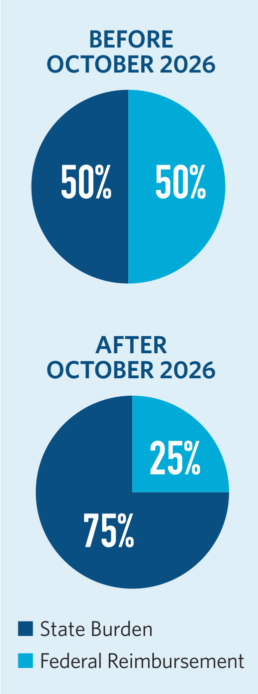
AUGUST 2025

HOW RECENT REPUBLICAN BUDGET CUTS WILL IMPACT HUNGER

On July 4, 2025, President Trump signed a partisan budget reconciliation bill into law that included massive cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), totaling an estimated $187 billion[1] (about 20%) and reducing or eliminating benefits for about 4 million people over the next decade.[2] This marks the most significant and damaging restructuring of SNAP in history — increasing eligibility restrictions, narrowing strategic flexibilities, and forcing states to absorb unprecedented program costs.

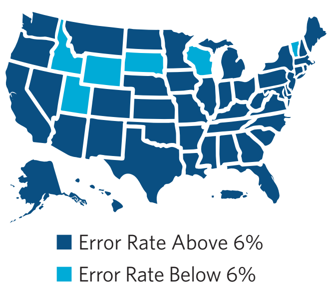


State Cost Shifts

Starting in October 2026, the federal reimbursement for SNAP administrative costs will drop from 50% to 25%, leaving states to cover the remaining 75%. This change will further strain state and county budgets, reduce staffing, delay services, increase administrative burdens, and reduce or eliminate SNAP benefits for about 300,000 people in a typical month.

Beginning in October 2027, most states with payment error rates (which measure the accuracy of a state's benefit payments to beneficiaries, including both overpayments and underpayments) that are 6% or greater will have to pay at least 5% of the SNAP benefit costs in their state, up to a maximum cost share of 15%. This will be the first time in history that the federal government has not covered the full cost of benefits, ensuring that Americans can keep food on the table no matter which state they reside in.

Based on the most recent data, 44 states have an error rate higher than 6%.[3] State governments have limited budgetary options for meeting increased costs and keeping SNAP available to those who need it. If their error rates are not reduced below 6%, they will be forced to raise taxes, pull funding from other areas of their budgets, employ additional barriers to eligibility, or potentially withdraw from SNAP entirely.



Based on 2024 data

Harsher Work Reporting Requirements

In general, so-called "able-bodied adults without dependents" (ABAWDs) can receive SNAP benefits for only three months in a three-year period if they do not meet specific work reporting requirements or are otherwise exempt. Evidence shows that these stringent requirements do not improve employment outcomes and result in many people losing food assistance due to red tape.[4]

[1] Congressional Budget Office: *Estimated Budgetary Effects of Public Law 119-21*
[2] Congressional Budget Office: *Estimated Effects on Participation and Benefits Under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program*
[3] USDA: *SNAP Program Error Rates*
[4] Hamilton Project: *A primer on SNAP work requirements*

Work Requirements

The new law drastically narrows the groups and ages of those qualifying for exemptions. CBO estimates that about 2.4 million people in total will be cut from SNAP under the provision. Once the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) issues guidance to state agencies on implementation, this law will:

- Raise the age of those subject to work reporting requirements from age 54 to 64;
- Redefine the age of a dependent child, for whom a caregiver is exempt from work reporting requirements, from under 18 years to under 14 years of age;
- Remove previous exemptions for veterans, unhoused individuals, and youth exiting the foster care system; and
- Include an exemption for American Indian and Alaska Native beneficiaries, including Urban Indians and California Indians.

Geographic Waivers

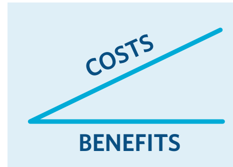
The new law restricts states in their ability to request waivers from USDA on work reporting requirements to only areas where the unemployment rate is 10% or greater. This undermines a state's ability to respond to local labor market conditions and increases barriers to access for those in economically distressed areas that fall below the 10% threshold. Noncontiguous states (Alaska and Hawai'i) would be eligible for a one-time waiver by December 31, 2028, if their unemployment rate is at or above 1.5 times the national unemployment rate.

Nutrition Education

The new law eliminates funding for the SNAP Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Program (SNAP-Ed). SNAP-Ed provides resources to assist beneficiaries in stretching their SNAP dollars, learning how to cook healthy meals, and leading active lifestyles. These evidence-based strategies and interventions are central to SNAP's efforts to improve nutrition and prevent diet-related disease.

Thrifty Food Plan

The new law limits future updates to the Thrifty Food Plan, which calculates benefits for SNAP and other food assistance programs, to those that are cost-neutral. This will prevent benefits from keeping pace with the cost of a realistic, healthy diet over time. In addition to preventing an increase of SNAP benefits, this change will also impact benefits levels for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), SUN Bucks/Summer EBT, and the Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) block grant to Puerto Rico.



Immigrant Eligibility

While undocumented immigrants have never been eligible to receive SNAP, the new law will strip benefits from many legal immigrants. Upon implementation, SNAP eligibility will be limited to U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, Cuban-Haitian entrants, and those who are Compact of Free Association "COFA" citizens from Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau. All other immigrants—including refugees, asylees, and those with humanitarian status such as survivors of domestic violence and trafficking—will no longer be eligible to receive SNAP. About 90,000 people living lawfully in the U.S. will lose food assistance.

Utility Allowances

The new law also prohibits states from considering internet costs as part of the "Standard Utility Allowance" and limits the availability of the SNAP standard heating and cooling allowance to only households that include a senior (60 years old or above) or a person with a disability who receives more than $20 payments from the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Eliminating these administrative simplifications for calculating utility expenses will significantly cut food benefits for qualifying households.