



STATE OF MICHIGAN
TERRI LYNN LAND, SECRETARY OF STATE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
LANSING

Answers to Your Questions

Q: If a government shutdown does occur, will all Secretary of State offices close or just selected ones?

A: As is the case with all other agencies, the Department of State cannot spend money without the authorization that comes with an approved state budget. The lack of spending authority would force the department to close all Secretary of State offices until a budget is approved by the Legislature and governor.

Q: Even if branch offices are closed, can I still do business online or by mail?

A: We encourage customers to take advantage of our convenient methods of license plate renewal that will still be available during a shutdown. You can renew plates [online](#), by [touch-tone phone](#), or [renewal by mail program](#), or at one of our [Self-Service Stations](#). With Self-Service Stations, many of which are available 24/7, your tabs are printed immediately. You can find the Self-Service Station nearest you by visiting our [Branch Office Locator](#). Please remember, though, that renewals done by phone, mail or online will be processed when department employees return to work after a state budget is approved.

Q: Can I still buy a car during a government shutdown?

A: A short-term shutdown will not prevent auto dealers from selling vehicles. As usual, customers receive a temporary title and registration from the dealer immediately upon the sale. For added convenience, more than 230 dealers across Michigan participate in the Secretary of State's Dealer Direct program, which lets car buyers drive off the dealer lot with new plates and registrations in place. Participating dealers can also transfer your current plate to your new vehicle.

Q: Will police give me a ticket if my driver's license or plates expire during the shutdown and I can't renew?

A: The department has asked law enforcement to exercise discretion when dealing with motorists who are in this situation. Please remember, though, that it is up to the specific law enforcement agency as to how it will handle such incidents.

Q: Will I be charged a late fee if my driver's license or plates expire during the shutdown and I can't renew?

A: If the expiration occurred during the state government shutdown, you will not be charged a late fee if you renew as soon as possible once Secretary of State offices reopen. If renewing by mail, any application postmarked before the expiration date will not be considered late.

Q: Are Office of the Great Seal services available if a government shutdown occurs?

A: No. Until state government business resumes, all Office of the Great Seal services, including document authentications, filings and notary public applications cannot be processed at any location.

Q: If I have a license appeal hearing or driver reexamination scheduled during the shutdown period, what do I need to do to get that rescheduled?

A: Anyone scheduled for a hearing or reexamination should check the department's Web site at www.Michigan.gov/sos or call 1-888-767-6424 (SOS-MICH) to see whether the department is open for business. After the government shutdown is over, anyone with an appointment is expected to appear. Appointments during the shutdown will automatically be adjourned and rescheduled by the department. A notice will be mailed to these individuals reflecting a new date and time to appear.