The Research Packet For

THE SNAP TASK FORCE

Meeting of January 2019

Prepared by the staff of Food Bank For New York City
39 Broadway, 10th Fl.
New York NY 10006
Tel: 212.566.7855
Fax: 212.566.1463
www.foodbanknyc.org
SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP) TASK FORCE

Contents

I. United States Department of Agriculture .................................................................3
   USDA to Restore Original Intent of SNAP: A Second Chance, Not A Way of Life ......3
   Secretary Perdue Details USDA Functions in the Event of a Lapse in Federal Funding ........................................................................................................................................3
   USDA Updates Available Functions During Lapse in Funding .............................4
   USDA Announces Plan to Protect SNAP Participants’ Access to SNAP in February ....4

II. New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance .............................7
   Informational Letter on Changes to the Minimum Wage .................................7
   Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Able Bodied Adults Without 
    Dependents (ABAWDs) Policy Update and Guidance on the New 36-Month Time Period .........................................................................................................................8
   Change to the Minimum Durational Sanction Periods for Supplemental Nutrition 
    Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment Sanctions .........................................9
   2019 Able Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD) Waiver in NY Update ......9

III. New York City Human Resources Administration .................................................11
   POLICY BULLETIN #19-02-ELI: PARTIAL FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN AND ITS 
    IMPACT ON SNAP BENEFIT (1/16/19) .................................................................11
   An Update on SNAP Benefits for February 2019 ................................................11
   Important Information for SNAP Recipients about your February Benefits ..........12

IV. Reports, News and Notable Items ........................................................................13
   Center on Budget and Policy Priorities: USDA to Fund SNAP for February 2019, But 
    Millions Face Cuts if Shutdown Continues .........................................................13
   Washington Post: For charities, the government shutdown could not have come at 
    a worse time ...........................................................................................................14
   Education Dive: 1.8M college students who could get SNAP benefits aren’t .........14
I. United States Department of Agriculture

USDA to Restore Original Intent of SNAP: A Second Chance, Not A Way of Life


The rule proposed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) focuses on work-related program requirements for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs). The rule would apply to non-disabled people, between the ages of 18 and 49, with no dependents. The rule would not apply to the elderly, the disabled, or pregnant women.

Under current SNAP requirements, ABAWDs must work or participate in an employment program for at least 20 hours a week to continue to receive benefits for more than three months over a 36-month period. States may request to waive the time limit in areas with an unemployment rate above 10 percent or where there are ‘not sufficient jobs,’ which current regulations primarily define as an unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average. With today’s strong economy, that could include areas with unemployment rates of under 5 percent – a rate normally considered to be full employment. In 2016 there were 3.8 million individual ABAWDs on the SNAP rolls, with 2.8 million (or almost 74 percent) of them not working.

USDA encourages all interested parties to provide input on the proposed rule, which will be posted to the Federal Register in the coming days. The comment period will be open for 60 days after the proposed rule is published in the Federal Register.

Direct link to the proposed rule:
https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/snap/ABAWDtoOFR.pdf

Secretary Perdue Details USDA Functions in the Event of a Lapse in Federal Funding


U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue today detailed which functions of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will remain available in the event of a lapse in government funding.

Some USDA activities will be shut down or significantly reduced and some USDA employees will be furloughed. However, certain USDA activities would continue because they are related to law enforcement, the protection of life and property, or are financed through available funding (such as through mandatory appropriations, multi-year discretionary funding, or user fees). For the first week of a potential shutdown, 61% of employees would either be exempted or excepted from shutdown activities. If the shutdown continues, this percentage would decrease, and activities would be reduced as available funding decreases.
USDA activities that would continue in the short-term include:

- Eligible households will still receive monthly Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits for January.
- Most other domestic nutrition assistance programs, such as the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, WIC, and the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, can continue to operate at the State and local level with any funding and commodity resources that remain available. Additional Federal funds and commodities will not be provided during the period of the lapse.
- The Child Nutrition (CN) Programs, including School Lunch, School Breakfast, Child and Adult Care Feeding, Summer Food Service and Special Milk will continue operations into February. Meal providers are paid on a reimbursement basis 30 days after the end of the service month. Carryover funding will be available during a lapse to support FY 2019 meal service.

For more information, please view a summary of USDA’s shutdown plans (PDF, 75.2 KB).

In addition, you may view a list of shutdown plans by USDA agency and office. Note that the National Finance Center information can be found on pages 7 to 9 of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) document on that page.

