

Information Update about October SNAP benefits

September 24, 2015

Good afternoon. As you know, there is potential for disruption of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program if Congress is unable to pass an appropriations bill avoiding a governmental shutdown. It is possible that over 400,000 Connecticut residents may have their monthly SNAP benefit, typically issued over the first three days of each month, delayed in October.

We want to share the latest official update to states, received late yesterday from the Food & Nutrition Service. In brief, FNS has modified its initial direction and has advised states to proceed to send benefit issuance files to EBT systems/vendors to insure that October benefits can be issued timely and without delay. **However**, FNS is also saying that it will be forced to essentially freeze benefits at the food retailer level if Congress does not pass a funding bill, as it will not have sufficient funding available.

The upshot -- while Connecticut and 49 other states and US Territories are now cleared to send October SNAP benefit information to our EBT vendor systems, we don't know yet when the benefits will actually be available for the clients to access at supermarkets, groceries, farmers' markets and other participating EBT retailers. That depends on Congress and how FNS responds over the coming days and weeks.

You can read the latest federal directive and get a quick overview at our special website area – www.ct.gov/dss/snapoctober2015. We will post updates as we receive them, and do our best to keep you informed.

Thank you and regards from the Connecticut Department of Social Services