



**Government Shutdown
Updated 1/10/2019**

The immediate impact of the partial government shutdown is being felt by the approximately 800,000 federal employees who are either currently furloughed or being asked to work without pay. North Texas Food Bank is ready to assist these public servants should they need help during this difficult time.

Our latest updates are as follows:

SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

The most recent Continuing Resolution funded the U.S. Department of Agriculture through December 21 of last year and ensured that January and February benefits would be provided without interruption.

Problems will begin should the shutdown extend past February:

- While there is not presently a disruption in benefits, it's important to be cognizant of the administrative nightmare state agencies are facing due to uncertainty.
- In addition, we are concerned about client confusion. People might wrongly assume that SNAP, WIC or other federal programs are not available during the shutdown (even though January and February are assured).
- February benefits will be issued early on January 20th due to policy restrictions
- Assuming the shutdown will be over, March benefits will be issued on their normal date to clients
- Please note that if clients choose to spend their February benefits early, this may create an unexpected need for food at the end of February.
- Partner Agencies should be advised of this potential increased need in emergency food at the end of February/beginning of March and plan accordingly.
- If the shutdown extends into March there are emergency funds available to cover SNAP through US Department of Agriculture (USDA) but this matter has no current comments.

USDA Foods

We are being told orders placed before January 2019 for TEFAP & CSFP (two USDA Federal commodity programs we administer) will be delivered without interruption, however:

Currently, there are no new funds available for new TEFAP or CSFP requests and 95% of the administrative staff for these programs is on furlough. But we are being assured our previous requests will be delivered.

NTFB put in their requests for USDA items last year through FY2019, we currently have no current reason to believe those items won't come in

TEFAP – The Emergency Food Assistance Program

With respect to the availability of food through commodity programs, orders for TEFAP food purchases that have already been confirmed with a contract will be delivered. Similarly, the Commodity Supplemental Food Assistance Program (CSFP) should not see interruption.

- This should cover most, but likely not all, of the food orders through March.
- While TEFAP food will be delivered, food banks will shoulder the burden of storage costs until the shutdown is resolved. State agencies and food banks are left to absorb the entire cost of storing and distributing USDA foods for the duration of the shutdown.

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Funding for child nutrition programs (school breakfast and lunch, summer and afterschool meals) is also enough at least through January.

- These programs are all reimbursement based, so there is a delay between serving meals and drawing down federal funds (versus SNAP which is direct payment to individuals and must be shut off immediately when funding runs out).
- In prior shutdowns, these programs could still operate, but the furlough would mean an administrative delay of them receiving the reimbursement.

WIC – Women, Infants, and Children Program

- State WIC agencies have enough funding on hand to stay open through the end of January.
- Beyond that, USDA officials are expected to undertake measures to identify & provide additional funding to allow operation of the program into next month.