Six weeks after exiting the show he created, executive produced and ran, Frank Darabont remains in discussions to continue on with an unspecified role on THE WALKING DEAD.

Deadline reports that, according to inside sources, Darabont will keep his executive producer title on THE WALKING DEAD. Negotiations are ongoing, and it's "in the hands of the lawyers" representing Darabont and AMC, the source remarked.

Darabont, who is still listed as an executive producer in the credits for the season premiere, was replaced as showrunner by Glen Mazzara. "Everything has transitioned really well with Glen," says writer/executive producer/comic creator Robert Kirkman, who also addressed Darabont's displeasure with the show's reduced budget for season two. "Anyone who has concerns about how the budget will affect things will be reassured after they see the premiere. All of our production values [from season one] are the same if not bigger."

However, Kirkman also admitted that the cast and crew were caught off-guard by Darabont's hasty exit. "Oh sure, it was tough," he comments. "It happened. It is what it is. But the truth is Frank remains very much a part of the second season. He was there from early February through the time he left [in July] mapping things out. His stamp will be all over it. But that aside, the attitude is good. Everyone's 100 percent invested in making the best TV show that we can."

THE WALKING DEAD's second season begins with a 90-minute premiere on October 16.