



Frequently Asked Questions - Partial Federal Shutdown

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), called the Food Supplement Program (FSP) in Maryland (formerly known as food stamps), helps low-income households buy the food they need for good health.

As the partial federal government shutdown continues, the Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) is working to assist vulnerable Marylanders through this uncertain time. [On January 11, the Department announced](#) it will be able to provide February Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to recipients in Maryland.

Q: I am a Food Supplement Program (FSP/food stamp) benefit recipient in Maryland. Will I receive my January benefit (normally issued between the 4th and the 23rd of January) on time?

A: Yes. The partial government shutdown does not affect the regularly scheduled distribution of January FSP benefits.

Q: Will I receive my February FSP benefits? If so, when will I receive these benefits?

A: To ensure you will be able to access your February SNAP/Food Supplement Program (FSP) benefits, the [U.S. Department of Agriculture \(USDA\)](#), the federal agency that pays for FSP benefits, is working with states to issue February benefits earlier than usual. Due to the partial federal government shutdown:

- If you were determined eligible for a February FSP benefit *on or before January 16*, you will receive your February benefit EARLY, by January 20.
- As of 1/18/2019, if you were determined eligible for a February FSP benefit *on or after January 17*, your February issuance date will depend on the availability of federal contingency funds.

Q: I received an early February benefit on or before January 20. Will I receive an additional benefit in the month of February?

A: No. The early issuance of February FSP benefits should be used to accommodate your household needs for the month of February as intended. As of 1/18/2019, there are no additional benefits scheduled to be issued on your EBT card in the month of February.

Q: Will my EBT card stop working due to the partial federal government shutdown?

A: No. All EBT cards are active and will continue to work properly subject to your compliance with FSP program rules. If you already have an EBT card, you may continue to use that card and PIN.

Q: I lost my EBT card; how can I get a new card?

A: If you lost your EBT card, please call the EBT Customer Service Call Center at 1-800-997-2222, to request a replacement card.

Q: Will retailers continue to accept my EBT card?

A: All EBT retailers should continue to accept EBT cards. Please [notify your local Department of Social Services \(DSS\)](#) if you are aware of any EBT retailer that is not accepting EBT cards.

Q: Is it true that I must use all of my FSP benefits (food stamps) before February 1?

A: No. You have up to 365 days to use your FSP benefits once they have been loaded onto your EBT card.

Q: Will the partial federal government shutdown impact my Temporary Cash Assistance (TANF/TCA) or Temporary Disability Assistance Program (TDAP) benefits?

A: No.

Q: Where can I find information and receive updates regarding my benefits?

A: We encourage FSP recipients to establish [a myDHR account](#) so that you may easily track your benefits online. You may also call your [local Department of Social Services](#).

Q: What should I do if I have an upcoming FSP redetermination to complete?

A: You should comply with FSP redetermination requirements established by your local Department of Social Services.

Q: I never received a letter regarding my February benefits. What should I do?

A: Letters to FSP recipients were mailed the week of January 14. A copy of the customer letter is available on the [DHS website](#).

Q: I need additional assistance; who may I call?

A: If you need additional assistance during this time, please contact your local Department of Social Services (DSS) to learn about additional resources that may be available in your community. Contact information for each of our 24 local Departments of Social Services may be found on our website at <http://dhs.maryland.gov/local-offices/>. You may also call our Customer Service Call Center at 1-800-332-6347 (TTY: 1-800-735-2258).