USDA Updates Available Functions During Lapse in Funding


No changes to the language above for federal nutrition programs.

USDA Announces Plan to Protect SNAP Participants’ Access to SNAP in February


When USDA’s funding expired on December 21, 2018, SNAP benefits for January were fully funded. States have already received that money and have been distributing it to participants. Since the lapse in appropriations, USDA has been reviewing options available to the department for funding February benefits without an additional appropriation from Congress.

To protect SNAP participants’ access for February, USDA is working with states to issue February benefits earlier than usual. USDA will rely on a provision of the just-expired Continuing Resolution (CR), which provides an appropriation for programs like SNAP and child Nutrition to incur obligations for program operations within 30 days of the CR’s expiration. USDA will be reaching out to states to instruct them to request early issuance of
SNAP benefits for February. States will have until January 20th to request and implement the early issuance. Once the early issuances are made, the February benefits will be made available to SNAP participants at that time.

USDA has also ensured the other major nutrition assistance programs have sufficient funding to continue operations into February. The child nutrition programs, including school meals and after-school programs have funding available to continue operations through March. The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) has prior year funding which USDA will begin to provide states this week to facilitate February benefits. Other FNS programs, which provide critical assistance to our nation’s food banks, the elderly, and Tribal nations, may continue to utilize grant funding provided prior to the lapse in appropriations. Commodity deliveries to those programs will continue.

Nutrition Assistance Programs under a Lapse in Appropriations

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**

- USDA will use the authority under the last Continuing Resolution to issue February benefits. The Continuing Resolution that expired December 21, 2018 provided an appropriation for programs like SNAP and Child Nutrition to incur obligations for program operations during the 30 day-period following the expiration of the Act.

- States will need to take action to issue February benefits on or before January 20, 2019. We will be reaching out to States to instruct them to request early issuance of SNAP benefits for February. States will have until January 20 to implement this early issuance.

- Once these early issuances are made, the February benefits will be made available to SNAP participants at that time. SNAP monthly issuance for February is estimated to be approximately $4.8 billion and State administrative expense (SAE) is estimated at about $350 million for a total need of approximately $5.1 billion.

- This approach requires careful coordination. FNS has noticed States to hold their issuance files. States would, instead, implement an early issuance strategy, providing February benefits to SNAP participants on or before January 20, 2019. We will be working with States individually on how this approach is executed, in order to issue benefits to eligible households in the most efficient and equitable manner possible.

**Child Nutrition Programs**

- For these programs, including school meals and the Child and Adult Care Food Program, States already have funding to cover CN program operations for the month of January (approximately $2.1 billion) on the basis of the last continuing resolution.

- This week, we will provide an additional two months’ worth of funding, consistent with the standard practice of funding these programs on a quarterly basis.
Supplemental Nutrition and Safety Programs

- For WIC, FNS has identified resources to cover projected State expenditures for February. The agency will allocate at least $248 million to State agencies this week, and we have identified an additional $350 million in unspent prior year funds to allocate at a later date. A total of approximately $600 million in funding will be provided to WIC State agencies. We will continue to work with States to make resources available to the extent possible.

- For the WIC Farmers’ Market (FMNP) and Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Programs (SFMNP), FNS does not anticipate significant operational impacts as they are seasonal benefit programs with annual grant funds.

- For the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), food deliveries planned for February will continue. Due to the lapse, States have not received their 2019 caseload assignments, so CSFP-participating States must operate at 2018’s caseload levels. Similarly, states have received no additional administrative funds since the lapse, and none can be made available until the lapse ends.

- For The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), food deliveries planned for February (including entitlement, bonus and trade mitigation) will continue. States have received no additional administrative funds since the lapse, and none can be made available until the lapse ends.

- For the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), food deliveries planned for February will continue. FDPIR programs have administrative funding through January 31 and are expected to operate the program.
II. New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

Informational Letter on Changes to the Minimum Wage


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>12/31/2018</th>
<th>12/31/2019</th>
<th>12/31/2020</th>
<th>2021*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NYC - Big Employers</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11 employees or more)**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYC - Small Employers</td>
<td>$13.50</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>$14.00</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10 employees or less)**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Island &amp; Westchester</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
<td>$13.00</td>
<td>$14.00</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater New York State</td>
<td>$11.10</td>
<td>$11.80</td>
<td>$12.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The increase in the State minimum wage effective December 31, 2018, will vary by region and size of employer for individuals who are working in New York City. The increase in the State minimum wage will result in additional income for some households receiving TA and/or SNAP benefits and offer an incentive for individuals to enter the workforce. The increase in the State minimum wage will also affect the number of hours a TA and/or SNAP recipient may be required to participate in a work experience program (or a community service activity assigned by the district as described in section 336(g) of the Social Services Law) effective January 2019, as described below. The increase in the State minimum wage will also affect the number of hours that an Abled Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD) must participate in work experience effective January 2019, to meet the ABAWD requirement for the month consistent with 18NYCRR §385.3.

