

Gov. Henry McMaster, S.C. DSS Director Michael Leach Extend Emergency SNAP Supplements

COLUMBIA, S.C. – Governor Henry McMaster and S.C. Department of Social Services (DSS) Director Michael Leach have extended the deadline for federally-funded emergency supplements for lower income elderly, young and at-risk South Carolinians who participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Since the state is no longer under a declared state of emergency, the supplements were set to expire on August 1, 2021. South Carolinians who receive SNAP benefits (used for the purchase of household food) will continue receiving the monthly supplement through the end of the year.

According to Director Leach's July 28 letter to Governor McMaster, in which he requested authorization to seek the extension, "Approximately 295,000 households, representing 610,000 DSS clients, currently receive supplemental Nutrition Assistance in South Carolina from the federally-funded SNAP program. Emergency Allotments (supplements), funded 100% by the federal government, have been provided to beneficiary households in South Carolina since the onset of the pandemic in March of 2020."

Director Leach continued: "While SNAP allotment amounts vary depending on household size, income, countable household expenses, and other federal eligibility requirements, the average emergency allotment for a household is an additional \$177 per month."

[For a copy of Director Leach's letter, and Governor McMaster's response, click here.](#)

In responding to Director Leach, Governor McMaster wrote: "Our moral and ethical duty during the COVID-19 pandemic is to protect the lives of the most vulnerable South Carolinians – our elderly, young and at-risk population. Currently, the Department of Social Services is providing 610,000 vulnerable South Carolinians with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance benefits for the purchase of household food."

The governor continued: "Accordingly, I hereby direct the department to take all actions necessary to remain authorized by the federal government to receive emergency SNAP supplements until December 31, 2021 or until termination of the federal public health emergency, whichever occurs first. By taking this action, we are protecting vulnerable and at-risk South Carolinians, while avoiding disruption and confusion at grocery stores and markets across our State."

In order to continue the emergency allocations, DSS submitted an Administrative Agency Declaration to the Food and Nutrition Services Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and received approval yesterday, July 29. The agency will renew its request with the USDA monthly through the end of the year.