

NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

JOSH STEIN • Governor

DEVDUTTA SANGVAI • Secretary

YVONNE COPELAND • Director, Division of Child and Family Well-Being

October 27, 2025

Dear County Directors of Social Services,

Attention: Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Administrators, Managers, and Supervisors

Subject: USDA's Suspension of November 2025 SNAP Benefit Issuances

Priority: Information and Action

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has directed North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) to suspend the issuance of November 2025 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), known as Food and Nutrition Services in North Carolina, to the approximately 1.4 million North Carolinians who need assistance with purchasing nutritious foods for themselves and their families.

Late Friday, October 24, 2025, NCDHHS received a memorandum from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) suspending November 2025 Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) benefit allotments. To comply with this directive, NCDHHS must suspend issuance of November 2025 Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) benefit allotments effective November 1, 2025. If USDA directs NCDHHS that their suspension is lifted, NCDHHS is prepared to take immediate action to resume issuing November 2025 FNS benefits to the North Carolinians who will be harmed by USDA's decision.

USDA had previously directed State Agencies to hold November 2025 Food and Nutrition Services issuance files to preserve maximum flexibility while it evaluates contingency options. In compliance with that prior directive from October 10, 2025, NC FAST had delayed transmission of November 2025 issuance files to the State Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) contractor, Fidelity Insurance Services (FIS), until further direction from USDA. As of October 25, 2025 NCDHHS had already flagged for delay approximately \$224 million in November 2025 FNS issuances for nearly 607,000 North Carolina households and families that receive nutrition assistance through the FNS program. The delay includes \$1.1 million in nutrition benefits to approximately 2,000 North Carolina households who filed expedited applications after October 15, 2025 due to their immediate risk of food insecurity.

NCDHHS is concerned about the individuals, families, and children that rely on Food and Nutrition Services Benefits. Approximately 43% (581,412) of FNS participants in September 2025 were children, and 17% of participants were under the age of 7. Approximately, 43,537 of North Carolina's FNS participants in September 2025 were babies.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING

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NCDHHS Actions

To comply with USDA's directive, NCDHHS is taking immediate action to notify Food and Nutrition Services participant households of the suspension. NCDHHS will publicize the USDA's decision to suspend November 2025 FNS allotments through a press release to be issued on October 27, 2025. In addition, NCDHHS will notify FNS participant households and individuals by text message, social media posts, and earned media to explain the suspension and provide community resources for finding food assistance.

NCDHHS will not issue a DSS-8553 - Notice of Adverse Action to households affected by the suspension of November 2025 benefits.

NCDHHS will maintain updates on the status of USDA's suspension of November 2025 benefits on its Federal Government Shutdown page: <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/about/federal-government-shutdown>. All communications regarding the status of USDA's FNS benefit suspension should reference this webpage to ensure consistency and avoid misinformation.

County DSS Actions

Per USDA's October 24, 2025 memorandum, the suspension of benefits does not affect the ongoing determination of eligibility of applicant households.

NCDHHS will transmit additional guidance to counties before November 1, 2025 regarding any NC FAST and manual notice changes that may require additional action to implement USDA's October 24, 2025 directive to suspend November 2025 benefits.

All counties must continue normal operations for application processing, including expedited service applications, and complete recertifications in compliance with federal and state policies. Counties must continue to comply with normal application processing timeframes.

USDA has encouraged State agencies to limit administrative expenses only to the activities necessary to support the eligibility and issuance processes, integrity/oversight, and system maintenance.

At this time, the suspension applies only to November 2025 benefit issuances and does not impact issuance of prior months benefits. Applications submitted on or before October 31, 2025, and approved through normal processes will be eligible to receive prorated benefits through the month of October 2025, even if the approval of the application happens after October 31, 2025.

The suspension of benefits does not change eligibility, verification, or reporting requirements.

The suspension of benefits has no effect on the certification period assigned to a household. Recertification of households must continue within normal recertification periods and deadlines.

Important Information for FNS Participants

Households may continue to redeem benefits issued to their electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card at any SNAP authorized retailer. The suspension applies only to November 2025 benefit issuances to households and does not impact any prior benefits, and as such, the authorization or redemption of benefits at eligible retailers is not impacted.

USDA has indicated that households will receive retroactive benefits for November 2025 once the suspension is lifted.

