



STATE OF HAWAI'I
KA MOKU 'ĀINA O HAWAI'I

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA

ANNE LOPEZ
ATTORNEY GENERAL
LOIO KUHINA

**HAWAI'I JOINS COALITION OF STATES AND GOVERNORS IN
DEFENDING SNAP BENEFITS**

*Coalition Urges Court to Immediately Restore SNAP Funding Relied Upon by 42 Million
Americans*

News Release 2025-92

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 28, 2025

HONOLULU – Attorney General Anne Lopez joined a coalition of 22 other attorneys general and three governors today in [filing a lawsuit](#) against the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and its Secretary Brooke Rollins for unlawfully suspending the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP helps more than 40 million Americans buy food, due to the ongoing federal government shutdown.

“The unlawful suspension of SNAP benefits jeopardizes food security for thousands of Hawai'i residents who rely on this lifeline every day,” said Attorney General Lopez. “Our office is committed to protecting the rights of families and individuals who depend on this program.”

On October 1, 2025, the new federal fiscal year began without an appropriation by Congress to fund the federal government, creating a “government shutdown.” On October 10, USDA sent a letter to state SNAP agencies saying that if the shutdown continues, there will be insufficient funds to pay full November SNAP benefits for the millions of individuals across the country that rely on them.

Despite USDA's claim of insufficient funds, the agency has access to billions of dollars in SNAP-specific contingency funds appropriated by Congress for this very purpose. Furthermore, USDA has funded other programs with emergency funds during this shutdown, but has refused to fund SNAP, leaving millions of Americans without the assistance they need to buy food.

The lapse in benefits will have dire consequences for the health and well-being of millions across the country, who rely on the program to feed themselves and their families. This lapse will also put unnecessary strain on state and local governments and community organizations, as families increasingly rely on emergency services and local food pantries that are already struggling to fill a growing nutrition gap. It will affect our school systems and college and university communities, where food insecurity will stand in the way of educating our students. Suspending SNAP benefits will also harm the hundreds of thousands of grocers and merchants that accept SNAP payment for food purchases across the country. USDA has estimated that in a slowing economy, every \$1 in SNAP benefits generates \$1.54 in economic activity.

Thus far in 2025, an average of 161,400 people received SNAP benefits in Hawai'i each month, including approximately 27,910 families and 62,647 children. During the federal fiscal year between October 1, 2024 and September 30, 2025, the Hawai'i Department of Human Services issued approximately \$57,695,553 per month in SNAP benefits in Hawai'i for individuals and families to meet their basic subsistence and nutritional needs.

For more information on the impacts on SNAP benefits for Hawai'i and food resource information go to the Department of Human Services webpage [here](#).

The coalition of attorneys general will also be filing a motion for a temporary restraining order later today asking the court to immediately turn benefits back on. While the federal government funds and sets the monthly amount of SNAP benefits, states are responsible for administering programs in their states. Suspending SNAP benefits in this manner is both contrary to law and arbitrary and capricious under the Administrative Procedure Act. Where Congress has clearly spoken, providing that SNAP benefits should continue even during a government shutdown, USDA does not have the authority to say otherwise.

Joining Attorney General Lopez in filing this lawsuit are the attorneys general of Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington and Wisconsin. The Governors of Kansas, Kentucky and Pennsylvania have also joined.

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Media contacts:

Dave Day
Special Assistant to the Attorney General
Office: 808-586-1284

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Email: david.d.day@hawaii.gov

Web: <http://ag.hawaii.gov>

Toni Schwartz
Public Information Officer
Hawai'i Department of the Attorney General
Office: 808-586-1252
Cell: 808-379-9249
Email: Toni.E.Schwartz@hawaii.gov