



2025 Federal Government Shutdown FAQs

Updated October 2, 2025 – SNA will continue to provide updates as new information becomes available.

[USDA Lapse of Funding Contingency Plan \(PDF\)](#)

[USDA Shutdown Notification Letter to State Agencies \(PDF\)](#)

Why is there a shutdown?

The federal government can only spend funds with Congress' approval, granted through appropriations bills that authorize funding levels. Before the end of each fiscal year (September 30), Congress must either pass new appropriations laws or a "continuing resolution" (CR) to keep the federal government fully operating. Since Congress has [not yet passed](#) any Fiscal Year 2026 appropriations bills, nor come to an agreement on a CR to extend current funding levels, the federal government shutdown began at midnight on October 1, 2025.

How are school meals funded during normal operations?

Since the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) are entitlement programs, federal per-meal reimbursements (including those for snacks and suppers) are guaranteed. However, Congress makes these funds available through the annual appropriations process and USDA releases the funds to State agencies. For more details on the funding structure of child nutrition programs, see this [CRS report](#).

Will school nutrition programs receive reimbursements for meals served in September?

[According to USDA's Lapse of Funding Plan](#), "Carryover funding and recoveries are available to continue to reimburse schools as well as child and adult care providers for meals served in September and October." The plan also indicates that Section 32 funds can be made available to support operations and that some Food and Nutrition Service employees will be excepted from furlough to support operations. SFAs should contact their State agencies to confirm funds are on hand.

Will school nutrition programs receive reimbursements if the shutdown lasts past October?

Several State agencies have reported they do not currently have adequate funding to cover October's meals and that reimbursements could be delayed should the shutdown extend beyond November 1. However, [USDA's Lapse of Funding Plan](#), states that "Carryover funding and recoveries are available to continue to reimburse schools as well as child and adult care providers for meals served in September and October." USDA's October 1 [letter to State agencies](#) states that "funding has been provided for the Child Nutrition Programs at least through October."

In prior shutdowns, USDA has released advanced funds to State agencies to ensure continued reimbursements in case the shutdown was lengthy. SNA contacted USDA prior to the shutdown



inquiring if advanced payments would be issued and to request more information on members' behalf. ***SNA will continue to urge USDA to provide greater clarity and will share additional details as they become available.***

What about reimbursements for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)?

The FFVP receives mandatory funding outside of the annual appropriations process. This mandatory funding structure means FFVP can continue even during a lapse in appropriations.

Will USDA Foods deliveries to schools be impacted by the shutdown?

USDA's [letter to State agencies](#) states that, "vendors are required to deliver any USDA Foods that were purchased prior to the lapse in appropriations; therefore, Program operators should expect to continue to receive USDA Foods deliveries during the lapse."

Has USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) staff been furloughed during the shutdown?

[USDA's Lapse of Funding Plan](#) said 1,135 FNS employees (out of 1,237) are expected to be furloughed during the shutdown, but "a limited number of FNS employees" will be excepted from furlough to support Child Nutrition Program operations. USDA's [letter to State agencies](#) confirmed that "many FNS staff" will be furloughed and unavailable during the shutdown. State agencies were instructed to continue to administer the programs and to contact regional offices with any questions.

Who should SFAs reach out to with questions?

Contact your State agency with program specific questions and stay tuned to SNA's website for updates on the shutdown. This FAQ will be revised as more details become available.

How can school nutrition programs support the students of furloughed workers in my district?

With many federal workers and contractors furloughed or impacted by the recent federal Reduction in Force (RIFs), SNA encourages members to promote Free and Reduced-Price meal applications at this time. Remind families that at any time of year, applications can be resubmitted due to the loss of income.