



Impact of the Government Lapse on November Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Household Benefits

The best way for SNAP to continue is for the shutdown to end.

If not for Congressional Democrats blocking government funding, November SNAP benefits would be paid on-time.

- **Due to Congressional Democrats' refusal to pass a clean continuing resolution (CR), approximately 42 million individuals will not receive their SNAP benefits come November 1st.**
 - This jeopardizes all SNAP recipients in November, including those that have applied for benefits in the last half of October, and furloughed Federal employees who will not receive their combined October/November benefits.
- **Contingency funds are not legally available to cover regular benefits.**
 - Democrats have refused to pass the CR and fund regular monthly benefits for fiscal year (FY) 2026. SNAP contingency funds are only available to supplement regular monthly benefits when amounts have been appropriated for, but are insufficient to cover, benefits. The contingency fund is not available to support FY 2026 regular benefits, because the appropriation for regular benefits no longer exists.
 - Instead, the contingency fund is a source of funds for contingencies, such as the Disaster SNAP program, which provides food purchasing benefits for individuals in disaster areas, including natural disasters like hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods, that can come on quickly and without notice. For example, Hurricane Melissa is currently swirling in the Caribbean and could reach Florida. Having funds readily available allows the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to mobilize quickly in the days and weeks following a disaster.
- **Transfers from other sources would pull away funding for school meals and infant formula.**
 - Child Nutrition Programs (CN), which include the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, and Child and Adult Care Feeding Program, transferred \$23 billion from its annual Section 32 tariff funds to carry out these programs during the lapse.
 - These funds are also temporarily supporting the Special Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). Additional transfers will be needed to support WIC and will be taken from the CN full-year appropriation.
 - This Administration will not allow Democrats to jeopardize funding for school meals and infant formula in order to prolong their shutdown.

- **Despite their willingness, States cannot cover the cost of benefits and be reimbursed.**
 - Unlike other reimbursable programs, SNAP allotments are fully Federally funded. States are responsible for determining household benefits, and the movement of dollars through to the processors and ultimately to the retailers. There is no provision or allowance under current law for States to cover the cost of benefits and be reimbursed.

Background:

- **Given the uncertainty, on October 10, USDA notified States that they must hold on sending November benefit files to their Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) processors until further notice.**
 - A similar notice was provided in FY 2016 when it was unclear if sufficient appropriations would be provided.
 - Holding the issuance files prevents States and EBT processors from loading November benefits on to households' cards and protects existing balances.
 - This provided USDA additional time to work with States on how the program will operate until further decisions are made.