

HAWAII ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

TITLE 17

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

SUBTITLE 6

BENEFIT, EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION

CHAPTER 687

HAWAII EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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SUBCHAPTER 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

§17-687-1 Purpose. (a) The purpose of this chapter is to establish the rules governing the administration and implementation of the Hawaii Emergency Food Assistance Program for households that were approved for November 2025 SNAP benefits pursuant to chapter 17-680, and had their benefits suspended from being transmitted to the EBT vendor for processing on October 28, 2025.

(b) These emergency rules shall be effective upon filing with the Office of the Lieutenant

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Governor; provided that the conditions set out in these rules shall apply retroactively as of November 6, 2025. [Eff NOV 07 2025] (Auth: HRS §§91-3, 91-4, 346-14) (Imp: HRS §346-14)

§17-687-2 Definitions. For the purposes of this chapter:

"Benefit" means the Hawaii Emergency Food Assistance Program payment that is a non-SNAP, state-sponsored, food benefit that can be redeemed at FNS-approved food retailers.

"Categorically eligible" means a household was approved for November 2025 SNAP benefits pursuant to chapter 17-680.

"Dependent child" means a child under eighteen years of age who is in the care of a specified relative.

"Department" or "DHS" means the department of human services, State of Hawaii.

"Department's designee" means a service provider contracted by the department to deliver the services described in this chapter.

"Electronic benefit transfer" or "EBT" means the computer-based system that processes and distributes authorized benefits to qualified households from a central computer system through an automated teller machine or point-of-sale device.

"Episode of need" means a critical situation for a categorically eligible household with a dependent child that does not have access to their SNAP benefits as a result of lack of federal funds for their SNAP benefit due to the on-going federal government shutdown.

"Expungement" means the removal of benefits provided pursuant to this chapter from the EBT account to which they were issued typically by an EBT processor on behalf of the department.

"FNS" means the Food and Nutrition Service of the United States Department of Agriculture.

"Household" or "Household unit" means a group of related or nonrelated individuals, who are not residents of an institution or boarding house, but who are living as one economic unit.

"Non-recurring short-term payment" means payments:

- (1) Provided to a categorically eligible household with a dependent child to address an episode of need for food support;
- (2) Not intended to meet a family unit's recurring or ongoing needs; and
- (3) Will not extend beyond four months.

"Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program" or "SNAP" means the program that provides food assistance to qualifying low-income and needy households.

"Temporary assistance for needy families" or "TANF" means the federally funded block grant awarded annually to states to provide benefits and services to qualified families with dependent children under the age of eighteen years. [Eff NOV 07 2025] (Auth: HRS §§91-3, 91-4, 346-14, 42 U.S.C. §§601, et seq.) (Imp: HRS §346-14; 7 C.F.R. §§273.1, 273.10(f), 273.14, 274.2(a), 274.7, 45 C.F.R. §260.31)

\$17-687-3 Eligibility. Households eligible for the benefit shall be limited to only categorically eligible households as determined under chapter 17-680, and had their benefits suspended from being transmitted to the EBT vendor for processing on October 28, 2025. [Eff NOV 07 2025] (Auth: HRS §§91-3, 91-4, 346-14,) (Imp: HRS §346-14;)

\$17-687-4 Benefit. (a) Benefits under this chapter shall be a one-time payment in the amount of \$250 per household member.

(b) Benefits under this chapter shall be considered a non-recurring, short-term benefit for TANF purposes. [Eff NOV 07 2025] (Auth: HRS

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§§91-3, 91-4, 346-14, 42 U.S.C. §§601, et seq.) (Imp: HRS §346-14; 45 C.F.R. §260.31)

§17-687-5 Issuance and availability of benefits.

(a) The department or department's designee shall process and transmit the benefit payment to the department's EBT vendor for issuance of the benefit on a date designated by the department during the month of November 2025.

(b) Benefits shall be issued to the household's existing EBT account and redeemable through the household's existing EBT card for FNS-allowable food items at FNS-approved food retailers.

(c) Any unredeemed benefits issued under this chapter that are remaining in the household's EBT account shall be expunged on the first business day after December 31, 2025, and the household loses all rights to the balance amount that was remaining and unredeemed.

(d) The department may, subject to the availability of funds:

- (1) Expand the definition of categorically eligible to include additional households that were approved for November 2025 SNAP benefits; and
- (2) Issue additional benefits should the on-going federal government shutdown continue beyond the month of November 2025. [Eff
NOV 07 2025] (Auth: HRS §§91-3, 91-4, 346-14) (Imp: HRS §346-14; 7 C.F.R. §274.2(a))

§17-687-6 Review. (a) A categorically eligible household eligible to receive a benefit pursuant to section 17-687-3 may request a review by the department when:

- (1) A payment received is not in accordance with section 17-687-4; or

(2) A categorically eligible household was inadvertently omitted from being issued a benefit.

(b) The department shall provide a written determination of the review to the categorically eligible household. [Eff NOV 07 2025] (Auth: HRS §§91-3, 91-4, 346-14) (Imp: HRS §346-14)

§17-687-7 Program termination. (a) The Hawaii Emergency Food Assistance Program shall terminate at the conclusion of the on-going federal government shutdown.

(b) If the on-going federal government shutdown concludes on or after the issuance of benefits, expungement of unredeemed benefits shall proceed in accordance with section 17-687-5(c). [Eff NOV 07 2025] (Auth: HRS §§91-3, 91-4, 346-14) (Imp: HRS §346-14)