

Federal Government Shutdown: Resources for Our Neighbors

If Congress does not pass appropriations legislation for the next fiscal year, or temporarily extend current funding, by the November 17th, the federal government will shut down. A government shutdown impacts federal programs, federal employees and people who work for federal contractors in different ways and at varying times. Federal employees may be furloughed or asked to work without pay, federal contractors may miss paychecks, and benefits programs may see disruptions due to a lack of funding or staffing.

We have compiled some information and resources that may be helpful during a shutdown. As always, we encourage those in need of food to please visit the Maryland Food Bank's Find Food page at www.mdfoodbank.org/Find-Food to locate a food pantry in your area.

Maryland Food Bank Assistance for Federal Employees and Contractors

- Federal employees and people who work for federal contractors may receive charitable assistance from nonprofits for needs that arise during the shutdown and beyond. Although there are rules that prohibit federal employees from accepting gifts from the public while completing official duties related to their federal employment, federal employees and people who work for federal contractors are allowed to receive charitable assistance from nonprofits and other organizations that aid community members.
- Federal employees will eventually receive back pay after a shutdown ends, but people who work for federal contractors may not.
- Our network of community partner organizations will be able to provide nutritious food at no cost to federal employees, people who work for federal contractors, and other individuals impacted by the shutdown.
- Some federal employees and people who work for federal contractors can receive SNAP benefits, if they meet all eligibility criteria. If you need assistance applying for benefits, contact the Maryland Food Bank SNAP Team at 1-888-808-7327 or snapteam@mdfoodbank.org.

State Assistance for Federal Employees and Contractors

- Furloughed federal employees may apply for Unemployment Insurance through the Maryland Department of Labor. The link to start that process is [here](#). However, once the shutdown is over and when these employees receive retroactive pay, they will be required to pay back the UI funds.
- Federal employees who are essential workers, meaning they are required to continue working but will not be paid, are eligible for Maryland's no-interest loan program, which will provide funds until the government reopens. The loans would need to be paid back. Information on how to access that program is forthcoming.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

- A government shutdown will not impact November or December SNAP benefits. SNAP benefits for these months will be available in full and on time.
- If the government is shut down, you can still apply for SNAP. We do not expect changes to the application process throughout November or December.
- If the shutdown lasts until January, SNAP benefits could be incomplete and disrupted. The State of Maryland could also step in and fund SNAP to avoid any disruption in benefits.
- If you need assistance applying for benefits, contact the Maryland Food Bank SNAP Team at 1-888-808-7327 or snapteam@mdfoodbank.org. Our knowledgeable application assistants will review your eligibility and assist you in completing the application process.

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

- WIC benefits and services will be available in full and on time through November and December, though there could be a disruption in January if the shutdown continues.
- [Contact your local WIC office](#) for more information on how benefits will be impacted.

Additional Information

- The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), or senior food box program, should not see any disruption for existing distributions through December.
- Children will still be able to receive school meals. Child nutrition programs are expected to operate as normal through December. This includes school breakfast and lunch, and afterschool meals through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). However, a prolonged shutdown could lead to delayed program reimbursements which could cause operating disruptions.