



(Caption: Grocery store shopping cart)

## Partner Fact Sheet: 3SquaresVT Benefits are delayed for November

About this fact sheet:

This fact sheet summarizes the federal guidance issued October 10, 2025, directing states to pause the issuance of all new and November benefit approvals and new disbursements due to the lack of a federal appropriations bill. This document is intended for community partners who assist 3SquaresVT households.

**Important:** The federal government may issue new guidance or pass a funding bill at any time. Please continue to check back regularly for updates.

### What Households Should Know

- No federal benefits will be loaded for November for eligible households unless federal funding is approved.
- No guarantee of retail EBT acceptance: the USDA has indicated that retail stores might be prevented from accepting EBT cards as payment
- Cash (non-food) EBT benefits may still be accessible at ATMs.
- Funding allocated specifically for food benefits cannot be withdrawn at ATMs.
- The situation is dependent on Congress. Once a federal appropriations bill passes, USDA can issue further guidance.

## Dept for Children and Families, Economic Services Division

- It is not yet known whether the federal government will restore (“backfill”) any missed or delayed benefits once funding is approved.

### What This Means for 3SquaresVT Clients

- Delays could significantly affect food access for low-income households.
- Households may need to plan how to use existing benefits on cards, since delayed November benefits could limit access.
  - Spending remaining benefits now ensures immediate access to food.
  - Saving remaining benefits may pose a risk if retail stores are unable to process EBT cards in November.
  - If households choose to stock up using their remaining October benefits, they may want to consider foods that are shelf-stable or have a longer storage life.
- Some households may need emergency support (food banks, local pantries).
- Community partners will play a critical role in helping households navigate uncertainty, access alternative support, and understand updates.

### What Partners Can Do

- Share clear, accurate information with clients, update them when new guidance is received.
- Encourage clients to reach out to ESD with questions about their case or status.
- Connect households with alternative food resources (local food shelves, meal programs).

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## Contact & Resources

### Economic Services Division (Vermont DCF)

1-800-479-6151

Monday–Friday: 7:45 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Thursday: 9:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

### Food Help

Call 211 or visit their website: <https://vermont211.org/>