

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
BENEFIT, EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION (BESSD)

Informational Briefing: Federal Shutdown Effects on SNAP

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October 28, 2025



BESSD Overview: Staff & Clients

- BESSD is the largest DHS Division by position count.
- Nearly 700 staff positions located in 19 offices throughout the State
- This includes nearly 400 Eligibility Workers and clerical staff responsible to process SNAP and Financial Assistance benefits.
- BESSD Processing Centers serve 85,000+ Families or an estimated 166,000+ individuals annually.

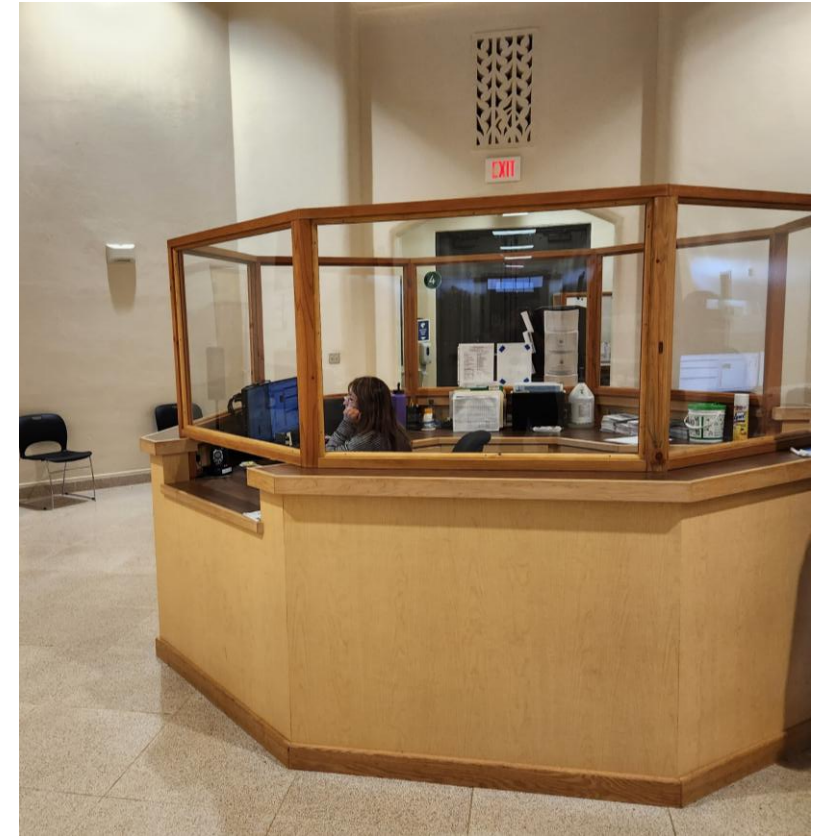


Photo: The lobby of the Kauai Processing Center in Lihue.



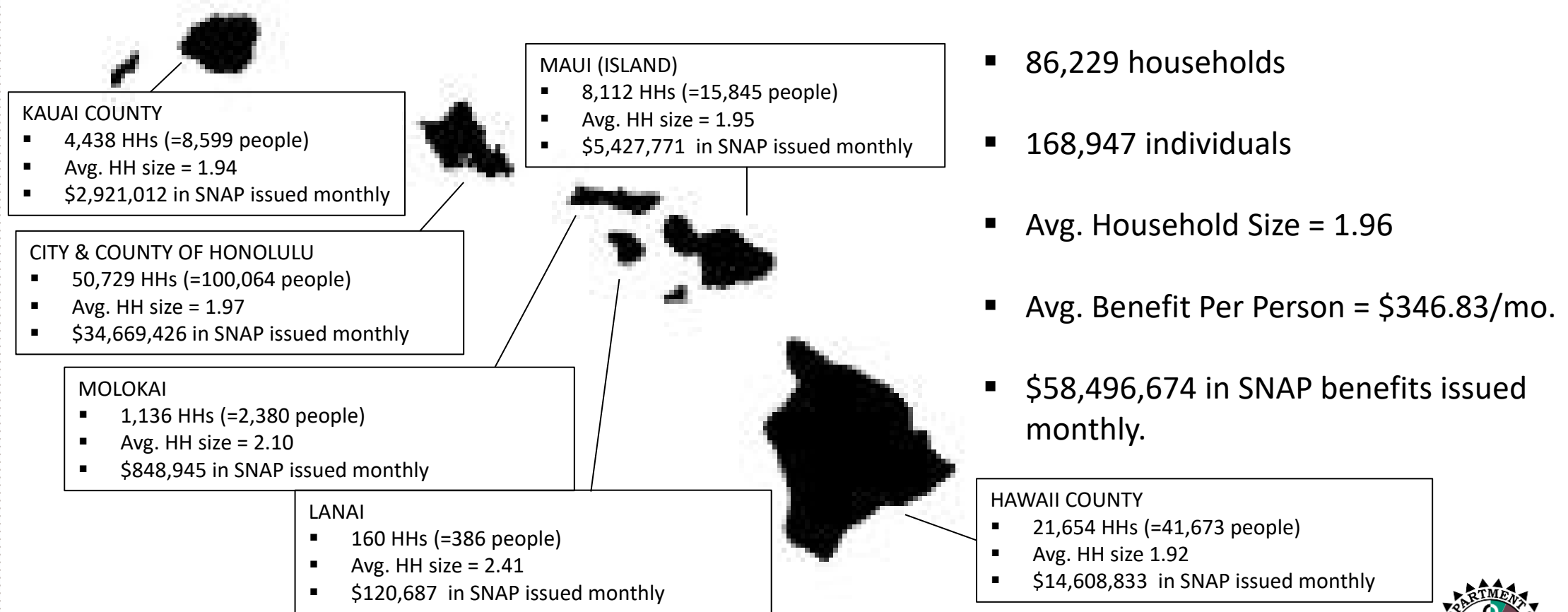
What is SNAP?

- Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a federal program that provides monthly benefits to low-income households to help them purchase food.
- Formerly known as Food Stamps.
- Benefits are issued through an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card for recipients to buy groceries at authorized retailers.
- SNAP recipients must meet income and other program requirements to qualify.



FOCUS: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – September 2025

SNAP Participation as of Sept. 2025:



USDA Suspension of SNAP Benefits Eff. November 1, 2025

- On October 10, 2025, USDA directed states to hold sending files for November SNAP benefits to EBT vendors.
- On October 24, 2025, USDA directed states to suspend SNAP November benefits effective November 1, 2025.
- DHS issued a News Release on Friday, October 24th to inform the public of the suspension of benefits, and posted information regarding the impact of the federal government shutdown on SNAP, as well as a list of Frequently Asked Questions.



Food and Nutrition Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

DATE: October 24, 2025

SUBJECT: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefit and Administrative Expense Update for November 2025

TO: Regional SNAP Directors
All Regions

SNAP State Agency Directors
All State Agencies

This memorandum provides guidance regarding November 2025 SNAP benefits and administrative expenses as a follow-up to our prior guidance issued on October 10, 2025. In accordance with 7 CFR 271.7(b), FNS is suspending all November 2025 benefit allotments until such time as sufficient federal funding is provided, or until FNS directs State agencies otherwise. This suspension is effective November 1, 2025.

Please take immediate action to implement this suspension. Per 7 CFR 271.7(d)(4), State agencies must notify households of the suspension in accordance with the mass change notice provisions at 7 CFR 273.12(e)(1). Upon the availability of federal funding, FNS will notify State agencies of when the suspension is lifted to allow for immediate action to resume issuing November and subsequent monthly benefits to eligible households.



Key Points for November 2025 SNAP Benefits and Federal Shutdown

- If the federal shutdown continues, SNAP participants will not receive SNAP benefits on the 1st, 3rd and 5th, and SNAP benefits will be suspended until the federal shutdown ends.
- Cash benefits (e.g., TANF, GA, and AABD) will NOT be affected.
- SNAP benefits available on the EBT card from October or a prior month are NOT affected, and will still be accessible to participants for use at retailers.
- DHS will continue to process applications, recertifications, and ongoing cases as normal, although November SNAP benefits will not be issued.
- SNAP participants should continue to keep interviews for applications and recertifications, submit any documents requested by an Eligibility Worker, and report mandatory changes.



Other Federal Impacts on the SNAP Program and SNAP Participants

- Effective October 1, 2025, the annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for SNAP reduced the maximum SNAP benefit in Hawaii by an average of \$8 per person. This is the third such reduction in the maximum SNAP benefit since 2023.
- Starting November 1, 2025, new requirements from the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA or H.R. 1) will go into effect for Able Bodied Adult work requirements.
- Starting November 1, 2025, new requirements from the OBBBA will go into effect regarding changes to non-citizen eligibility for SNAP.



Able Bodied Adult Work Requirements

- The following populations will be newly subject to Able Bodied Adult work requirements:
 - Adults aged 55-64.
 - Adults in households with dependent children aged 14 and older.
 - People experiencing homelessness
 - Veterans
 - Youth aged 18-24 transitioning from foster care.
- SNAP participants will be assessed for these requirements during their next interview for an application or recertification.
- Information and FAQs regarding the work requirements are available on the DHS website.



Changes to SNAP eligibility for Non-Citizens

- Effective November 1, 2025 only the following non-citizen households will be eligible for SNAP:
 - Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR) – *Must also meet additional criteria for non-citizens receiving SNAP.*
 - Individuals present in the United States based on the Compact of Free Association (COFA).
 - Cuban or Haitian entrants.
- Ineligible non-citizens must still be reported as part of a household applying or during recertification.
- Income of the ineligible non-citizen will be counted in full towards a household's total income without any exclusions.



OVERALL SUMMARY OF FEDERAL SHUTDOWN IMPACTS ON SNAP

- November SNAP benefits will not be issued if the federal government shutdown continues.
- Cash benefits will not be impacted.
- SNAP benefits from prior months will still be accessible.
- DHS is continuing to process applications and cases as normal, and clients should keep interviews and follow up with submitting any documents requested.
- DHS will still implement changes effective November 1 related to the OBBBA (e.g., work requirements and non-citizen eligibility).
- DHS is actively working to stand up the Hawaii Relief Program and provide support to the Hawaii Foodbank to mitigate immediate impacts.



Thank you for your continued support.

For any questions, please contact:
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