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Omaha World-Herald

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Pause in SNAP benefits puts more strain on food pantries



MATTHEW MUELLER, THE WORLD-HERALD

McKenzie Keane grabs bags of fruit to be put on shelves while volunteering at Together Omaha on Wednesday. The organization's president and CEO, Mike Hornacek, said he's heard from people who are "anxious and concerned" about the pause in SNAP benefits due to the federal government shutdown.

It leaves them in 'impossible situation,' Omaha area nonprofit leaders say

LUNA STEPHENS
World-Herald Staff Writer

Already facing unprecedented need, Omaha food pantries worry a pause in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits due to the federal government shut-down will further strain resources. The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services announced it was pausing SNAP benefits beginning Wednesday due to notification from the U.S. Department of Agriculture that SNAP recipients would not receive benefits on Nov. 1 if the government isn't reopened by then. SNAP recipients will be able to use any remaining benefits on their EBT cards and DHHS will continue to accept and process applications for SNAP while benefits are on pause, according to a statement from the department. "DHHS has a plan in place to immediately begin working with the USDA to process payments and get benefits to recipients as soon as possible when the government shutdown ends," department CEO Steve Corsi said in the statement. According to the Trump administration, funding will run out for the program that serves 42 million

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CHRIS MACHIAN, THE WORLD-HERALD

Omaha Mayor John Ewing speaks during a press conference Wednesday at the Mayor's Office, announcing a food drive to help those in need because of a pending pause in federal food assistance due to the government shutdown.

Ewing launches city-led food drive to help fill need

LUNA STEPHENS
World-Herald Staff Writer

Omaha Mayor John Ewing announced a city-led food drive Wednesday and called for community support for those who won't receive benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program due to the federal government shutdown. Over the next week, Omaha residents are asked to drop off nonperishable food items at community centers, Ewing said during a press conference. Those

items will be donated to the Food Bank for the Heartland. Ewing also encouraged residents to make monetary donations to organizations like the food bank, the United Way and the Omaha Community Foundation. The United Way will be distributing 100% of donation proceeds to local food resources, CEO Shawna Forsberg said during the press conference.

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Fed cuts key rate for 2nd time this year

CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Federal Reserve cut its key interest rate Wednesday for a second time this year as it seeks to shore up economic growth and hiring even as inflation stays elevated. "Job gains have slowed this year, and the unemployment rate has edged up but remained low through August," the Fed said in a statement. "More recent indicators are consistent with these developments." The government hasn't issued unemployment data after August because of the shutdown. The Fed is watching private-sector figures instead. Wednesday's decision brings the Fed's key rate down to about 3.9% from about 4.1%. The central bank cranked its rate to about 5.3% in 2023 and 2024 to combat the biggest inflation spike in four decades. Lower rates could, over time, reduce borrowing costs for mortgages, auto loans and credit cards, as well as for business loans. The move comes with hiring sluggish and inflation stuck above the Fed's 2% target. Compounding its challenges, the central bank is navigating without the economic signposts it typically relies on from the government, including monthly reports on jobs, inflation and consumer spending, which are suspended because of the government shutdown. The Fed signaled it may reduce its key rate again in December, but the data drought raises the uncertainty around its next moves. The Fed typically raises its short-term rate to combat inflation, while it cuts rates to encourage borrowing and spending and shore up hiring. Right now its two goals are in conflict, so it is reducing borrowing costs to

Please see **FED**, Page A2

Conviction overturned

A man who spent 43 years in prison before his conviction was overturned faces deportation. **Page A3**

Opening date uncertain

Gov. Pillen isn't certain about the opening date for the "Cornhusker Click" ICE facility. **Midlands**

Weather

High: 58 Low: 37
Clouds, then sunny Details: A8

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