

SNAP PHE Unwinding Frequently Asked Questions

What you need to know about the COVID-19
Public Health Emergency (PHE) and your
current SNAP benefits



What is a federal Public Health Emergency (PHE)?

A federal PHE is an official declaration made by the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), a federal agency, when a disease or disorder presents an emergency to public health, or that a PHE otherwise exists due to significant outbreaks of infectious disease. A PHE declaration allows states to take certain actions to address the causes and effects of a disease outbreak. In 2020, HHS declared a PHE to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. HHS continues to extend the federal COVID-19 PHE every 90 days.

When is the Public Health Emergency (PHE) ending?

As of January 11, 2023, the PHE was extended for another 90 days. We do not know for certain when this will be ending, however, some of the rules that changed during the PHE are coming to an end.

The process of ending these changes is being called “PHE Unwinding”.

What steps can I take to get ready?

- **Update us so we can update you!** Make sure your address and phone number are up to date! Visit DSS online at mydss.ct.gov
- Be on the lookout for mail from the Connecticut Department of Social Services
- Follow DSS on social media for updates [CT Department of Social Services | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ctdss) and <https://twitter.com/ctdss>

What changes with my SNAP benefits as the PHE Unwinds?

- The last monthly emergency benefit, normally sent in the middle of the month (bringing your benefit to the maximum, or an additional \$95) will be issued in February 2023
- Visit www.ct.gov/snap/extracovidbenefits for frequently asked questions
- Your normal monthly SNAP benefits will continue. Visit mydss.ct.gov to check your regular benefit amount

What might change with my SNAP benefits once the PHE Ends?

- Visit [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP--SNAP PHE Flexibilities \(ct.gov\)](http://www.ct.gov/supplementalnutritionassistanceprogram-snap--snap-phe-flexibilities) for more information.
- Interviews will be required again at application and renewal for most households
- Periodic Report Forms (halfway through your renewal cycle) will resume for most households. These can be completed via mail or online at mydss.ct.gov
- Expanded exemptions for college students will end

- When the Federal PHE ends, a college student will be required to be participating in work study, or have another exemption allowed under normal policy to be eligible for SNAP
- A college student's Expected Family Contribution (EFC) will no longer be allowed as an exemption
- If you are currently getting SNAP benefits and using these exemptions, they will no longer apply at your next renewal which will be at least 30 days after the federal PHE ends. Also, 30 days after the PHE ends, these flexibilities will no longer apply to new SNAP applicants

How will I know if these changes affect me?

You will receive notification from DSS if your benefits will be affected

- We will call you for a phone interview, if required. If you miss your phone call, we will send you a Notice of Missed Interview in the mail
- You will receive your Periodic Report Form (PRF) in the mail when it is due. If you have signed up for paperless notices, you will receive an email to log in to your MyAccount to complete your PRF. PRFs can be completed via mail or online at mydss.ct.gov
- We will advise you during the application or renewal process if you no longer qualify for one of the exemptions for college students

What do I need to do now?

- Update us so we can update you! Make sure your address and phone number are up to date! Visit DSS online at ct.gov/UpdateUsDSS
- Wait for a notice telling you when it's time to take further action
- There is no need to contact us until you receive your notice