

[Which congressional staff are 'essential' during shutdown?](#)

by Sam Hudzik Apr. 08, 2011

U.S. Rep. Jan Schakowsky said she believes all her staff will be essential.

Members of Illinois' congressional delegation may have to decide which of their staff are "essential," and which they can do without. That's if no spending bill is signed into law by midnight Friday, triggering a government shutdown.

Congressional employees can stick around if they're deemed "essential" to "upholding...constitutional responsibilities." And the member of Congress gets to personally make that decision.

"You know, I think my staff is all going to be particularly essential," said U.S. Rep. Jan Schakowsky, Democrat from Evanston.

Schakowsky said if there's a shutdown, her staff will be answering all sorts of questions about affected government services.

Likewise, U.S. Rep. Robert Dold, a North Shore Republican, said he wants his constituents to still be able to reach his office.

"For me, I want to make sure we are as responsive as possible, while recognizing that if indeed it does come to that, that we are paring back," Dold said.

Dold planned to first ask his staff if anyone wanted to volunteer to be furloughed.

Meantime, some members of Congress - including at least one from Illinois - say they don't plan to keep any salary earned during a potential shutdown. U.S. Sen. Mark Kirk, Republican from Highland Park, announced on Twitter that he would donate his pay to charity.