As a result of the increase in the State minimum wage, districts must review the cases of all individuals engaged in work experience or a community service activity assigned by the district and use the increased State minimum wage per hour in effect for their corresponding region as identified in the chart above to calculate the maximum hours that a TA or a SNAP recipient may be assigned to work experience and/or community service effective January 2019. Districts must ensure that the hours an individual is required to participate in work experience or community service do not exceed the maximum hours under State law. Districts may adjust the hours assigned to other work activities as needed but cannot exceed 40 hours per week. The district should continue to engage the individual in a combination of work activities, consistent with the individual’s assessment and employment plan up to 40 hours per week. In New York City where the minimum wage varies based on the size of the employer, the higher minimum wage that applies to large employers should be used for recipients in all of New York City when determining the maximum number of hours permitted for a work experience of community service assignment.
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) Policy Update and Guidance on the New 36-Month Time Period


Effective January 1, 2019, when the ABAWD time limit clock resets, an ABAWD is only eligible for SNAP benefits for three months in the new 36-month period unless the individual is meeting the ABAWD work requirement each month, documents that he/she is exempt, lives in an area of the State covered by a full county or jurisdictional federal ABAWD waiver, or receives an exclusion from the ABAWD work requirements. An ABAWD may meet the work requirement for a calendar month through one of the following methods:

- Working for at least 80 hours per month. Work can include paid employment, volunteer, or inkind work.
- Participating in a qualifying work or training program, as assigned by the district for at least 80 hours per month.
- Participating in a Work Experience Program (WEP) assignment for the number of hours per month that equal the amount of the SNAP benefit divided by the current State minimum wage in the district.
- Participating in a work activity under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) or Trade Act, which may include job search, job readiness training, occupational skills training, or education activities for at least 80 hours per month.
- Participating in a combination of work and a qualifying work activity for at least 80 hours per month.

Note: Federal rules state that participation in a stand-alone job search or job readiness training provided under Temporary Assistance (TA) or SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) program is not a qualifying activity to meet the ABAWD work requirements. In order to meet the ABAWD work requirement, a work program that contains job search or job readiness training must also contain an ABAWD qualifying activity. The job search or job readiness training provided under a TA or SNAP E&T program must equal less than one half of the total monthly hours of participation. For example, an ABAWD who is participating in job search for 39 hours per month must participate in a qualifying activity, such as community service, for no less than 41 hours per month.
Change to the Minimum Durational Sanction Periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment Sanctions


This ADM advises districts about a change made to the minimum durational sanction periods for the first and second SNAP sanctions for non-exempt SNAP recipients who willfully and without good cause refuse or fail to comply with work requirements as assigned by the district or who have voluntarily quit employment or reduced their earnings/work effort willfully and without good cause as described in 18 NYCRR 385.12.

These changes will also modify the minimum durational periods imposed for SNAP applicant voluntary quit or reduction in earnings/work effort. Information regarding SNAP applicant noncompliance other than voluntary quit or reduction in earnings/work effort will be released separately.

Effective January 15, 2019, the following SNAP durational sanction periods will be imposed for a non-exempt SNAP applicant who without good cause has voluntarily quit employment, or has voluntarily reduced earnings/work effort as described in 18 NYCRR 385.13:

• The first instance of voluntary quit or reduction in work effort without good cause, a period of 30 days and thereafter until the individual complies with SNAP requirements as determined by the district.
• For the second instance of voluntary quit or reduction in work effort without good cause, a period of 90 days and thereafter until the individual complies with SNAP requirements as determined by the district.
• For the third and all subsequent instances of voluntary quit or reduction in work effort without good cause, a period of 180 days and thereafter until the individual complies with SNAP requirements as determined by the district.

For applicants, the durational period for voluntary job quit or voluntary reduction in earnings/work effort as described in 18 NYCRR 385.13 is counted in days, and is effective as of the date of application for SNAP benefits, whether the remaining household members are certified, or the application is denied.

