

Washington State Parks

Contingency planning for unlikely event of government shutdown

The Washington Legislature is working to reach final agreement on state operating and capital budgets, prior to the start of the 2017-19 Biennium on July 1. If a budget is not passed by June 30, the Washington state constitution requires a shutdown of state government services.

In the unlikely event of a government shutdown, state parks would be closed July 1.

We apologize for the uncertainty and inconvenience, and we want you to know that full refunds will be given for any reservation nights that customers are not able to use due to a government shutdown.

How would the shutdown affect my camping or overnight lodging reservation in a state park?

As your camping reservation date approaches, please check for updates on the State Parks website, at www.parks.state.wa.us. You have the following options:

- **You can keep your reservation**, and your campsite or accommodations will be waiting for you if government services continue on July 1, as we anticipate. If a shutdown occurs, full refunds will be processed for nights you were not able to use. These automatic refunds would be processed once a budget is signed, and state employees return to work.
- **You can cancel your reservation by telephone at 1-888-226-7688**, any time up to your arrival date to receive the full refund. At this time, the full refund is only for customers who have reservations for June 30 through July 8.

Please note that if you do choose to cancel, you must make these arrangements by telephone to receive a full refund; online cancellations automatically charge the normal reservation and cancellation fees. Also note that if parks remain open and you have a reservation but do not show up, you will be subject to the State Parks “no-show” policy and subject to forfeiture of all fees.

What if my family has reserved an environmental learning center (ELC) or retreat center?

Your options are as follows:

- **Keep your ELC or retreat center reservation in place** and if the parks remain open July 1, the facility will be available so you and your group can carry on with your plans.
- **You may cancel ELC or retreat center reservations between now and June 30, by calling (360) 902-8600**, to receive a full refund of your deposit. Please note that if parks are closed due to a shutdown and you have not cancelled your reservation by June 30, deposit refunds may be significantly delayed due to the furlough of staff. Refunds will be processed as soon as a budget is passed and state employees return to work.

What if our camping reservation is scheduled for late June into July?

If no budget is passed by June 30, visitors arriving at parks that day unfortunately cannot be allowed to enter the parks. Those who are already in the park camping will be asked to pack up their campsites to depart the morning of June 30, so that park staff have time to shut down systems and prepare to close the parks.

If the parks are closed, are people allowed to go in?

Since gates will be closed, you will not be able to drive into the parks. There will be no electricity, water, restroom facilities or garbage service. While it is not illegal to enter a park that has a closed gate, we discourage entering parks when they are closed.

Won't there be a skeleton staff be on hand in the parks?

No, park staff would not be allowed to work during a shutdown. Volunteers in state parks must be supervised by employees, so volunteers will not be available, either. State Parks staff will alert local fire districts and local law enforcement if shutdown appears likely.

How will I know if the parks are open?

Before you go, check the State Parks home page at www.parks.state.wa.us.

If a shutdown occurs: Once a budget is signed and Parks employees are back at work, it will take two to three days for parks to reopen. The parks will need to be assessed for health and safety issues. Water and sewer systems need time to recharge and be certified for public safety. Check the home page for status updates.