

ITC, Other IP Agencies Up And Running As Shutdown Ends

By **Elliot Weld**

Law360 (November 13, 2025, 5:59 PM EST) -- The U.S. International Trade Commission said it was resuming operations Thursday after having funding restored due to the end of the longest government shutdown in history.

The ITC said in a statement released Wednesday that it would resume operations the following day with some caveats, and that it had received funding through Jan. 30.

The ITC said it would not be accepting document filings until Nov. 17, and that it was working to reschedule active cases and previously scheduled deadlines impacted by the shutdown, which began Oct. 1. The commission said it was in a "read-only capacity" for the time being.

The commission further said it had tolled statutory and investigative deadlines for 47 days to account for the shutdown, but proceedings pending before administrative law judges can be revised as needed. The ITC said it anticipates it could take a week or more for revised schedules to be finalized.

The Federal Circuit said it was resuming normal court operations Thursday after receiving a restoration of federal appropriations. The circuit said its clerk's office public intake counter had returned to normal business hours and its library had reopened.

The notice rescinded two previous orders from the circuit issued the day the shutdown began and on Oct. 31 that said it was remaining open with "sufficient staffing as necessary to continue to support the court's constitutional and statutory obligations." The Oct. 1 order said the court would not entertain motions for extension based solely on the lapse in appropriations.

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office Director John Squires said in a statement that the office had remained operational for the entire shutdown and thanked employees who stayed on the job to make it happen.

Squires said the office began the fiscal year with a little over \$1 billion in reserve funds and ended the shutdown with about \$600 million of that left.

Squires said in the meantime, the office launched an artificial intelligence-assisted patent search pilot tool, expanded streamlined claim-set reviews and reduced the application backlog by tens of thousands. The office also processed over 92,000 trademark applications, Squires said.

"We also used this time to strengthen the agency internally — advancing our return-to-office transition, onboarding new patent examiners and trademark examining attorneys, refining performance appraisal plans for FY26, and even beginning to pay out performance awards for FY25," Squires said. "This process has already started, and our goal is to make all payments before the holidays. This far exceeds last year's date, when there was no shut down."

The Copyright Office said in a Friday statement that it was fully operational. The office said it paused most operations during the shutdown but had now resumed processing copyright registrations, recordation applications and other requests. The office's voluntary small-claims tribunal, the Copyright Claims Board, had also resumed operations, the statement said.

Update: This story has been updated to include the Copyright Office's reopening.

--Editing by Nicole Bleier.

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