

# Millions in US face cutoff of food aid, healthcare

Patrick Martin  
29 June 2026

Nearly 5 million people in the United States have lost food stamp assistance, and 4 million have lost or will lose health insurance because of cuts implemented by state governments, driven by the savage legislation enacted by Congress last year and signed into law by President Trump on July 4, 2025, under the name “One Big Beautiful Bill Act” (OBBBA).

One year later, Trump’s class war bill is having its intended effect: Millions of lower income working people are being denied access to food and medical care, while millionaires and billionaires enjoy record tax cuts and federal spending on war and death reaches new highs.

Reports issued this week, ahead of the July 1 start of the fiscal year for most of the 50 states, paint a dire portrait of the impact of Trump’s social spending cuts, which passed the Republican-controlled Congress with only token opposition from the Democrats.

A Reuters report citing data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which administers the food stamp program, found that 4.7 million people have lost these benefits provided by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) since the Trump legislation took effect, about 11 percent of all recipients.

A study last year by University of Pennsylvania researchers found that, based on an earlier estimate of 3.2 million people losing SNAP benefits, there would be 93,000 premature deaths over the following 14 years. If the same ratio applies to the much larger number that have actually been cut off food stamps, the projected toll of premature deaths would approach 140,000.

The OBBBA reduces SNAP funding by \$187 billion over the next 10 years, mainly by expanding work requirements for recipients, including those aged 55 to 64, who were previously exempt, and disqualifying large sections of legal immigrants. This has had a disproportionate effect on states with large immigrant and Hispanic populations, particularly Arizona, where 457,000 have lost eligibility since February 1, including 196,000 children.

The administration of Democratic Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs has moved to implement the changes required by the One Big Beautiful Bill more quickly than other states, according to both the SNAP program and the state’s Department of Economic Security.

Governor Hobbs’ press secretary emailed Reuters claiming, “Arizona has no choice but to meet these requirements. ... If we don’t comply, we will be fined hundreds of millions of dollars and more vulnerable Arizonans will lose their food assistance.”

This is a reference to the mechanism used by the Trump administration to enforce the cuts. The OBBBA set a threshold of a 6 percent error rate for food stamp awards, compared to the national average of 10.9 percent estimated in 2024. States above that threshold would be required to cover up to 15 percent of the cost of food stamps, rather than the federal government paying the full amount.

The error rate is not an estimate of fraud, as the Feeding America charity explains: “The SNAP payment error rate is often misunderstood. It reflects unintentional mistakes by state agencies navigating outdated technology, staff shortages, incomplete case files and layered eligibility rules. It is not a measure of fraud or abuse by people participating in the program.”

In the case of Arizona, the error rate was estimated in 2024 at 8.84 percent, below the national average but well above the new threshold. To avoid a threatened penalty of \$201.5 million next year, the state DES deliberately cut off benefits by requiring additional documentation from recipients, including pay stubs, leases, or other paperwork, knowing that many low income workers—particularly those engaged in day labor and work in agricultural—would not have such documentation available.

The result was a reduction of more than 50 percent in SNAP enrollment in the state. For the first time in recent history, more Arizonans have been relying on food banks and similar charities to feed themselves, rather than food stamps. Some 843,000 residents visited food banks in April, the month after the SNAP cutoffs began.

Arizona is only the worst of the 50 states. According to figures published by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), SNAP enrollment is down in every state, down by 5 percent or more in 42 states, and down by 10 percent or more in 21 states. States recording double-digit cuts in food stamp enrollment include Florida (down 21 percent) Louisiana (down 20 percent), Oklahoma and Tennessee (down 16 percent), Wyoming (down 11.6 percent) and Virginia (down 13.7

percent).