2019 Able Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD) Waiver in NY Update.


For calendar year (CY) 2019, there are a total of 37 counties in New York State (34 counties outside of New York City/three counties within NYC) who have federal approval to waive ABAWD rules. Additionally, five other counties are approved to waive ABAWD work requirements for individuals who live in an area of the county, such as a city or a town for calendar year 2019. There are also six community districts in New York City with a federally approved ABAWD waiver for calendar year 2019.

The following counties have a federally approved ABAWD waiver for calendar year 2019:

• Bronx County
• Kings County
Further, the following community districts within New York City have a federally approved ABAWD waiver for calendar year 2019:

- Manhattan Community Districts 9, 10, 11 and 12
  - Manhattan Community Districts 9, 10, 11 and 12 comprise an area in Manhattan above West 110th Street and above East 96th Street.

- Queens Community Districts 10 and 12
  - Queens Community District 10 is the area of Queens County that is bounded by Van Wyck Expressway (on the east), Liberty Avenue/103rd Avenue (on the north), 165th Avenue and JFK International Airport (on the south), and the Brooklyn/Queens Line (on the west).
  - Queens Community District 12 is the area of Queens County that is south of Hillside Avenue and north of Belt Parkway, and between Van Wyck Expressway (on the west) and Francis Lewis Boulevard and Springfield Boulevard (on the east).
III. New York City Human Resources Administration

POLICY BULLETIN #19-02-ELI: PARTIAL FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN AND ITS IMPACT ON SNAP BENEFIT (1/16/19)

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has informed the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) that in addition to funding recurring SNAP benefits for January 2019, they will be able to fund recurring SNAP benefits for February 2019, if OTDA deposits SNAP benefits into households Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) accounts by January 17, 2019.

OTDA has advanced the February 2019 SNAP recurring issuance dates for all toe digits (0-9) so that SNAP benefits will be available to participants on January 17, 2019. The NYS OTDA advanced February 2019 early issuance SNAP payments will appear in the Welfare Management System (WMS) as special grants under the following issuance codes:

• 14 (CA/SNAP Single Issuance – Full Month)
• 16 (NCA/SNAP Single issuance – Full Month)

Households whose SNAP certifications expire on January 31, 2019 that did not get recertified by January 15, 2019 will not be issued advanced benefits. However, SNAP benefits will be released based on the normal issuance cycle for cases processed after the early issuance deadline.

The Complete Policy Guidance including Q&A is Attached to the end of this report.

An Update on SNAP Benefits for February 2019


This just in: If you currently receive SNAP benefits and there are no changes to your case, your benefits will continue through the end of February, 2019.

Please be advised that SNAP recipients might begin to see their benefits issued as early as the week of January 14, 2019. We urge all recipients to check their balances carefully.

You can access your account via the ACCESS HRA Mobile App or Website: nyc.gov/accesshra

The following benefits also remain unaffected at this time:

• SSI
• Medicaid
• Cash Assistance

Please visit nyc.gov/hra or call HRA’s Infoline at 718-557-1399 for more information. We will continue to provide updates to New Yorkers as we receive them.
Important Information for SNAP Recipients about your February Benefits


Because of the federal government shutdown, most SNAP recipients will receive their February Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits early.

If you received a SNAP benefit in January and were scheduled to receive SNAP in February, your February benefits may be available on your EBT card on January 17th instead of on your scheduled February availability date.

This is your entire February benefit. This is not an extra SNAP benefit for January. If you get your February benefit on January 17th, you will not get any more benefits in February. So, it is important that you budget and spend your February benefit with that in mind.

If you completed your recertification for SNAP benefits in January and do not receive your February benefit on January 17th, this does not mean that you will not get a February benefit. Your February benefit should be available on your regularly-scheduled February benefit availability date.

Currently, nothing else about SNAP has changed due to the federal government shutdown. All program requirements remain in place. If you get a recertification notice and application, or a periodic report form, please complete it and return it to the New York City Department of Social Services (DSS) promptly so you may continue to receive SNAP benefits in the future. Your requirement to report changes to DSS has also not changed.

