



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

As SNAP Lapse Approaches, More Americans Turning to Community Action Agencies

National Community Action Foundation warns that the poverty-fighting organizations running popular programs, from food assistance to Head Start and LIHEAP, are being forced to halt services – even as they face increasing demand

Washington, DC – October 30, 2025 – As a lapse in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) funds approaches, Americans are turning to Community Action Agencies, trusted, locally-led organizations tasked with combating poverty, for help. Yet, hundreds of Community Action organizations across the country, responsible for critical services that often include food banks and meal-delivery services for seniors, are being forced to cut back services due to the government shutdown, warns the National Community Action Foundation (NCAF).

NCAF represents over a thousand Community Action Agencies (CAAs) across the country, tasked with combating poverty on the local level. Already, an estimated 14 percent of CAAs have closed programs or furloughed staff. By Thanksgiving, another 20 percent will be forced to shutter programs and furlough staff temporarily. By December, nearly half of all CAAs will have to close programs or close down entirely.

“These agencies are driven by a mission to assist the people in their community who need help. They are doing everything in their power to remain open, especially as demand increases due to the lapse in SNAP benefits,” says David Bradley, CEO of the National Community Action Foundation. “Community Action Agencies have for decades leveraged federal funds for matching public and private dollars, but they do rely on critical federal dollars and are being forced to temporarily stop programs as funds lapse. A pause in services, no matter how short, will be incredibly catastrophic for individuals and families across the country.”

Community Action Agencies are trusted members of their local community, with many operating for over 60 years. CAAs are known for providing tailored, effective programs that tackle the root causes of poverty. In addition to operating well-known programs like the Low-Income Heating and Energy Program (LIHEAP) and Head Start, they frequently run job trainings, manage food assistance, and coordinate emergency aid in natural disasters. In many areas, particularly rural communities, they are the sole provider of programs that help individuals and families get on a path to self-sufficiency.

Community Action Agencies rely on the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), federal funding that enables communities to make local decisions about how to combat poverty. CSBG

is foundational to Community Action Agencies; it not only funds tailored programs but sustains the staff and facilities necessary for efficient operations.

“In short, CSBG keeps the lights on at Community Action Agencies. These funds are often the glue that makes Community Action Agencies so well equipped to effectively run LIHEAP and Head Start,” says Bradley. “You may have never heard of CSBG, but now I fear the lapse in funds will make it painfully obvious just how important these funds are.”

The Fayette County Community Action Agency, Inc., which assists over 30,000 residents in Southwestern Pennsylvania every year, has been forced to cut both programs and staff. 35 staff have been furloughed, and 30 staff are working reduced hours. “Our food bank and 56 pantries are still open; however, the food boxes will contain fewer items,” shares CEO Kimberly Hawk. “The Senior Center is open two days a week instead of five, and home-delivered meals will be distributed twice weekly. We are not providing rental assistance, nutrition education is not being provided in the schools, and limited staff are working.”

The Community Services Block Grant has long received bipartisan support. NCAF is hopeful that Congress and the President will shortly end the shutdown and continue to support CSBG so that we can quickly return Community Action Agencies to operating at full force.

About the National Community Action Foundation

The National Community Action Foundation (NCAF) is the trusted, independent voice for America’s Community Action Agencies in Washington, D.C. Founded in 1981 by advocates determined to protect and strengthen the Community Action network, NCAF has spent more than four decades ensuring that locally-led, accountable, and efficient solutions to economic hardship have a seat at the federal table.

We work not just with political leaders, but across sectors and across the country to protect the tools communities need to solve problems — whether that’s job training in rural counties, small business support in urban neighborhoods, or housing stability in towns hit by economic change. Our impact is quiet but powerful: CSBG reaches over 10 million people each year, with low administrative costs and a high return-on-investment. Learn more at [NCAF.org](https://www.ncaf.org).

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