

Federal Government Shutdown FAQs

What is the state doing to help Iowans during the federal shutdown?

- Governor Reynolds has directed HHS to use existing state funds to match all cash donations to Iowa's six regional food banks up to \$1 million dollars beginning November 1, if SNAP benefits are not federally funded during November due to the government shutdown.

SNAP

Will I receive partial SNAP benefits for November?

- Iowa HHS received guidance from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) on issuing partial November SNAP benefits. Iowa HHS is working closely with the Department of Management's Division of Information Technology to implement the necessary calculations. The maximum benefit amount for each household is being reduced for November—this is a temporary change to meet the current requirement of partial benefits for November. Each household's benefit must be manually recalculated before our SNAP contractor can load the funds onto EBT cards. The department is still working on a timeline for when benefits will be loaded onto cards.

Can I use my SNAP card if it has a fund balance from previous months?

- Yes, you will still be able to use any remaining balance on your EBT card after November 1. You can check your EBT balance by calling the number on the back of your card, 800-359-5802, logging into your ConnectEBT account online, or using the ConnectEBT Mobile app.

How soon after the federal government shutdown ends will my benefits be available to me?

- Iowa HHS will work as quickly as possible to ensure benefits are available. We will communicate the timing as details are finalized.

What should I do with my SNAP card in the meantime?

- You should keep your SNAP card.

Will Iowa HHS continue to process applications and renewals for SNAP?

- Yes, Iowa HHS will continue to process eligibility for the SNAP program at this time. If approved, SNAP cards will be mailed, but no benefits will be loaded onto the card if the shutdown is still in effect.

How can I stay updated on what is going on with SNAP benefits?

- Please visit hhs.iowa.gov/SNAP for updates

Where can I get food while I don't have SNAP benefits?

- Call 211
- Text zip code to 898211
- Go to 211iowa.org
- Download 211 NE + IA app

WIC (Women, Infants and Children)

Will WIC participants receive benefits?

- Iowa WIC participants will continue to receive uninterrupted WIC benefits and services through November.

What happens if a participant uses SNAP and WIC benefits at the store?

- Since SNAP benefits will not be available to SNAP participants on November 1, it is likely that individuals attempting to redeem their benefits in conjunction with their WIC benefits will run into challenges in the check-out process. As a solution, if participants experience challenges in the checkout line, grocery personnel could separate out the WIC foods or process the split tender a second time, excluding the SNAP EBT card as a form of payment.

Is my WIC clinic open?

- Yes, Iowa WIC remains open. Participants should continue to schedule and attend their appointments. Check with your clinic for their hours of operation.

Will WIC Local Agencies be paid for November?

- At this time, Iowa HHS does not anticipate challenges providing WIC local agencies with reimbursement for November operations.

Will benefits be taken off cards?

- At this time, Iowa WIC continues to operate as usual. Benefits will remain on WIC EBT cards for the 62,000+ women, infants, and children who utilize the program.

Does SNAP funding affect WIC?

- No. The WIC program does not rely on SNAP funding. Therefore, we do not anticipate that WIC participants will experience any changes in their benefits availability due to the loss of SNAP funding.

How is WIC being funded?

- Iowa WIC has continued operations through additional funds provided by USDA. In the event USDA is unable to provide additional contingency funds, Governor Reynolds has authorized the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to temporarily fund WIC. Iowa HHS will use contingency funding within the department to continue all WIC program operations through November.

LIHEAP (Low-Income Housing Energy Assistance Program)

Can I still apply for LIHEAP during the government shutdown?

- Yes. Applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Beginning October 1, households with at least one member who is 60 years of age or older or disabled may apply. All other households may apply starting November 1.

How do I apply for LIHEAP?

- Visit your local [Map Local Community Action Agencies](#) to apply for LIHEAP and other programs. Individuals may apply for the program at the local Community Action Agency in their county. Scroll down the page, and there is a map. This map will specify county offices for each community action agency.

When will my LIHEAP payment(s) be in my account?

- Due to the federal shutdown, payments cannot be made to utility companies until the state receives the federal funding. Once the state receives the funding, the earliest accounts will see payments will be late January or early February.

Once I'm approved for LIHEAP, do I need to keep paying my bill?

- Yes. Continue to make payments on your account. The LIHEAP payment will appear as a credit on your account once it is issued.

Can I be disconnected after applying for LIHEAP?

- Anyone who is approved for LIHEAP and has a natural gas and/or electric account will be protected from disconnection through April 1st. If you have propane or LP, you are not protected.

What do I do if I have a disconnect notice?

- Contact the utility provider and let the provider know that you are going to apply for LIHEAP. Then, contact your Community Action Agency to let them know you have a disconnect notice, and apply for the program.

What do I do if I've been disconnected?

- Contact your local CAA to discuss options to get reconnected.

Will I be able to get help with my propane or fuel oil?

- Funding is available to address propane and fuel oil needs on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact your Community Action Agency to let them know you are low on fuel.

What do I do if I am out or running low on propane or fuel oil?

- Contact your Community Action Agency to let them know you are low on fuel or out of fuel and apply for the LIHEAP program.

Child Care

How do I find child care?

- You can find child care by visiting childcareconnect.iowa.gov, contacting Child Care Resource and Referral Parent Services at [855-244-5301](tel:855-244-5301) (Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.), or emailing our Parent Service Team at childcare@episervice.org

How do I apply for Child Care Assistance?

- You can apply for child care assistance by visiting <https://www.iowa.gov/how-do-i-apply-child-care-assistance>.