NCDHHS Communications

NCDHHS will be providing the following public message on October 27, 2025. This is provided for your information in response to previous requests to help our organizations stay aligned in public messaging. Please expect public messaging through our website, press release, and social media.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) helps low-income families buy groceries. SNAP benefits will continue through October 2025. However, because of the federal government shutdown, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has told NCDHHS to pause all November SNAP benefits starting November 1, 2025. This means no new benefits will be added to EBT cards in November unless federal funding is restored. You can still use any benefits already on your EBT card and continue to shop at any store that accepts SNAP/EBT. This pause only affects new November benefits and does not take away any benefits already on your card. NCDHHS is closely monitoring the situation and will continue to update partners and beneficiaries, including next steps if the USDA restores funding for November.

NCDHHS has sent guidance and notification of the pause in November FNS benefits to County Directors, issued a statewide press release to notify FNS participants, and will post updates on the Department website and social media channels. Up-to-date information on the Federal Government Shutdown's impact on SNAP, WIC, LIEAP can be found on NCDHHS's website at <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/about/federal-government-shutdown>.

Households can view account details using the free ebtEDGE mobile app or by calling the EBT Customer Service number on the back of the card.

NCDHHS is coordinating across NC State Government, with community partners, the NC Retail Merchants Association, and Feeding the Carolinas and the seven Feeding America affiliated regional food banks in North Carolina to help disseminate accurate information.

County Messaging

Counties should ensure that households who may exhaust their current benefits are informed about available community resources that can offer supplemental food assistance and nutrition support during this potential food insecurity crisis.

County staff may communicate the following script to FNS recipients:

The United States Department of Agriculture has ordered a pause on all November SNAP benefits until further notice due to the federal government shutdown. Unless the USDA lifts their suspension in the coming days, November SNAP benefits will not be issued. The NC Department of Health and Human Services is ready to act quickly if the USDA allows North Carolina to resume November SNAP benefits.

You can still use your EBT card and current benefits at retailers and grocers that accept SNAP/EBT in North Carolina. You can check your balance in the ebtEDGE app or by calling the number on the back of your EBT card.

Although USDA has suspended SNAP benefits for November, please still continue to follow reporting requirements, including recertifying for benefits during your usual recertification schedule. DSS is still open for business and will continue to process new SNAP applications, recertifications, and change reports.

We know how important these benefits are. NCDHHS will continue to share updates on this situation on their website at <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/about/federal-government-shutdown>.

If asked, refer individuals to food resources in your county or the list of resources below.

Community Resources

North Carolina's resilient network of regional food banks and their partner networks of food pantries, meal providers, and nonprofit organizations are mobilizing to support North Carolinians during this potential food insecurity crisis caused by USDA's directive to suspend November 2025 SNAP benefits. In addition to NC211, North Carolina's regional food banks are crucial resources for helping North Carolinians locate food resources and support during this crisis, as they have been during other moments of hardship for North Carolina.

- [Food Bank of the Albemarle](#) (Northeast NC)
- [Second Harvest Food Bank of Southeast NC](#) (Fayetteville and Southeast NC)
- [Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina](#) (Greater Triangle Region through Coastal NC)
- [Inter-Faith Food Shuttle](#) (Greater Triangle Region)
- [Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina](#) (Greater Charlotte area)
- [Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest NC](#) (Greater Triad area and Northwest)
- [MANNA Food Bank](#) (Western NC)
- [NC211](#) - Dial 2-1-1 or visit nc211.org to connect with local food pantries, meal programs, and other essential services. Available 24/7 and in multiple languages.

Even with robust support, food banks can provide only a fraction of the nutritional assistance that federal programs like FNS provide. For every meal that a food bank provides to neighbors experiencing hunger, FNS provides nine.

Update on the H.R. 1 Reconciliation Bill Implementation

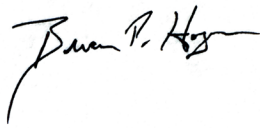
Despite the Federal Government Shutdown and USDA's suspension of November 2025 benefits, NCDHHS is still required to continue implementation of the provisions of H.R. 1. discussed in NCDHHS's [September 19, 2025 Dear County Directors memorandum](#).

NCDHHS will send out additional guidance to County Directors this week regarding the phased implementation during November of H.R.1 provisions concerning Standard Utility Allowances and modifications to the work requirements for Able-Bodied Adults. NCDHHS has yet to received written guidance from USDA concerning implementation of H.R. 1's changes to non-citizen eligibility for SNAP.

We appreciate your collaboration with implementation of H.R. 1 provisions during this challenging moment and we will implement the provisions in a phased manner to allow counties to allocate resources to the demands created by the Federal Government Shutdown.

If you have questions, please submit them to Continuous Quality Improvement Support (CQIS): dss.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian P. Hogan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Brian Patrick Hogan
Deputy Director of Nutrition
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services,
Division of Child and Family Well-Being

EFS-FNSEP-18-2025