

Two Different SNAP Stories: What's Happening and What's Changing

Massachusetts DTA updates can be confusing because two different things are happening at once – a temporary federal shutdown and permanent SNAP rule changes. Here's how to tell them apart.

Program	Impact from Shutdown	Notes
SNAP (food stamps)	✗ At risk – no November funds unless shutdown ends	Existing balances still usable.
HIP (Healthy Incentives Program)	✓ Continues normally	Clients can still earn HIP rebates.

	Federal Government Shutdown	One Big Beautiful Bill (OBBB) Act
What it is	Congress didn't pass a budget → USDA can't release money for SNAP.	A new federal law signed in July 2025 that changes who qualifies for SNAP.
When it starts	November 1st, 2025	November 1st, 2025, but only when your recertification comes up.
Who's affected	Everyone on SNAP could see delayed November benefits.	People reviewed after November 1 – rules phase in over the next year.
What happens to my SNAP money?	No new November funds until shutdown ends. Use any balance already on your card.	Amounts or eligibility may change at your next renewal depending on work, income, or immigration status.
Should I still send paperwork?	✓ Yes. Keep doing business with DTA normally. They'll process it so you're ready when funding resumes.	✓ Yes. Your paperwork keeps your case active for when new rules apply.
Do EBT cards still work?	✓ Yes, for any balance already loaded and for other programs (HIP, WIC, school meals, cash benefits).	✓ Yes. SNAP continues under the new rules once your case renews.
Programs NOT affected	HIP, WIC, School Meals, TAFDC, EAEDC continue normally.	Same – these are state-funded or separate programs.
What to do right now	Check your EBT balance; visit the Food Access Guide at www.capecod.gov/foodaccess for pantry info and meal sites.	Watch your mail for your recertification notice and ask DTA or a SNAP outreach partner for help understanding new rules.

