



GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, October 31, 2025

MEDIA CONTACT:

Governor's Press Office, ra-gvgovpress@pa.gov

Governor Shapiro Takes Action to Support Pennsylvanians on SNAP, Increase Capacity Among Pennsylvania's Charitable Food System

As the Trump Administration withholds November SNAP payments during the federal government shutdown for nearly two million Pennsylvanians, Governor Shapiro is mobilizing state resources and private sector support to protect families, children, and seniors and maintain food security across the Commonwealth.

Governor Shapiro signed a declaration of disaster emergency and is making \$5 million in Commonwealth funding immediately available to Pennsylvania food banks.

Governor Shapiro is also leading a private sector donation campaign, securing over \$1 million in private donations for food banks through the "SNAP Emergency Relief Fund."



Philadelphia, PA – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** announced **new state-led efforts** to support Pennsylvania’s charitable food network and the two million Pennsylvanians who rely on the **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** after the Trump Administration refused to fund SNAP benefits in November amid the ongoing federal government shutdown.

The Governor is driving out **\$5 million in state funding immediately** to [Feeding Pennsylvania](#) to distribute through its network of food banks across the Commonwealth. The Governor also [signed](#) a declaration of disaster emergency to expedite the delivery of Commonwealth funding and ensure relief reaches Pennsylvanians as quickly as possible. The declaration will allow state resources to be driven out more quickly, streamline contracting, and provide the Governor with additional tools to address the harm caused by the federal government shutdown.

“Nearly two million Pennsylvanians rely on SNAP every month — and they shouldn’t have to wonder where their next meal will come from because of the dysfunction in Washington,” said **Governor Shapiro**. “There is no substitute for the federal government’s decision not to release SNAP benefits, but my Administration is stepping up to use every tool we have — state resources, private sector support, and the compassion of our communities — to make sure our food banks are fully stocked and our families are fed. The federal government has the money to keep people fed — they’re just refusing to use it. In Pennsylvania, I won’t let our families or food banks shoulder that burden alone, and I’m not going to stand by while the federal government lets Pennsylvanians go hungry.”

The \$5 million in state funding will flow through Feeding Pennsylvania like the **Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus System (PASS)** — a **Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture** initiative that connects food banks with Pennsylvania farmers to provide fresh, local food to families in need. Since 2015-16, PDA has distributed **\$35.5 million** through PASS to 13 food banks that collectively serve all 67 counties. Under the Shapiro Administration, **\$11 million** over the last two years in PASS funding has already been delivered to strengthen Pennsylvania's charitable food network.

In addition to state support, **Governor Shapiro** has launched a **private sector fundraising effort** to help food banks meet the expected surge in demand — **raising more than \$1 million** so far for the "SNAP Emergency Relief Fund" thanks to contributions from Pennsylvania leaders, including Thomas Tull, Connie Williams, Mark Cuban, and David and Hallee Adelman.

Earlier this week, **Governor Shapiro** [joined](#) 24 other states and Washington, D.C. in suing the Trump Administration for unlawfully suspending SNAP payments and failing to use billions in Congressionally-approved contingency funds available to the **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)** to continue benefits during the shutdown.

Governor Shapiro made today's announcement at [Philabundance](#) — the largest non-profit food bank in the Delaware Valley region — and was joined by **Feeding Pennsylvania CEO Julie Bancroft**, **Philabundance CEO Loree D. Jones-Brown**, and **Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) Secretary Russell Redding**, and local leaders who underscored the importance of swift state action in the face of the federal shutdown.

Feeding Pennsylvania is the statewide association of Pennsylvania's nine **Feeding America** partner food banks, supporting hunger relief efforts, policy advocacy, and resource coordination. Its member food banks serve **over 1.5 million people annually**, distributing **237 million pounds of food** — roughly **197.5 million meals** — through more than **2,700 agencies** across all 67 counties. Currently, eight of nine food banks are using reserve funds to purchase additional food, and all have seen **100 percent increases** in visits to their "Find Help" pages. They are preparing for a **20 percent increase in demand** in November.

Philabundance, founded in 1984, is part of the Feeding America and Feeding PA networks, and partners with the Food Bank of Chester County. It serves **100,000 households weekly** across Southeastern PA and Southern New Jersey through **300 community partners**. In 2024, Philabundance distributed **47 million pounds of food**, equivalent to **39 million meals**, and runs a range of programs connecting low-income families with nutritious, locally sourced food.

Federal Government Shutdown Threatens SNAP Benefits for Nearly Two Million Pennsylvanians

Since its creation in 1964, SNAP has been fully funded by the federal government, with benefits administered by the states. Each month, SNAP provides more than **\$366 million in benefits** to help **nearly two million Pennsylvanians** feed themselves and their families — including more than **713,000 children** and **697,000 older adults**. More than \$4.3 billion in SNAP benefits were issued over the course of state FY2024-25. In total, roughly **42 million people in the U.S. receive SNAP benefits** each month.

Beyond helping families put food on the table, the USDA estimates that **every \$1 billion in SNAP benefits generates \$1.54 billion in economic activity** through job retention and creation, income for farmers, and sales for food retailers.

Because Republicans in Washington — who control both chambers of Congress and the White House — have failed to pass a federal budget, the government has shut down, and the Trump Administration has stated it will not issue SNAP benefits for November. This marks the first time in history that the federal government has stopped SNAP payments.

Protecting Pennsylvania's Families, Farmers, and Food System

Governor Shapiro and his Administration continue to stand up for Pennsylvania's food security and agricultural economy:

- Earlier this year, the USDA abruptly canceled Pennsylvania's **Local Food Purchasing Assistance (LFPA) agreement, cutting \$13 million in federal funding** over three years for programs that provide fresh, locally grown food to food banks. The Governor [filed a lawsuit](#) over that decision, and that case is pending.
- The Governor has expanded access to school meals by securing **universal free breakfast for 1.7 million students** and free lunch for 22,000 eligible students. During the 2024–25 school year, Pennsylvania schools served nearly **93 million breakfasts** — a 13.8 percent increase over two years — including more than 70 million meals for students at risk of hunger or from low-income families.
- To increase access to fresh food in communities across the Commonwealth, the Governor relaunched the **Fresh Food Financing Initiative** with \$4 million from his first two budgets. In May 2025, \$3.4 million in grants were awarded to businesses in 23 counties, connecting low-income communities with locally produced, healthy food.
- The **Shapiro Administration** also participated in the Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (Summer-EBT) program in 2024, providing \$120 per child to ensure access to nutritious meals during June through August. The program, which is federally funded, continued in Summer 2025.
- Additionally, the Governor increased funding for the **State Food Purchase Program (SFPP)** by \$2 million in FY2023–24 & FY2024-25, bringing total

funding to \$26.6 million. These funds support emergency food assistance, connect surplus food through PASS to food banks and pantries statewide, and provide Senior Food Boxes with nutritious staples.

How Pennsylvanians Can Help

Governor Shapiro encouraged Pennsylvanians who are able to support their local food banks and pantries. Visit feedingpa.org to learn more about how to donate or volunteer.

#