

For Immediate Release:

Changes to the SNAP and Medicaid Program are Coming

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 which was signed by the President of the United States at the end of December 2022, contains several provisions of significance that are designed to end pandemic-related policies in SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and Medicaid.

For close to three years, since a public health emergency was federally declared around the COVID-19 pandemic, SNAP and Medicaid programs have been operating under different federal regulations. Medicaid and SNAP benefits are now no longer tied to the public health emergency. This change is governed by federal law and State and county agencies have no control over this policy change.

Federal law had allowed states to request emergency allotments for households participating in SNAP until the end of either the federal public health emergency declaration or that state's declaration and Ohio has been providing enhanced emergency allotments to SNAP households since March 2020. Congress has now set forth that the last month of emergency SNAP allotments, including maximum benefits, will be February 2023.

SNAP participants have been receiving their normal allotment on their normal issuance dates from the 1st to the 20th of the month and their emergency allotments at the end of the month. Beginning in March 2023, clients will only receive their normal monthly allotment. As this is a federal law change, there are no fair hearing rights or fair hearing benefits on the ending of the SNAP emergency allotments.

"SNAP recipients will not see their SNAP benefits terminate due to this change, but all households will experience a decrease of at least \$95 per month beginning March 2023," said Lake County JFS Program Administrator Michelle Herron. "We recognize that this is likely going to cause an unexpected and significant hardship on many individuals in our community who rely on SNAP benefits. It is important that everyone understands that this is due to a federal law change and State and county agencies have no control over this change," said JFS Director Suzanne Casar. "In Lake County alone, we have approximately 24,000 individuals who receive SNAP assistance and nearly 46,000 individuals who receive Medicaid assistance. The termination of SNAP emergency allotments will affect many aspects of our community – in the month of December alone, \$1,568,018.00 in emergency allotments were allocated to Lake County SNAP households," continued Casar. Members of the public are encouraged to access other local resources, including food pantries, to assist them during this time.

Individuals can check the balance on their EBT card by calling the phone number on the back of their card. Please remember that the decrease in your monthly benefit amount will not happen until March 2023. Any SNAP benefits you have received will remain on your card and will continue to follow the normal expungement process. To check your normal SNAP benefit amount, you can go to connectEBT.com. If you have questions or need more information, please call 1-844-640-6446.

Changes made by the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 now permit states to begin conducting full eligibility redeterminations for individuals receiving Medicaid benefits. Since March 2020, States have been required to maintain Medicaid recipient's coverage unless they have requested closure, moved out of state, or have passed away. Beginning in April 2023, individuals who no longer meet eligibility criteria or respond to annual renewal packets may be disenrolled from the Medicaid program.

Ohio Medicaid needs an individual's most up to date information. Visit <https://benefits.ohio.gov> or call 1-800-324-8680 to update your contact information today.