THE POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES OF SUSPENDING SNAP FOR POVERTY AMONG NEW YORKERS

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As the 2025 federal government shutdown continues, there is a real risk that the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, otherwise known as food stamps) will not issue November benefits. SNAP provides essential support to millions of New Yorkers, helping families afford food and cope with the affordability crisis across the state. If a shutdown interrupts SNAP benefit payments, the consequences for poverty and food insecurity in New York State would be immediate. This short factsheet estimates how many New York State residents would be moved into poverty in 2025 if they did not receive their SNAP benefits in November.

KEY FINDING

I find that approximately **35,000 New York State residents** would fall into poverty in 2025 if SNAP benefits were not paid in November. This estimate reflects how critical SNAP is in keeping households above the poverty line, even from losing just one month of benefits. Given that approximately two-thirds of SNAP dollars in the state go to New York City residents, this implies that **23,000 New York City residents** would fall into poverty in 2025 if these benefits were not paid.

HOW THESE NUMBERS WERE ESTIMATED

To arrive at the numbers above, I used three years of data from the Census' March Current Population Survey (CPS), the large national household survey used to calculate poverty in the United States. I used three years as this is recommended to arrive at state-level estimates. I use a version of the data augmented by researchers at the Urban Institute using their TRIM3 model,[1] which attempts to correct for known misreporting in household survey data of major benefit programs like SNAP.[2]

To remove November benefits, I first consider the number of months that each SNAP recipient in the data received SNAP. For New Yorkers who receive SNAP for all 12 months, I remove 1/12th of their annual SNAP benefits. For New Yorkers who receive fewer than 12 months of SNAP, I adjust how much I remove based on the likelihood that they received benefits in November. For example, for those who receive SNAP for just one month, there is roughly a 1 in 12 probability that they received their month of SNAP in November.[3] So I find 1/12th of recipients who get just one month of SNAP, and then remove 100% of their SNAP benefit; this is because their entire one month would be their November benefit. For recipients who get between 2 and 11 months, I adjust these percentages accordingly. I then recalculate annual SNAP benefits, aggregate across family members thought to share income, and recalculate poverty rates.[4] Poverty rates described here represent annual poverty (i.e., comparing a household's total resources for the calendar year against the annual Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) threshold representing the minimum amount a household needs per year to meet basic needs).

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Losing even just one month of SNAP benefits could cause serious harm to families. If SNAP benefits are not distributed in November because of the government shutdown, an estimated 35,000 New Yorkers would be pushed into poverty in 2025. Millions more would lose critical benefits, the loss of which would push them deeper into poverty or closer to falling into poverty. It is critical for federal and state policymakers to act swiftly to fill any impending shortfalls.

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[1] Data were from the 2018 to 2020 TRIM3 March CPS, covering calendar years 2017 to 2019. Because SNAP caseloads are higher in 2025 than 2018 (the midpoint of my 2017-19 dataset), I increase my estimate by 11% (the difference between New York State SNAP caseloads in 2018 and 2025).
[2] TRIM3 project website: trim3.urban.org. Data downloaded on 10-15-2025.
[3] This assumes there are no major changes in case-loads across the calendar year, for example if the economy were improving or deteriorating across the year. It also assumes no major cyclicality in receipt of SNAP benefits.
[4] The analysis uses the Supplemental Poverty Measure (see Shrider and Bijou, 2025 for details on the measure).
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