



FOOD ASSISTANCE RESOURCES FOR CALIFORNIA FAMILIES



Understanding the SNAP Crisis and Its Impact on California Families

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as "food stamps," provides monthly grocery assistance to 5.5 million Californians (40% are children). The SNAP program is also known as CalFresh in California. Benefits are loaded onto an EBT card that works like a debit card. Due to the federal government shutdown, new SNAP benefits have been suspended, resulting in a \$1.1 billion loss of monthly food assistance for California families.

While California's universal school meals program ensures all students receive free breakfast and lunch during school days, SNAP provides critical support for all other meals. Families rely on SNAP to provide dinner every night, meals on weekends and holidays, and food throughout the summer. Without SNAP, families face an impossible gap; school meals cover only two meals on school days, leaving families to find ways to feed their children dinner daily, plus all meals during non-school time. This crisis directly impacts student health, well-being, and academic success, as hungry children cannot learn effectively.

CalFresh/SNAP benefits have been suspended starting November 1, 2025

Key Facts for California Families:

- Existing EBT cards still work for any benefits already loaded (from October).
- Delayed benefits may* be available retroactively once federal funding resumes (*based on prior government shutdown examples). There is no need to reapply, however new applications can be submitted.
- Anyone required to renew or submit the SAR 7 (eligibility form) in November it is recommended that forms still be turned in on time. There may be processing delays, but completing the required steps protects benefits. For more information: getcalfresh.org/en/sar7info

California State PTA Resources and Support for Local PTAs

We are committed to keeping you informed and equipped to support your communities during this critical time. This is an evolving situation. We have created a Blog post on capta.org where you can check back regularly for updates as new information becomes available.

- California approved \$80 million in emergency funding for food banks.
- California State PTA signed on to a National PTA letter to Congress urgently requesting the release of SNAP funding.
- CA PTA issued a statement on SNAP benefits and their impact on children and families. Help us amplify our position by liking and sharing our statement social media.
- Read our blog post for guidance for PTA unit, council, and district leaders.





Information to Share in your PTA Community



- **Existing SNAP/CalFresh EBT cards** still work for any benefits already loaded (from October). Delayed benefits may* be available retroactively once federal funding resumes (**based on prior government shutdown examples*).
- There is no need to reapply, however **new CalFresh applications** can be submitted: Get Help: 1-877-847-3663 | www.cdss.ca.gov/calfresh
- **Find Your Local Food Bank**
 - California has 42 food banks providing free groceries and fresh produce. No proof of income or citizen documentation required. Visit: www.cafoodbanks.org/find-food
- **Visit 211california.org**
 - Call 2-1-1 anytime for free food near you and local resources in multiple languages. Or text your ZIP code to 898-211 for resources near you.
- Anyone required to renew or submit the **SAR 7** (eligibility form) in November should still turned them in on time. There may be processing delays, but completing the required steps protects benefits. For more information: getcalfresh.org/en/sar7info
- **WIC (Women, Infants & Children)** remains open in California through November 2025 for pregnant women and families with children under age 5. New applicants can text 'APPLY' to 91997.
- **School Resources** - All California students receive free breakfast and lunch during school days. School meal programs continue without interruption. We recommend contacting your school's wellness center or front office for the most recent information on expanded meal programs and local food assistance.

November 3, 2025



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