



**For Immediate Release:**

February 27, 2019

**Contact:** Katherine Morris

katherine.morris@maryland.gov

410-767-8944

## **Maryland Department of Human Services to Issue SNAP Benefits On March 6**

*Streamlined Schedule Provides Certainty for Recipients*

**BALTIMORE, MD** - The Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) today announced it will provide Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits on March 6 to all recipients in Maryland, including those who may have been impacted by the partial federal government shutdown.

SNAP benefits (known as the Food Supplement Program, or FSP, in Maryland) are typically issued on a staggered schedule between the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 23<sup>rd</sup> of each month. This year, all March SNAP/FSP benefits are being issued on the same date to reduce the length of time between recipients' February and March SNAP/FSP benefits. This streamlined schedule ensures that low-income individuals and families will not experience an extended period where they are unable to access their Food Supplement Program benefits.

"Our goal is to provide some certainty and relief to vulnerable Marylanders during this unpredictable time," said DHS Secretary Lourdes Padilla. "Changing the distribution date to March 6 and issuing all the SNAP/FSP benefits on the same day reduces the time recipients must wait for funds to purchase food in Maryland."

On average, there are more than 650,000 Marylanders receiving approximately \$75 million in FSP assistance each month. During the partial federal government shutdown, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the federal agency that funds SNAP/FSP program, directed states to issue February benefits earlier than usual. As a result, Maryland SNAP/FSP recipients obtained their February FSP benefits on or before January 20, 2019.

The Maryland Department of Human Services has taken a number of steps to ensure its clients are notified and prepared for the change in March service delivery. The department has mailed more than 300,000 letters to SNAP/FSP households, launched a [webpage](#) with specific information and resources about SNAP/FSP benefits, compiled a list of community food resources by city/county, posted a series of Frequently Asked Questions, and continues to post important information on their [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) platforms regarding the support and resources they're making available to residents across Maryland.

####