if needed, while also offering case-by-case help for businesses feeling the impact.

"We recognize the stress a government shutdown creates for workers who still have bills to pay," said Bill Coffee, Stockman Bank CEO. "We are happy to make accommodations for impacted federal employees to help reduce this stress and protect their credit."

TIMELY IMPACT TO ECONOMIC DRIVERS

AGRICULTURE

The shutdown has created significant challenges for Montana's agricultural community:

➤ **Farm Service Agency:** All 49 USDA Farm Service Agency offices across Montana closed on October 1, placing all **200 Montana FSA employees** on furlough. FSA issues more than **\$300 million** annually to Montanans for farm loans and conservation payments, which won't go out during the shutdown and will be delayed afterward.

Billings Gazette

➤ **Broader Economic Ripple Effects:** In rural Montana communities, farmers form the base of the local economy, so if farmers can't pay their bills or are waiting to get paid, it causes delays throughout the economy in rural communities.

JobsEQ, KTVH, Montana Free Press

CHILDREN, ELDERLY, ARTS, AND STATE GOVERNMENT SEE IMPACTS

Overall Federal Funding Concerns:

Large-scale federal changes to funding will have significant impacts on Montana, with a report this summer estimating a nearly **\$160 million** hit to the state's budget. Montana state agencies have expressed concern about the potential loss of federal funding across various programs.

Specific Agency Impacts:

The Montana State Library, Montana Arts Council, and Montana Historical Society have small budgets to begin with, and federal money makes up a huge percentage of their funding. **Federal funds make up 13.7% of school district budgets in the state.**

Daily Montanan

More than **77,000 Montanans, or about 7% of the state's population**, could lose access to a food assistance program beginning in November if the federal government shutdown continues.

Most SNAP participants are children, elderly people and individuals with disabilities. Montana food bank leaders say that a disruption puts a strain on the entire food assistance system.

TOURISM

AND THE IMPACT TO OUR NATIONAL PARKS

Montana's tourism economy, particularly around Yellowstone National Park, faces substantial disruption:

Yellowstone National Park:

In 2024, Yellowstone contributed

- **\$169 million** in lodging
- **\$9.2 million** in gas
- **\$63 million** in restaurant meals to the local economy with recreation businesses bringing in **\$55.6 million.**

*Last year, tourists to America's national parks spent **APPROXIMATELY \$29 BILLION** in gateway towns across the country.*

Gateway Community Concerns:

Gardiner, a gateway town to Yellowstone, is a tourism-driven economy, and while the shutdown is occurring toward the end of the busy season, October can still be very busy if weather holds, which could greatly impact revenue streams.

Gateway town businesses are concerned about losing revenue from hotels, restaurants, gas stations, fly shops, and grocery stores.

Operational Status:

Park roads, lookouts, trails, and open-air memorials remain accessible to visitors, but **9,296 of the park agency's 14,500 employees** were expected to be furloughed.

Roughly three-quarters of park staff nationwide have been furloughed because of the shutdown.

KTVH, JobsEQ, Fairfield Sun Times, Mountain Journal, Montana Public Radio, Montana Free Press

HISTORICAL COMPARISONS

Past Shutdown Costs: The 2018-2019 shutdown, which lasted 34 days, cost the U.S. economy about **\$11 billion** according to the Congressional Budget Office. During a 2013 shutdown, the Committee for a Responsible Federal Government estimated that the shutdown resulted in more than **\$500 million** in lost visitor spending nationwide at national parks.

Montana Free Press