



## Illinois Department of Human Services | SNAP and the Federal Government Shutdown Q&A

January 2019

### **Are IDHS offices open during the federal shutdown?**

Yes. We are a state agency and our offices remain open for regular business hours.

### **Will I receive my SNAP benefits during the federal shutdown?**

You should have received both your January and February benefits. February benefits were sent out early, and should have been received on or before January 20<sup>th</sup>.

### **I've heard stores aren't accepting SNAP during the federal shutdown. Is this true?**

No. Your Link card will continue to work at any authorized SNAP retailer through the month of February. If you encounter a store that typically accepts SNAP and is currently not accepting SNAP because of the federal shutdown, please email [DHS.SNAPVendor@illinois.gov](mailto:DHS.SNAPVendor@illinois.gov) with the store name and location. IDHS will reach out to the retailer and ensure them that they can accept SNAP through the month of February.

### **Do I need to call or visit my local office to receive my February SNAP benefits?**

No. SNAP benefits will be automatically loaded to your Link card.

### **How can I check my Link card balance?**

You can check your Link card balance as usual at 800-678-LINK or at [www.ebt-link.illinois.gov](http://www.ebt-link.illinois.gov).

### **Do I have to use my SNAP benefits before February 1st?**

No. You do not have to use your benefits before February. The benefits that have been loaded early are intended for use in the month of February and will continue to be available on your Link card in the upcoming months.

### **Will I receive my March SNAP benefits?**

If the federal shutdown ends before March, you will receive your SNAP benefits as usual. We are working with the governor's office to explore all possible options if the shutdown continues into March and will provide further information as soon as it is available.

### **Will the federal shutdown impact my Medicaid (medical) benefits?**

No.

### **Will the federal shutdown impact my TANF (cash) benefits?**

No, cash benefits are not currently affected and will not be affected for several months.

## **What if I apply for SNAP benefits after February 1st?**

IDHS will continue processing applications and other requests. Once the shutdown ends, if you are eligible, you will receive SNAP benefits.

## **What do I do if I already applied for SNAP benefits, but have not received any benefits?**

If you have not been interviewed yet by IDHS, please call your local office. If you have been interviewed already, you will receive a notice from IDHS letting you know if you will receive benefits or not.

## **Are caseworkers still conducting eligibility interviews?**

Yes.

## **I already had my eligibility interview but have not yet submitted requested verifications, what do I do?**

Your application could be denied, or benefits reduced. Please send requested documents as soon as possible.

## **What if I have not turned in my Redetermination (REDE) or Mid-Point Report (MPR) due in January?**

Turn in your REDE or MPR as soon as possible through Manage My Case on [www.abe.illinois.gov](http://www.abe.illinois.gov) or at the fax or address listed on your letter.

## **If I think the benefit amount I received is incorrect, what should I do?**

Call your local office to discuss this situation.

## **I am an ABAWD (Able Bodied Adult without Dependents) living in DuPage County. If I do not receive benefits in March, will it still be a “countable ABAWD month”?**

We are seeking guidance on this issue from the United States Department of Agriculture.

## **Where do I go if I need additional food?**

Your local food pantry may be able to assist you. Visit the following links based on your location to find your closest food pantry, soup kitchen, mobile food distribution or shelter.

Greater Chicago Food Depository: <https://www.chicagosfoodbank.org/find-food/>

Northern Illinois Foodbank: <https://solvehungertoday.org/get-help/where-to-get-food/>

Central Illinois Foodbank: <https://www.centralilfoodbank.org/Get-Help/Food-Locator/>

Eastern Illinois Foodbank: <https://eifoodbank.org/help/find.html>

Peoria Area Foodbank: <http://www.peoriafoodbank.org/agency-locator/>

River Bend Foodbank: <https://riverbendfoodbank.org/find-food/>

St. Louis Area Foodbank: <https://stlfoodbank.org/programs-services/find-food/>

Tri-State Foodbank: <http://www.tristatefoodbank.org/get-help.html>

## **Can I apply for benefits if I'm a federal employee without a paycheck?**

Furloughed employees are welcome to apply for SNAP, TANF or medical. Your current household income will determine your eligibility. Some federal employees are concerned about having to pay back the benefits. We are seeking guidance from the federal agencies on whether that will be required.