

U.S. Shutdown Could Cause Moscow Embassy to Close

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Employees at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow may soon join an estimated 800,000 U.S. government workers furloughed in the midst of a partial government shutdown following U.S. Congress' failure to approve a spending bill for the new fiscal year.

Should the embassy run out of funding, only key diplomats and the consular division, which receives funding from visa and passport service fees, will continue their work, Kommersant reported Friday.

The embassy's operations are currently restricted in accordance with a U.S. State Department memorandum issued Sept. 27.

The memo requires that all embassy activities be divided into the "excepted" and "nonexcepted," with "excepted" functions defined as "those necessary for emergencies involving 'the safety of human life or the protection of property,' and those necessary for

activities essential to national security, including the conduct of foreign affairs essential to national security."

If funding lapses, employees conducting "excepted" activities will continue working while all others will be given four hours to put their affairs in order and then promptly furloughed pending a resolution to the government crisis.

The embassy's funds are available for varying time periods: for one year, for several years, or until expended, an embassy spokesman explained by e-mail.

"Certain State Department and USAID accounts have residual funds that will be available after Sept. 30, 2013," the spokesman said last week.

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