



Guidance for Food Banks and Food Pantries During the Federal Shutdown

Questions and Answers

Updated November 6, 2025

On October 30, 2025, Governor Moore announced [a \\$10 million emergency grant from the Fiscal Responsibility Fund](#).

The Governor's [declaration of a State of Emergency](#) and [Executive Order authorizing the emergency grant funds](#) charges the Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) to ensure the data-driven, equitable distribution of resources to hundreds of eligible food distribution organizations statewide. The goal of the state emergency funds is to get food on the tables of Marylanders impacted by the federal government shutdown and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's delayed and reduced release of November SNAP benefits.

Of the \$10 million, we are allocating:

- A. **\$9 million to the Maryland Food Bank (MFB) and the Capital Area Food Bank (CAFB)** through modifications of our current grant agreements for further distribution to their existing community food bank, pantry, and mobile distribution partners statewide.
- B. **\$1 million to augment and fully fund current state fiscal year 2026 Maryland Emergency Food Program (MEFP)** grantees that serve as community pantries and emergency hunger relief statewide. Current MEFP grantees do not need to take further action. DHS will fully fund MEFP proposals, as submitted, and continue disbursing funds as rapidly as possible.

In addition to [Maryland's \\$62 million supplemental state emergency food benefits](#) and [Baltimore City](#), [Anne Arundel](#), [Baltimore](#), and [Montgomery](#) Counties' emergency food bank assistance efforts, we will work together to help Marylanders put healthy and nutritious food on the kitchen table in November during the Trump Administration's federal shutdown.

Questions and Answers:

- 1. Will Maryland ensure that every jurisdiction has access to the \$10 million in state emergency funds?**

Yes. Both of the food banks and our MEFP program grantees collectively serve all 24 local jurisdictions. Every Maryland jurisdiction has organizations that will receive resources from the \$10 million fund. The lists here show all partner organizations receiving resources.

- For a list of our MEFP grantees and the local jurisdictions they serve, [please see here](#).
- For a list of MFB partners, please see [here](#).
- For a list of CAFB partners, please see [here](#).

2. How is DHS distributing funds through the Maryland Food Bank (MFB) and Capitol Area Food Bank (CAFB)?

We are executing modifications to existing grant agreements with MFB and CAFB. The funds will be distributed by the week of November 10th. CAFB serves metro jurisdictions including Prince George's and Montgomery Counties. MFB serves the rest of the 22 local jurisdictions statewide.

3. Will community partners or food banks be charged administratively for receiving funds or food deliveries from the emergency grant?

No. Community partners and food banks will not be charged any fees or experience any additional costs associated with these grants.

4. What if an organization is not on any of MFB or CAFB's existing partner lists?

In order to expedite food to those who need it, DHS, MFB, and CAFB are prioritizing providing resources to *existing* distribution partners at this time.

However, to expand the reach of state funds, the Maryland Food Bank will provide some resources to its partner Re-Distribution Organizations (RDOs) and Emergency Feeding Organizations (EFOs). Organizations may contact MFB at regionalprogramdirectors@mdfoodbank.org if they have any questions about the RDO or EFO distribution process.

5. Will the \$10 million food bank announcement change with recent federal SNAP litigation?

No, the \$10 million for food banks is still urgently needed to ensure Marylanders impacted by the federal government shutdown have access to food.

On October 31st, two federal district courts found the Trump Administration was acting unlawfully by failing to use federal SNAP contingency funds to honor its promise to Americans, and one federal court ordered the Trump Administration to use those funds. On November 3rd, the Trump Administration said that it would provide November SNAP benefits at 50% of SNAP households' current allotments. On November 4th, the USDA issued guidance on November SNAP calculations. On November 5th, the USDA issued additional guidance with revised allotments. We are reviewing the guidance we received from USDA on November 4th and 5th which will impact how SNAP benefits in Maryland are distributed.

On [November 3, Governor Moore issued an emergency order](#) to make state funds available to help Marylanders. Maryland will issue supplemental state

benefits for emergency food assistance for current Maryland SNAP customers. We project that the Maryland supplemental benefits may amount to up to \$62 million from the State's [Fiscal Responsibility Fund](#).

6. How long will the emergency food bank funding last?

The \$10 million funding is an emergency grant to address the surge in demand for food assistance that we expect to see in November. The surge is driven by Marylanders who may not receive timely federal SNAP benefits and [furloughed federal workers and contractors who are negatively impacted by the federal government shutdown](#) (map courtesy of the Maryland Food Bank). The Moore-Miller Administration will closely monitor both funding and statewide demand for food resources as we learn more about the impact of the federal shutdown.

7. Where is the money coming from?

The state emergency funding is coming from the Maryland Fiscal Responsibility Fund. The Fiscal Responsibility Fund is an account that is primarily used to fund capital projects, and was created in 2017. The Fiscal Responsibility Fund exists for one-time expenditures, and is part of Maryland's longer-term budgetary strategy.

