

How the Federal Shutdown Affects SNAP Questions and Answers

Q1. If I received my February benefits on January 17th, and the federal government shutdown ends, will I receive more benefits in February on my normal date?

A1. No. The February benefits you receive early on January 17 are what you are eligible for the entire month of February. That is why it is important that you budget your SNAP to last you through the end of February.

Q2. When can I start using the February benefits deposited on my EBT card on January 17?

A2. You may begin to use them immediately beginning January 17; however, remember that you will not receive any more SNAP benefits in February so you must budget accordingly.

Q3. If I receive my February benefits in January, do I have to use them by January 31?

A3. No, those benefits are your February benefits and may be redeemed in February. In fact, you will not get any more SNAP benefits in February and should budget so that they last you through February

Q4. What if my February benefits are not available in my EBT account on January 17?

A4. This does not mean that you will not get your February benefits. If you have completed your recertification, or if you complete it by January 31st, your benefits should be available on February 1 if you live in a county outside of New York City. If you live in New York City, your February benefits should be available on your regularly scheduled February benefit availability date. If you have sent in your recertification application, but have not yet completed the recertification process, you must do so as soon as possible. You must complete your interview, if you have not already, and must submit any required verification to your local Department of Social Services as soon as possible for them to determine if you are eligible for February SNAP benefits.

Q5. What if I haven't sent in my completed recertification yet?

A5. You must do so as soon as possible in one of three ways. The fastest way is to complete a recertification application online at www.mybenefits.ny.gov. You may also drop your recertification off at your local Department of Social Services (DSS) or mail it back to DSS in the envelope that was included in the recertification packet you received in the mail.

Q6. What will happen to my March benefits?

A6. OTDA has not yet received any information from the federal government about March SNAP benefits. We will continue to work closely with the federal government during the shutdown and will provide updates on our website at www.otda.ny.gov and through social media (links are available at the bottom of OTDA's home page) as it becomes available.

Q7. Do I have to continue to meet all SNAP requirements during the shutdown?

A7. Yes. You are still required to recertify, complete periodic reports, report changes and respond to requests from your local DSS as usual.

Q8. Can I still apply during the shutdown if I don't receive SNAP?

A8. Yes. You may still apply at your local DSS, or online at www.mybenefits.ny.gov.

Q9. Does the federal government shutdown affect my Temporary Assistance (cash) benefits?

A9. Temporary Assistance benefits (including cash and restricted benefits) are not currently affected by the shutdown and will be available on their normal schedule.