



October 21, 2025

Dear Governor Healey and Members of the Massachusetts Legislature:

Below is a letter we sent to the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation on October 17 regarding the precarious situation faced by federal nutrition programs in the wake of the federal government shutdown. In summary, USDA has signaled that November SNAP benefits are at risk if the shutdown persists. As the leading anti-hunger organizations in Massachusetts, we are calling upon our delegation to take action to avoid any disruption to these critical programs. Regardless of the state of shut down negotiations, hungry families cannot and should not be collateral damage.

If the Trump Administration and Congress fail to act, we urge you to take state-level action to protect Massachusetts families from hunger by using state resources to fill the gaps.

SNAP, the largest of these programs, serves more than one million residents alone and is critical not only to the 650,000 households utilizing benefits to purchase the food they need, but also the 5,500+ participating SNAP retailers. Each month Massachusetts SNAP participants spend about \$220 million federal dollars - accounting for \$1 of every \$5 of grocery sales in the Commonwealth. A disruption, even temporary, could have devastating impacts on the health and wellbeing of families and the Massachusetts economy. If next month's benefits are not available, and SNAP participants turn to the statewide food pantry system to cover the gap, the four MA food banks would have to provide up to 56 million *more* meals in November—an impossible outcome.

With less than two weeks until November 1st, many families may be unaware they are about to be pushed off this cliff. With little time to prepare, we are concerned families will be left scrambling—turning to food pantries already stretched thin, going into debt, or just skipping meals altogether.

We ask you to rapidly identify and allocate the necessary state funds to protect these families and Massachusetts businesses. This may include utilizing the rainy-day fund to shield Massachusetts residents from this oncoming storm.

Sincerely,

Children's HealthWatch
Food Bank of Western Massachusetts
Massachusetts Food System Collaborative
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
Merrimack Valley Food Bank
Project Bread
The Greater Boston Food Bank
Worcester County Food Bank

October 17, 2025

To the Honorable Members of the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation:

As the leading anti-hunger organizations in the Commonwealth, we are writing to share our concern over the impacts on federal nutrition programs in the case of a prolonged government shutdown. These programs provide critical resources for families with low incomes to purchase groceries or directly serve nutritious meals for children and seniors. Unfortunately, the following programs are at risk if the shutdown continues past the end of this month:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and National School Breakfast Program (SBP)
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

Regardless of when an agreement is reached to reopen the federal government, we urge you to work with the Administration and your colleagues to ensure there are no disruptions to nutrition programs that more than one million Massachusetts residents use to access food for themselves and their families.

Many of these programs will be in jeopardy if the shutdown continues beyond the end of this month. In fact on October 10th, the USDA wrote in a [letter to states](#) “if the current lapse in appropriations continues, there will be insufficient funds to pay full November SNAP benefits” and, on October 16th, [Secretary of Agriculture Brooks Rollins stated that money for SNAP will run out in two weeks.](#)

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need, but also the 5,500+ participating SNAP retailers. Each month Massachusetts SNAP participants spend about \$220 million federal dollars - accounting for \$1 of every \$5 of grocery sales in the Commonwealth. A disruption, even temporary, could have devastating impacts on the health and wellbeing of families and the Massachusetts economy. If next month's benefits are not available, and SNAP participants turn to the statewide food pantry system to cover the gap, the four MA food banks would have to provide up to 56 million *more* meals in November—an impossible outcome. That's more than 4 times what the food bank system currently distributes in an average month on top of the increased demand for food assistance that our network experiences around the holidays.

Most critically, USDA should transfer additional funding to SNAP - as they have done with WIC - to ensure 1 in 6 Massachusetts residents receive SNAP without interruption. USDA also has billions of SNAP dollars in its contingency fund - dollars that should quickly be disbursed to ensure SNAP participants can buy food starting November 1 (even at a percent of their normal benefit allotment).

While SNAP is the starkest example, any lapse in nutrition programs will have serious consequences come November. We express our deep gratitude for your longstanding support of basic needs programs and for fighting for food insecure families. **We ask you to extend your leadership to ensure that very low-income families are not collateral damage of the government shutdown.**

Sincerely,

Children's HealthWatch
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Massachusetts Food System Collaborative
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