

Debt Ceiling Crisis: Food Stamp Program Shutdown Imminent?

By [Zero Hedge](#)

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When over the weekend, a [Xerox “glitch” shut down the EBT system](#), better known as foodstamps, for nearly the entire day across 17 states leaving millions without “funding” to pay for food leading to dramatic examples of the [basest human behavior possible](#), some of the more conspiratorial elements saw this merely as a dress rehearsal for what may be coming in the immediate future. While there was no basis to believe that is the case, a USDA (the currently shuttered agency that administers the [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#)) memo obtained by the Crossroads Urban Center in Utah carries in it a very disturbing warning for the 46+ million Americans currently on foodstamps.

To wit: “understanding the operational issues and constraints that States face, and in the interest of preserving maximum flexibility, we are directing States to hold their November issuance files and delay transmission to State electronic benefit transfer (EBT) vendors until further notice.” In other words, as [Fox13News summarizes](#), “States across the country are being told to stop the supplemental nutrition assistance program for the month of November, pending further notice.”

The full memo first posted on the [Crossroads Facebook](#) page is shown below:



[More on this dramatic development](#) which, if implemented, would will result in significant unpredictable outcomes across the nation:

“This is going to create a huge hardship for the people we serve here in our food pantry,” says Bill Tibbits who is the Associate Director at Crossroads Urban Center.

They posted a letter from the USDA on its Facebook page. It says in part, “in the interest of preserving maximum flexibility, we are directing states to hold their November issuance files and delay transmission to state electronic benefit transfer vendors until further notice.”

“What this means if there’s not a deal, if Congress doesn’t reach a deal to get federal government back up and running, in Utah about 100,000 families won’t get food stamp benefit,” says Tibbits.

In other words, tens of thousands of Utah families may not be able to feed their children come November.

...

“People out here are going to go without food,” says Lorelee Smith whose been homeless since August and says the uncertainty is making her uneasy about where her next meal will come from. “I’m on food stamps, I don’t know if I’m going to get them, a lot of people are on food stamps and they don’t know if they’re going to get them.”

Others say if SNAP shuts down, they’ll find a way to feed themselves.

One hopes such “alternative” feeding arrangements will be peaceful, although in the most heavily armed nation in the world, and arguably the one where a massive portion of the population is now fully reliant on the welfare state for virtually every daily need, it is easy to see cutting off daily bread to tens of millions has a less than happy ending.

As the report notes, for people out on the streets like Richard Phillips, “It could impact us and it’s going to cause problems because you’re going to come to find out that people are going to steal and do what they have to do to survive.”

Such a realization could come as a very unpleasant wake up call for the millions of other Americans who still live in their Ivory Towers, focusing on the daily gyrations of the S&P500, and largely oblivious of how the rest of America lives.

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