

NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

JOSH STEIN • Governor

DEV DUTTA SANGVAI • Secretary

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

October 31, 2025

Dear County Directors of Social Services,

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

Subject: Updates on USDA's Suspension of November 2025 SNAP Benefit Issuances and Fair Hearing Requests

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

NCDHHS is currently reviewing the Memorandum and Order in *Commonwealth of Massachusetts et al. v. USDA* issued by United States District Court Judge Indira Talwani on 31 October 2025 regarding the Motion for a Temporary Restraining Order against USDA for the suspension of benefits. We will send additional guidance to Counties regarding the impact, if any, of the District Court Order. In addition, the Department is reviewing the Order in *Rhode Island State Council of Churches v. Rollins* by United States District Court Judge John McConnell.

As of 31 October 2025, NCDHHS has not received additional written guidance from USDA since the [27 October 2025 Dear County Directors of Social Services](#) transmittal (EFS-FNSEP-18-2025). Prior guidance in EFS-FNSEP-18-2025 remains in effect. 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.

County Actions

In addition to the actions specified in EFS-FNSEP-18-2025 from 27 October 2025, Counties must take the following actions due to USDA's decision to suspend November 2025 benefits.

Fair Hearing Requests

NCDHHS will not hold fair hearings for participants who request a hearing to dispute the fact that USDA ordered a suspension of November 2025 benefits. Counties are instructed to deny

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

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requests for fair hearings when the sole issue disputed is the suspension of November 2025 benefits. Counties must carefully discern the reason for the household's hearing request before denying the request under 7 CFR 271.7(f).

Counties must continue to process fair hearing requests for all other eligibility matters, including requests for fair hearings based on a household's belief that its benefit level was computed incorrectly.

If the household's reason for requesting a hearing is unclear, the household must be contacted to clarify its grievance. If a household requests a hearing solely because it disagrees with the action to suspend issuance of November 2025 FNS benefits, document the case record to indicate that a fair hearing was requested and denied for that reason.

If a household requests a fair hearing for reasons in addition to USDA's action to suspend issuance of November 2025 FNS benefits, counties must follow normal procedure outlined in FNS 700 Hearings and transmit a DSS-1473 to NCDHHS Hearing and Appeals to ensure timely action on hearings for those other reasons. **The right to make a hearing request for reasons other than the suspension of November 2025 benefits issuances must not be limited or interfered with in any way.**

Consistent with the USDA's directive to suspend issuance of November 2025 benefits, households do not have a right to a continuation of benefits on or after November 1, 2025 pending a fair hearing, unless the USDA suspension is lifted. If the suspension of November 2025 benefits issuances is lifted on or after November 1, 2025 and the household had been receiving a continuation of benefits under FNS 700.11 pending a fair hearing, aid paid pending must resume.

NCDHHS Communications to FNS Participants

To update Counties on the Department's communications to FNS participants on the suspension of benefits, NCDHHS issued a [press release on 27 October 2025](#) to announce that November benefits for the 1.4 million North Carolinians who rely on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) will be delayed if the federal government shutdown continues.

NCDHHS will continue to maintain updates on the status of USDA's suspension of November 2025 benefits on its Federal Government Shutdown page: <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/shutdown>. All communications regarding the status of USDA's FNS benefit suspension should reference this webpage to ensure consistency and avoid misinformation. The Department's Federal Government Shutdown page links to a [FAQ](#) for FNS participants regarding the November 2025 SNAP benefits suspension. NCDHHS has posted a series of messages on social media channels during the week of 27 October to inform FNS participants and community stakeholders of USDA's suspensions of benefits.

NCDHHS has been actively sending text message notifications to FNS participant households through the week. As of 30 October 2025, NCDHHS has sent text messages to ~525,000 of the active 665,000 participant households. NCDHHS will complete the text message notification campaign to remaining households today. The text message reads:

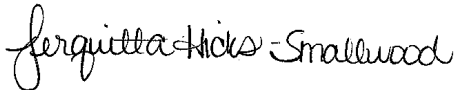
NCDHHS Alert: November SNAP benefits are at risk as the federal shutdown continues. Continue applying/renewing. Updates: [ncdhhs.gov/shutdown](https://www.ncdhhs.gov/shutdown). Food help: dial 2-1-1.

The text message has been sent to households in both English and Spanish.

NCDHHS plans to begin a RoboCall campaign on Monday, 3 November 2025, to households with 'specified persons' under FNS 212.02 to inform participants of the potential disruption to November 2025 benefits issuance schedules.

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 that reads "Jerquitta Hicks-Smallwood". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jerquitta Hicks-Smallwood
Deputy Director
Division of Child and Family Well-Being

JHS/vb

EFS-FNSEP-19-2025