

The Impact of the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) on Monthly Poverty Rates

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As part of the ongoing (as of this writing) government shutdown, the Trump administration announced plans to not disburse November Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) payments. This decision is the subject of ongoing political and legal disputes, but regardless of if payments are delivered in November or not, it raises an important policy question: How many Americans does the SNAP program keep out of poverty each month?

We know from the latest Census Bureau [report on poverty](#) that the SNAP program kept 3.6 million people out of poverty in 2024.¹ But this is with incomes from all sources received across the whole year. Numbers may well be different (likely higher) in any given month when considering families' income and budgets in that month alone. In this fact sheet, we use data from the Columbia University Center on Poverty and Social Policy's innovative monthly poverty measure to determine how many people SNAP has typically kept out of poverty in recent months. For full details of the monthly poverty measure's methodology, see Parolin et al., 2022.

Table 1, on the following page, shows monthly poverty rates from January 2024 to August 2025, the latest month available as of this writing. We show poverty rates with SNAP and without SNAP included in families' resources, highlighting the direct impact of SNAP on the monthly poverty rate. **In a typical month, SNAP keeps 1.3 percent of Americans from experiencing poverty. This translates to 4.3 million people.** The exceptions are months during tax time, when many people with low incomes receive substantial tax refunds and monthly poverty rates drop sharply.

While data for November 2025 are not yet available, given the stability of recent estimates outside of tax time, **we would expect the loss of a month's SNAP benefits to lead to more than four million people experiencing a spell of monthly poverty.** Of course, those who aren't pushed into poverty - and those who were poor to begin with - will also be made poorer by the loss of benefits.

¹ Shrider and Bijou, 2025, Poverty in the United States.

Table 1. Impact of SNAP on monthly poverty rates, 2024 and 2025

	Poverty with SNAP	Poverty without SNAP	Difference (percentage point)	Number of People Moved Out of Poverty
2024				
Jan	18.2%	19.5%	1.3 p.p.	4.4 million
Feb	18.1%	19.4%	1.3 p.p.	4.4 million
Mar	13.0%	13.9%	0.9 p.p.	3.1 million
Apr	15.6%	16.8%	1.2 p.p.	3.9 million
May	17.9%	19.2%	1.3 p.p.	4.4 million
Jun	18.6%	19.8%	1.2 p.p.	4.3 million
Jul	18.7%	19.9%	1.2 p.p.	4.2 million
Aug	18.6%	19.9%	1.3 p.p.	4.3 million
Sep	17.8%	19.1%	1.3 p.p.	4.4 million
Oct	17.8%	19.1%	1.3 p.p.	4.4 million
Nov	17.9%	19.2%	1.3 p.p.	4.4 million
Dec	17.8%	19.1%	1.3 p.p.	4.4 million
2025				
Jan	18.0%	19.3%	1.3 p.p.	4.5 million
Feb	18.0%	19.3%	1.3 p.p.	4.5 million
Mar	13.1%	14.1%	1.0 p.p.	3.2 million
Apr	15.6%	16.8%	1.2 p.p.	3.9 million
May	17.9%	19.2%	1.3 p.p.	4.5 million
Jun	18.5%	19.8%	1.3 p.p.	4.3 million
Jul	18.4%	19.6%	1.2 p.p.	4.3 million
Aug	18.1%	19.4%	1.3 p.p.	4.3 million

Source: Center on Poverty and Social Policy, produced using the monthly poverty measure. Methodology for constructing the monthly measure outlined in Parolin et al., 2022.

Note: P.P. = Percentage Point

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DATA SOURCE

This analysis relies on the [CPSP monthly poverty measure](#). Full details on the methods used to develop the monthly poverty measure can be found in Parolin, Curran, Matsudaira, Waldfogel, and Wimer (2022). Starting in 2024, changes were introduced to the monthly poverty measure to enhance the conceptual soundness of its estimates. Full details on the updated methodology from 2024 onward can be found in Curran, Lee, and Parolin (2025).

REFERENCES

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