



**TULARE COUNTY
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY**

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One-time Early CalFresh Benefits Release for February
Federal Government Shut-down Affects CalFresh Benefits

VISALIA, CA – Due to the federal government shut-down, February CalFresh benefits (known as SNAP at the federal level) for most program participants are being issued early, January 16-20. If a participant receives CalFresh benefits for February early, these benefits will be the only CalFresh benefits dispersed until the end of February.

“We hope this is a one-time fix and that an agreement is reached to end the government shutdown,” said Vienna Barnes, Human Services branch Deputy Director with Tulare County Health & Human Services Agency. “That being said, we are diligently working with our federal, state, and local partners to minimize harm to our residents to the greatest extent possible.”

Should the shutdown continue into February, those who use CalFresh food assistance benefits could see their benefits impacted. CalFresh is a federally funded program subject to federal appropriation. States do not share in the cost of these benefits. There is no existing mechanism for the state to pay for CalFresh benefits should the federal government be unable to do so.

CalFresh benefits provide temporary help for qualifying low-income community members to be able to feed their families nutritious food, including fruits and vegetables, whole-grain foods, dairy products, and other healthy foods. Nearly half of those who receive CalFresh benefits are children. This program is a cornerstone of the national assistance safety net. According to federal SNAP data, CalFresh benefits the community as each \$5 in benefits generates almost twice that amount in economic activity for the community.

According to the Public Policy Institute of California, “An average of 4.1 million Californians living in 2.0 million households received CalFresh benefits each month in federal fiscal year 2017. Each participant received, on average, \$136 a month toward household grocery costs. Californians received slightly more than \$6.7 billion in federal SNAP benefits, or 10.6% of the total national spending.” Those who are eligible to qualify based on income would include seniors, working individuals, and legal immigrants.

For questions concerning CalFresh benefits, please call 1-800-540-6880. For more information about CalFresh, log on to <http://mycalfresh.org/>.

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