

H.R.1 Impacts on California

ACCESS TO FOOD ASSISTANCE

Background

H.R.1 is the federal budget reconciliation bill signed into law in July 2025. This budget prioritized tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans while cutting funding for critical public services and benefits, including the publicly-funded food assistance [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#). In California, SNAP is known as "CalFresh." For more information about SNAP and CalFresh see [NCYL's H.R.1 Implementation Timeline](#) (page 9).

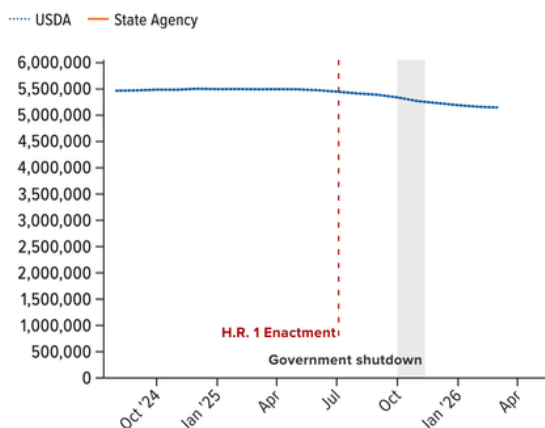
Implemented Changes

Some of the changes to SNAP made by H.R.1 have already been implemented. For example, eligibility and work requirements are already in effect. Beneficiaries who have already recertified may have already experienced benefit cuts or loss.

Current Impacts

Nationwide, there has already been an [estimated 10% drop](#) (4 million people) in SNAP participation. Between July 2025 and March 2026, there has been a 6% (about 300,000 people) drop in SNAP participation in California.

SNAP Participation in California



Source: USDA and state agency program data.

Upcoming Changes

Some changes will be implemented soon, including:

- Federal share of administrative costs decreases to 25%, which will lead to increased state cost burden and potential benefit cuts (**Effective October 1, 2026**)
- Federal funding of SNAP benefits decreases, with potential implementation delays until 2029 or 2030 (**Effective October 1, 2027**)

To see the full timeline for more details, click [here](#).

Projected Impacts

- In California, the estimated fiscal additional [cost associated with H.R.1](#) is expected to be over \$2 billion.
- Over [3 million](#) Californian families are anticipated to be at risk of losing some or all of their SNAP benefits, impacting every legislative district in the state.
- Local food grocers and retailers, as well as farmers, will lose significant income from SNAP beneficiaries losing their benefits.
- These impacts will have long-term effects, resulting in worse well-being outcomes for countless Californians.

California's Response So Far

California leaders have moved to mitigate the negative impacts of H.R. 1 on access to food through proposed state legislation and budget decisions.

For example, lawmakers are currently (as of July 2027) considering various bills (SB 881, AB 2299, AB 1049) that would:

- Extend the ability for food producers to receive tax credits for donating surplus food to food banks
- Create state-funded benefits, through expansion of California Food Assistance Program (CFAP) eligibility, for Californians now ineligible for federal CalFresh benefits due to eligibility changes
- Remove sponsor deeming from the CFAP, which would potentially increase the number of eligible applicants by decreasing the income used to determine eligibility.

Source: [California Association of Food Banks](#), [California Legislative Information Website](#)

California's 2026-27 budget includes several measures intended to lessen or delay the impacts of H.R. 1 on food access such as:

- Continuing funding for the application to, workforce for, and implementation of the universal school meals program.
- Appropriating \$5 million to implement expansion of the California Food Assistance Program for those who can no longer access CalFresh due to H.R.1.
- Appropriating \$14 million for the CalFresh Outreach Program, which helps families apply for food assistance
- Appropriating \$15 million to the Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program, which enables the state to buy locally grown food for food banks.

Sources: [AB 109- Budget Act of 2026](#), [California Association of Food Banks](#), [California State Budget 2026-27](#)

Additional summer 2026 resources: California students can access free meals during summer break; see this [meal service site directory](#) for distribution locations. Students may also be eligible for the [SUN Bucks](#) summer food program.

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

- H.R. 1 [timeline](#) from NCYL
- H.R. 1 [CA-specific impacts](#) timeline from the Cal. Budget & Policy Center
- CalFresh [fact sheet](#) from Youth Law Center and Public Interest Law Project re. Non-Minor Dependents and Youth Exiting Foster Care
- H.R. 1 impacts [resource](#) from CA Association of Food Banks
- [Understanding CalFresh Time Limits and Exemptions](#) from the California Protecting Immigrant Families Coalition

HOW WILL THIS IMPACT MY CALFRESH?

For questions about your own benefits: Find your local county office, <https://calfresh.dss.ca.gov/food/officelocalor/> to learn more about potential impacts to your access to CalFresh.

If you're facing problems accessing your food assistance benefits: Contact a legal aid organization in your area, see <https://www.lawhelpca.org/find-legal-help/directory/area>

HOW CAN I ADVOCATE AGAINST FOOD BENEFIT CUTS?

Contact your state and federal representatives to explain how food benefit cuts will impact you, your family, and your community. Find your reps [here](#).

Check out NCYL's [advocacy toolkits](#) for other practical ways to get involved in advocacy. While these toolkits are focused on *federal* advocacy, the same strategies can be used to advocate at the *state* level.