

Rauner Administration calls on Comptroller Susana Mendoza to not put employee pay and critical government services at risk

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Pay for nearly 600 employees and human service agencies in jeopardy

CHICAGO – The Rauner Administration, including the Department of Central Management Services (CMS), Department of Public Health (DPH) and Department of Human Services (DHS), on Friday called on Comptroller Susana Mendoza to comply with court orders, avoid creating a human service crisis and pay nearly 600 state employees from the General Revenue Fund.

“Comptroller Mendoza’s decision to stop paying employees out of the General Revenue Fund directly impacts the state’s ability to pay for human services,” Deputy Governor Leslie Munger said. “By taking this action, she is depleting accounts that human service agencies rely on and creating an unnecessary crisis. It is particularly stunning given her repeated promises to make human services a top priority.”

CMS submitted payroll to the Comptroller’s Office on Thursday for 578 employees just as it always has. But for the first time since coming into office, Comptroller Mendoza is demanding CMS resubmit the payroll to pay employees from two funds that support critical government operations. Paying employees with money from these funds will drain those accounts and jeopardize the state’s ability to maintain government operations.

“Comptroller Mendoza is creating a crisis at CMS that will have a ripple effect at other state agencies,” CMS Acting Director Mike Hoffman said. “By refusing to process payroll as submitted, she is putting families and critical government services at risk. We urge Comptroller Mendoza to comply with the court order directing her to process payroll without interruption and stop using employees as pawns in her quest to force a government shutdown.”

The comptroller is demanding CMS pay employees from funds that support day-to-day operations at state government agencies. That action would deplete funds that are used for emergency repairs to state facilities, rent and utilities at state offices, and vehicle maintenance and fuel for state vehicles. For example, CMS recently used money from one of the funds to make emergency repairs to the sprinkler system at the James R. Thompson Center.

"This decision will begin to deplete these government shutdown prevention funds, which could compromise IDPH services," said IDPH Director Nirav D. Shah, M.D., J. D. "Communicable disease investigations and nursing home inspections would be impacted if the state were unable to pay rent because of this directive."

“The Department of Human Services provides critical services to families in need,” DHS Secretary Jim Dimas said. “This could impair our ability to provide children and families with access to food assistance, child care and health care needs.”

Without a budget in place, state employees have been paid through a court order. Until now, the comptroller has processed payroll for these employees from the General Revenue Fund, as did the previous Administration at the Comptroller’s Office.

The comptroller has more than \$119 million cash on hand as of Friday to pay these employees.

“Comptroller Mendoza recently paid state legislators, and herself, the same way CMS is requesting to pay these 578 employees,” Acting Director Hoffman said. “There is no reason CMS should be forced to drain our government shutdown prevention funds to make payroll when she has money available to pay these employees.”