In Virginia, the new Democratic-controlled state government is headed by Governor Abigail Spanberger, a former CIA agent. Other Democratic-run states with double-digit cuts in SNAP enrollment include Illinois, Connecticut and Massachusetts. Kansas and Nevada have divided party control over the state government and double-digit cuts. Such figures demonstrate that the attack on the poor and the deliberate creation of mass hunger are the bipartisan policy of the entire US ruling elite, not just of Trump and the Republicans.

The CBPP found that in the 13 states where such data was collected, 808,000 children had been cut off food stamps as part of the nationwide cuts, nearly half the total losing benefits in those states.

While the *Wall Street Journal* hailed the reduction in food stamp enrollment as a sign of progress in reducing poverty and unemployment, the CBPP found “economic conditions haven’t been improving as the number of people receiving SNAP has plummeted in recent months, representing the sharpest decline in decades.” It concluded, “This dramatic six-month drop cannot be explained by a rapid improvement in people’s economic well-being or reduced need for help affording food. Labor force data show that the unemployment rate was flat between July 2025 and March 2026...”

The penalty of \$200.5 million facing Arizona is far from the worst burden imposed on states under the provisions of the OBBBA. By the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2027, nearly all states will have to pay between 5 percent and 15 percent of the total costs of food stamps, and the total bill, based on USDA data, is roughly \$9 billion.

The estimated totals for individual states include \$300 million for Michigan, \$350 million for Massachusetts, \$410 million for Pennsylvania, \$725 million for Texas, \$900 million for Florida, \$1.15 billion for New York and a staggering \$1.9 billion for California.

The direct cuts are to be compounded by further restrictions on what SNAP recipients can buy with their food stamps. States have sought to ban purchases of sweets, sugary soft drinks, and other items claimed to be inappropriate, in what amounts to a demeaning effort to micromanage the lives of the poorest section of the American population.

Similar cuts are taking place in healthcare benefits for a slightly less poor section of working people, those who make too much to qualify for Medicaid but are eligible for subsidies under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to purchase private insurance on the state exchanges set up under Obamacare.

The current federal budget, enacted after a 45-day federal shutdown last fall, eliminated most of these subsidies and raised premiums for some ACA plans by as much as 100 percent. The predictable result was a plunge in the number of people enrolled in ACA plans from 23.1 million for 2025 to an estimated 19.2 million this year, a drop of more than 16 percent.

These figures were released June 27 by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and refute the claims by Trump and the Republicans that the removal of subsidies would not result in a sharp rise in the number of uninsured. At the same time, the scale of the social disaster demonstrates the impotence of the Democratic Party, which forced the federal shutdown supposedly to fight the cutoff of subsidies but then capitulated abjectly.

In the case of New York state, starting July 1, hundreds of thousands of residents enrolled in the Essential Plan, New York’s version of the Obamacare marketplace, will lose their health insurance because of the cuts imposed by OBBBA. The Essential Plan provides free or low-cost healthcare to New Yorkers, who are 19 to 64 years old and ineligible for Medicaid or other federal health programs because their incomes are above the abysmally low threshold set at 200 to 250 percent of the Federal Poverty Line.

These are low-income working people, including a single-person household with income of \$31,920-\$39,900; a two-person household with income of \$43,280-\$54,100; a three-person household with income of \$54,640-\$68,300; and a four-person household with income of \$66,000-\$82,500. Particularly in New York City, such incomes mean deep poverty. These families are now to be cut off access to healthcare.

According to an analysis by the nonprofit Community Service Society, those cut off in New York will include 6,000 recipients of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), immigrants brought here by their families as children who have been protected from deportation. Many more are immigrants on Temporary Protected Status (TPS)—now facing deportation under the Trump administration policy affirmed by the Supreme Court last week.

As with food stamps, tightened work requirements are one of the principal means of enforcing the cutoff of health insurance eligibility. In one particularly perverse case outlined in the press, a woman able to work because of successful chemotherapy for her cancer could lose her health insurance if she has a bad week and cannot work, thus cutting her off from the treatment that is saving her life.



To contact the WSWWS and the  
Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**