8. Will Maryland fund other programs during the state of emergency?

Maryland is actively monitoring other federally funded programs like the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Head Start, and more. Every day that the federal government shutdown continues, those programs – and the thousands of Marylanders that rely on them – are more and more at risk. Maryland will continue to monitor the impacts of the shutdown and assess additional ways it can support impacted Marylanders.

9. How will this emergency funding support individuals with disabilities or older adults?

Both Maryland Food Bank and Capital Area Food Bank have mobile markets that are dispatched into communities to support older adults or those with disabilities. Additionally, we are providing funds to mobile distribution programs like Moveable Feast through MEFP.

Maryland Food Bank (MFB) - \$5.5 million allocation from DHS

10. How will the funding be transmitted from MFB (Statewide, except for Montgomery and Prince George's Counties)?

MFB will use \$3 million of the total funding to purchase and distribute food to its network of over 300 community-based existing food pantries and feeding programs within one week of final receipt of funds from DHS.

MFB will use \$2 million of the total funding to provide cash to selected Network Partners and Redistribution Organizations (RDOs) to buy food from local retailers and quickly provide access to food to those in need within two weeks of final receipt of funds from DHS.

In addition to its network of food pantries and feeding programs, MFB partners with RDOs and Emergency Feeding Organizations (EFOs) which act as county- or jurisdictional-level redistribution organizations to distribute food from MFB to their own downstream partners.

Nine RDOs and EFOs support 287 additional downstream partners in ten of Maryland's counties throughout MFB's service area. They are:

- Anne Arundel County Food Bank
- Harford Community Action Agency
- Southern Maryland Food Bank
- Western Maryland Food Bank
- Westminster Rescue Mission
- End Hunger in Calvert County
- Howard County Food Bank
- Cecil County Help Center
- Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee.

MFB will use the remaining funds for food distribution efforts.

11. How will MFB determine which partners to prioritize?

For [all partners](#), MFB will use quantitative and qualitative data to determine amounts including:

- SNAP participants by zip code;
- Federal workers by zip code;
- Partners' capacity and resources to accept and distribute additional food;
- Partners' self-identified need in its shutdown survey;
- Number of downstream partners; and,
- Historic distribution levels.

MFB will also use three Mobile Market vehicles to help schedule mobile distribution stops in communities.

12. Will partner organizations be charged for resources provided by MFB?

No.

13. How does my organization receive funding from MFB?

MFB has already reached out to many of its existing partners, including the regional distribution organizations. If additional information is needed, organizations may contact MFB at regionalprogramdirectors@mdfoodbank.org.

MFB's current operational strategy and commitment to grant integrity means they are prioritizing existing partners. Potential new partners should reach out to discuss future opportunities at regionalprogramdirectors@mdfoodbank.org

14. How will performance be monitored?

Performance will be monitored through [expenditure and commodity distribution reports \(an example linked\)](#), which detail the total pounds of food distributed, the number of individuals served, and the use of awarded funds based on actual expenditures.

Capital Area Food Bank (CAFB) - \$3.5 million allocation from DHS

15. How will the funding be transmitted from CAFB (focusing on Montgomery and Prince George's Counties)?

- CAFB will use \$1.5 million to purchase and distribute food to its [partner network](#). CAFB will not charge any administrative costs or other delivery fees for these distributions. Preparation is already underway so that increased distributions can begin within one week after receipt of funds from DHS.
- CAFB will use \$1.4 million to provide cash funding to existing partners to buy food from local retailers to help access food more quickly. These grants will be given to all active Maryland partners in good standing. CAFB will begin issuing grant agreements immediately upon receipt of funds from DHS. CAFB will issue cash to grantees within 5 business days after receiving a fully executed grant agreement and related paperwork.
- The remainder of the funds will be used for direct distributions, including support to help students and families through existing school based grocery distributions and workforce programs.

16. How will CAFB determine which partners to prioritize?

Both food distribution and cash grants to partners will be prioritized by CAFB based on:

- Food insecure households within 4 miles of partner locations.
- Households with federal workers with incomes below \$90,000 by census tracts.
- SNAP participants within 1 mile of partner location OR SNAP participants in partner/surrounding zip codes.

- Capacity to expand (the maximum volume a partner can receive each week).
- Partners demonstrated grant management capacity, compliance, operating budget, and stewardship of previous awards.

17. Will partner organizations be charged for resources provided by CAFB?

No.

18. How does my organization receive funding from CAFB?

CAFB is planning to issue cash grants to [all active Maryland partners](#) in good standing.

If you are an existing CAFB partner organization and have questions, please reach out to:

Austin Chikwendu
Deputy Chief, Regional Partnerships
Email: Achikwendu@capitalareafoodbank.org

CAFB is not planning on taking on new distribution partners in making subgrants at this time. Please reach out to CAFB to discuss future partnership opportunities.

19. How will performance be monitored?

Current performance is monitored through [expenditure and commodity distribution reports](#), which detail the total pounds of food distributed, the number of individuals served, and the use of awarded funds based on actual expenditures. Additionally, CAFB monitors the enhancement of partner capacity through grant funds assessed via qualitative reports or specific metrics.