



HENRY McMMASTER  
GOVERNOR

July 29, 2021

Mr. Michael Leach  
Director  
Department Social Services  
Post Office Box 1520  
Columbia, South Carolina 29202

Dear Director Leach,

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 (DSS) is providing 610,000 vulnerable South Carolinians with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) benefits for the purchase of household food.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the federal government has been providing each state with emergency SNAP supplements in addition to regular pre-pandemic SNAP benefits, which represents an average \$177 monthly increase for eligible South Carolinians.

However, since the State is no longer under a COVID-19 state of emergency, our federal SNAP supplements are scheduled to terminate on August 1, 2021. The termination of these emergency SNAP supplements will dramatically reduce how much food these vulnerable South Carolinians will be able to purchase each month.

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.

Thank you for your continued leadership and attention to these important issues.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Henry McMaster".

Henry McMaster



HENRY McMASTER, GOVERNOR  
MICHAEL LEACH, STATE DIRECTOR

July 28, 2021

The Honorable Henry McMaster  
State House  
1100 Gervais St.  
Columbia, SC 29201

**RE: SNAP Beneficiaries and Administrative Continuing Emergency**

Dear Governor McMaster:

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. For example, a 1-person elderly SNAP household whose regular SNAP allotment is \$19 a month has been eligible since March 2020 to receive an additional \$215 in emergency allotment which brought them up to the maximum monthly allotment for a one-person household of \$234. If the emergency allotments end at this time, this household would revert back to the \$19 pre-pandemic allotment. 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.

In order for the supplements to remain authorized for program beneficiaries, the public health emergency at the federal level must be aligned with a corresponding emergency at the state level. Please find submitted herewith a draft Administrative Agency Declaration recognizing the emergent circumstances placed upon South Carolina residents by the pandemic, and particularly some of our State's most vulnerable residents who deal with food insecurities. We are respectfully requesting your approval for DSS to issue this administrative declaration and provide a copy to federal authorities for the purpose of continuing to provide emergency allotments to qualifying households in South Carolina through December, 2021.

Thank you for your attention to the matter of Supplemental Nutrition beneficiaries that have been impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic. As always, your assistance in matters of our agency's service to citizens is greatly appreciated and we are at your service should you need additional information or wish to discuss the matter further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Leach', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael Leach  
DSS State Director