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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
Jan. 14, 2019

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## Michigan prepares for early issuance of February food assistance

**LANSING, Mich.** – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) plans to issue Food Assistance Program benefits early for February.

For food assistance clients, Michigan will begin issuing February benefits on Saturday, Jan. 19. Clients who don't receive their benefits on that date should receive the funds the following week. That means the 1.2 million Michigan residents who receive food assistance will have benefits to feed their families in February even if the partial federal government shutdown continues.

The early food assistance benefits are not additional benefits and there will be no food assistance payments in February. **MDHHS strongly encourages families to budget the funds they receive in January so they can meet their food needs through the entire month of February.**

"MDHHS is pleased that the department is able to work with its federal partners to make sure Michigan families have food on the table in February," said Terrence Beurer, MDHHS deputy director of Field Operations Administration.

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service has directed states to issue February food assistance benefits early. In Michigan, food assistance benefits are usually issued to clients according to a numeric schedule over a 21-day period throughout the month. USDA officials identified this one-time early benefit distribution of food assistance as a chance to provide the benefits during the shutdown.

At this point, MDHHS believes that Women, Infants and Children (WIC) benefits will be available for states to issue in February without interruption. In Michigan more than 200,000 mothers, pregnant women and children from birth to age 5 receive nutritional food through WIC. MDHHS will provide more information as details are known.

January food assistance and WIC benefits are being distributed according to the normal schedule. Learn more [on the USDA Food and Nutrition Service website](#).

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