



US Immigration Newsletter

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As Shutdown Stretches On How Will Immigration Be Affected?



On December 22nd, the Trump administration's long-running quest to secure funding for the US-Mexico border wall hit an all-too unpredictable impasse.

After weeks of back-and-forth accusations between President Trump and key Democratic figures such as Nancy Pelosi and Chuck Schumer, the President declared that he would refuse to approve any new government budget unless it included an additional \$5.7 billion for border wall construction. This is despite the fact that the White House had previously indicated that he would sign a modified bill that provided \$1.5 billion towards overall border security.

As the House and Senate scrambled to agree a new budget that could meet the President's demands, the December 21st came and went, and a partial government shutdown went into effect. Since then 25 days have passed, officially making this the longest shutdown in US history and we're still no closer to any sort of resolution.

Meanwhile, a number of federal agencies beginning to feel the pinch. Affected departments include: the FDA, TSA, the US Coast Guard, National Parks, the EPA, and certain FAA functions. To add to this, hundreds and thousands of government employees have now missed their paychecks, only adding to anxiety surrounding this prolonged political stalemate.

In terms of immigration, this shutdown has affected many key branches of USCIS. As of last week, the agency's E-verify system has gone offline, while almost 43,000 immigration court hearings have been summarily cancelled.

Although border patrol officers are continuing to show up on duty, these officials have received no guarantee of payments. The closure of several key detention centers has meant that these officials have no choice but to release detained migrants into the streets of border cities. Privately, DHS insiders are describing the situation as a full-blown humanitarian crisis.

CBS Reports Shows Border Crossings Are Not The Issue



According to a recently published CBS report, less than one-third of the United States' 10.7 million strong illegal immigrant population arrived through the US-Mexico border.

The study, funded by the Center for Migration Studies, shows that the volume of undocumented migrants entering the country from the South has more than halved over the past decade.

Instead, the vast majority of recent undocumented migrants (around 700,000) arrived on legitimate visas such as the H1B, and stayed in the country past the permitted expiration date.

Meanwhile, the foreign individuals that are attempting to enter the United States through the Southern Border are fleeing volatile political situations in Central America. For the most part, these individuals are aiming to enter the US legally through the established asylum process.

Poll Shows That Immigration is Leading Concern for US Citizens

Recent polls from Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research show that up to 49% of Americans consider immigration to be one of the leading problems facing the country in 2019.

These figures represent a market uptick from 2 years ago, when only 27% of citizens thought that the issue was worthy of concern.

The data shows that citizens are generally split equally along party lines with around 80% of Republicans showing support for stricter immigration policies through border wall funding, while only 8% of Democrats expressed similar views.