We will continue to provide up-to-date information about how the federal shutdown may impact your SNAP benefits on the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance website at www.otda.ny.gov and at nyc.gov/hra. OTDA’s website also includes some frequently asked questions and answers about the shutdown.
IV. Reports, News and Notable Items

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities: USDA to Fund SNAP for February 2019, But Millions Face Cuts if Shutdown Continues


The approach that USDA announced on January 8 to fund SNAP in February will not be available for March benefits. A month from now, and possibly sooner, USDA will need to inform states about whether sufficient funding is available for March. If it isn’t, USDA will need to instruct states on how to implement a cut in SNAP benefits.[6] At that time, less than $3 billion in funding will likely be available in March because some of the “contingency reserve” will probably need to be used in February, as discussed above.

SNAP benefits currently amount to about $4.8 billion a month,[7] so even the full $3 billion reserve could not fully fund March benefits. If USDA determines it has a shortfall of approximately $1.8 billion and directs that the partial funding be spread evenly across all 19 million SNAP households, the average cut per household would be at least $90, or close to 40 percent. If USDA needs to tap the contingency reserve in February, the cuts required for March would be larger.

Moreover, some households would see substantially larger cuts if the Administration either protected some households but not others from cuts, or if it shut down the entire program after the amount left in the contingency reserve is redeemed in March, which would leave some households with no SNAP benefits at all if their date to receive benefits comes after the reserve is depleted (most states issue benefits to different households on different days of the month).

Finally, larger households and those with lower incomes would likely be subject to larger cuts in dollar terms. For example, the typical household of four receives about $450 a month in SNAP benefits; if its SNAP in February were cut in proportion to the total cut needed to stay within the appropriation, it would face about a $170 cut.
But with no end in sight to the federal stalemate, nonprofit leaders worry it might not be enough.

“At this stage, we’re not only saying there’s a lot more meals we’ll need to provide, but also a lot more dollars we’ll need to acquire to attempt to do that,” said Radha Muthiah, chief executive of the Capital Area Food Bank. “What we’re seeing now is an increase — people who are calling in, saying ‘I’ve just been furloughed or I have a friend who has. Where should they go?’ ”

The Capital Area Food Bank, which serves half a million people in the Washington region each year, distributes about 3 million meals in a typical January. This month, the nonprofit group is expecting to see a 10 to 20 percent increase — or a difference of 300,000 to 600,000 meals, which could cost up to $300,000.

**Education Dive: 1.8M college students who could get SNAP benefits aren't**


Colleges vying to recruit more low-income students need to be aware of unique issues they face, including food insecurity, according to a new report from the Government Accountability Office that cites research indicating more than 30% of college students lack adequate access to food.

Many colleges and students aren't aware of or don't understand the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the report notes, with more than half (57%, or 1.8 million) of low-income, at-risk students who would likely qualify for the program not participating.

The report calls for the Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service, which oversees SNAP, to clarify its eligibility information, and for state agencies administering it to provide more guidance to students.
POLICY BULLETIN #19-02-ELI

PARTIAL FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN AND ITS IMPACT ON SNAP BENEFITS

Date: January 16, 2019

Subtopic(s):
SNAP, Budgeting

The purpose of this policy bulletin is to inform Job Center, HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA), and Non Cash Assistance (NCA) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Center staff of the impact of the partial federal government shutdown on SNAP benefits.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has informed the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) that in addition to funding recurring SNAP benefits for January 2019, they will be able to fund recurring SNAP benefits for February 2019, if OTDA deposits SNAP benefits into households Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) accounts by January 17, 2019.

OTDA has advanced the February 2019 SNAP recurring issuance dates for all ten digits (0-9) so that SNAP benefits will be available to participants on January 17, 2019.

The NYS OTDA advanced February 2019 early issuance SNAP payments will appear in the Welfare Management System (WMS) as special grants under the following issuance codes:

• **14** (CA/SNAP Single Issuance – Full Month)
• **16** (NCASNAP Single issuance – Full Month)

Households whose SNAP certifications expire on January 31, 2019 that did not get recertified by January 15, 2019 will not be issued advanced benefits. However, SNAP benefits will be released based on the normal issuance cycle for cases processed after the early issuance deadline.

HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS PROCEDURE?
Call 718-557-1313 then press 3 at the prompt followed by 1 or send an e-mail to PA Call Center Fax or fax to: (917) 639-0298

Distribution: X
When speaking to SNAP participants who will be issued their February 2019 recoring SNAP benefits on January 17, 2019, Job Center, HASA, and NCA SNAP Center staff must inform them that the payment is not a bonus, it is their advanced SNAP benefit for February and that they should budget their spending accordingly.

Job Center, HASA, and NCA SNAP Center staff must continue to fully process SNAP applications, recertifications, and undercare case changes as usual. The partial federal government shutdown does not affect SNAP case processing rules.

