

Families First Coronavirus Response Act

Anti-Hunger and Nutrition Provisions



The Families First Coronavirus Response Act, enacted on March 18, 2020, will provide needed funding and flexibility to federal nutrition programs to make them more accessible and responsive to individuals in need due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The following provisions will enable federal nutrition programs to both continue serving existing participants during the pandemic and help meet the increased need for nutrition assistance:

- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP):**
 - Increase benefit amount for families with school aged children. Allows the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to approve state plans to provide emergency SNAP assistance to households with children who would otherwise receive free or reduced-price meals if not for their schools being closed due to the COVID-19 emergency. In order to be eligible, the child's school must be closed for no less than 5 consecutive days.
 - Benefit Adequacy: Allows states to request special waivers from the Agriculture Secretary to provide temporary, emergency benefits up to the maximum monthly allotment, permitting recipients to stock up at the grocery store before any quarantine, and help deal with price increases for eligible food.
 - Additional SNAP Flexibilities in a Public Health Emergency: Gives broad discretion to the Agriculture Secretary to provide much more flexibility for states to manage SNAP caseloads, including more time between periodic reports; allowing more methods of issuance; and a simplified interview process.
 - Halts Implementation of Work Requirements for Able Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWDS). Suspends the work and work training requirements for SNAP while the state of emergency is in place.
- **The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP):** Provides \$400 million to assist local food banks to meet increased demand for low-income Americans during the emergency. Of the total, \$300 million is for the purchase of nutritious foods and \$100 million is to support the storage and distribution of the foods.
- **The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC):** Provides \$500 million to provide access to nutritious foods to low-income pregnant women or mothers with young children who lose their jobs or are laid off due to the COVID-19 emergency.
- **National School Lunch Program (NSLP):**
 - Allows Non-Congregate Meals. Allows all child and adult care centers to operate as non-congregate (i.e. they can serve outside the school or in individual settings) and waive all meal pattern requirements if there is a disruption to the food supply as a result of the COVID-19 emergency.
 - Simplifies Administration. Provides the Secretary of Agriculture the authority to issue nationwide school meal waivers during the COVID-19 emergency, which will eliminate paperwork for states and help more schools quickly adopt and utilize flexibilities.
- **Senior Nutrition Assistance:** Includes \$250 million to provide about 25 million additional home-delivered and pre-packaged meals to older adults who depend on senior nutrition programs.

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