SNAP benefits issued in previous months can still be redeemed unless the government orders a shutdown of EBT transactions.

Cash Assistance benefits are not affected by the partial federal government shutdown.

The Important Information for SNAP Recipients about your February Benefits (POST-226) is a Public Notice Poster that has been developed by OTDA. The poster must be displayed in English and Spanish in the reception and lobby areas where SNAP applications may be filed and should be displayed near the “You Have a Right to Free Interpreter Services” (OCM-34) poster, when possible.

A Q&A titled “How the Federal Shutdown Affects SNAP” (Attachment A) has been produced to provide additional information for SNAP households. This Q&A is informational only and should not be distributed to applicants/participants. However the information is useful and staff should familiarize themselves with the content.

Effective Immediately

References:

GIS 19 TA/DC002
GIS 19 TA/DC003
GIS 19 TA/DC005
GIS 19 TA/DC006
GIS 19 TA/DC008
GIS 19 TA/DC009
GIS 19 TA/DC012

Attachments:

Attachment A  How the Federal Shutdown Affects SNAP Questions and Answers
POST-226 (E)  Important Information for SNAP Recipients about your February Benefits
Attachment A

How the Federal Shutdown Affects SNAP Questions and Answers

Q1. If I received my February benefits on January 17th, and the federal government shutdown ends, will I receive more benefits in February on my normal date?

A1. No. The February benefits you receive early on January 17 are what you are eligible for in the entire month of February. That is why it is important that you budget your SNAP to last you through the end of February.

Q2. When can I start using the February benefits deposited on my EBT card on January 17?

A2. You may begin to use them immediately beginning January 17; however, remember that you will not receive any more SNAP benefits in February so you must budget accordingly.

Q3. What if my February benefits are not available in my EBT account on January 17?

A3. If you completed your recertification for SNAP benefits in January and do not receive your February benefit on January 17, this does not mean you will not get a February benefit. Your February benefit should be available on your regularly-scheduled February benefit availability date.

Q4. What if I haven’t sent in my completed recertification yet?

A4. You must do so as soon as possible in one of three ways. The fastest way is to complete a recertification application online at www.nyc.gov/accessHRA. You may also drop your recertification off at your local NYC Department of Social Services (DSS) or mail it back to DSS in the envelope that was included in the recertification packet you received in the mail.

Q5. What will happen to my March benefits?

A5. OTDA has not yet received any information from the federal government about March SNAP benefits. We will continue to work closely with the federal government during the shutdown and will provide updates at www.otda.ny.gov, nyc.gov/hra and through social media (links are available at the bottom of OTDA’s home page) as it becomes available.

Q6. Do I have to continue to meet all SNAP requirements during the shutdown?

A6. Yes. You are still required to recertify, complete periodic reports, report changes and respond to requests from your local DSS as usual.

Q7. Can I still apply during the shutdown if I don’t receive SNAP?

A7. Yes. You may still apply at your local DSS, or online at www.nyc.gov/accessHRA.

Q8. Does the federal government shutdown affect my Temporary Assistance (cash) benefits?

A8. Temporary Assistance benefits (including cash and restricted benefits) are not currently affected by the shutdown and will be available on their normal schedule.
Important Information for SNAP Recipients about your February Benefits

Because of the federal government shutdown, most SNAP recipients will receive their February Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits early.

If you received a SNAP benefit in January and were scheduled to receive SNAP in February, your February benefits may be available on your EBT card on January 17th instead of on your scheduled February availability date.

This is your entire February benefit. This is not an extra SNAP benefit for January. If you get your February benefit on January 17th, you will not get any more benefits in February. So, it is important that you budget and spend your February benefit with that in mind.

If you completed your recertification for SNAP benefits in January and do not receive your February benefit on January 17th, this does not mean that you will not get a February benefit. Your February benefit should be available on your regularly-scheduled February benefit availability date.

Currently, nothing else about SNAP has changed due to the federal government shutdown. All program requirements remain in place. If you get a recertification notice and application, or a periodic report form, please complete it and return it to the New York City Department of Social Services (DSS) promptly so you may continue to receive SNAP benefits in the future. Your requirement to report changes to DSS has also not changed.

We will continue to provide up-to-date information about how the federal shutdown may impact your SNAP benefits on the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance website at www.otda.ny.gov and at nyc.gov/hra. OTDA’s website also includes some frequently asked questions and answers about the shutdown.