

Ensure 3SquaresVT Stays in Vermont.

10% of Vermonters buy groceries with 3SquaresVT (known nationally as SNAP), keeping more than \$12 million federal dollars in our state economy every month. 3SquaresVT supports food security for our communities, as well as the bottom lines of businesses, grocers, and farmers.

The Vermont Department for Children and Families Economic Services Division administers 3SquaresVT in our state, on behalf of USDA, the federal agency that oversees SNAP. 3SquaresVT administration includes the operations required to run the program for Vermonters, including:

- Processing applications and renewals
- Making sure benefits are accurate and on time
- Helping households report changes
- Preventing errors and protecting program integrity
- Ensuring compliance with federal rules



Strong administration ensures eligible Vermonters get the food assistance they qualify for—efficiently and correctly.

WHAT CHANGED AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL?

In July 2025, Congress passed a federal budget bill (H.R. 1) that included historic cuts to SNAP. One major change shifts who pays to run the program.

Before, USDA and Vermont split the cost to operate 3SquaresVT equally.

- **USDA: 50%**
- **Vermont: 50%**

Beginning October 1, 2026, USDA will pay 25% less, requiring all states to pick up the tab. This change does not reduce the work that is required to operate 3SquaresVT—it simply shifts more of the cost to states.

- **USDA: 25%**
- **Vermont: 75%**

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR VERMONT?

Using recent program costs, Vermont's annual increase in 3SquaresVT administration costs is **estimated at \$8.4 million**. Because state and federal fiscal years don't align, the added cost in State Fiscal Year 2027 is \$6.3 million. Without this funding, Vermont risks reduced service quality, delays, and higher error rates.

**+\$8.4
MILLION**

Why this investment matters & what's needed



3SQUARESVT REMAINS VERMONT'S MOST EFFECTIVE PROGRAM FOR REDUCING HUNGER AND POVERTY. INVESTING IN ADMINISTRATION ALLOWS VERMONT TO:

- Keep benefits timely and accurate
- Maintain a low payment error rate
- Prevent backlogs and service disruptions
- Fully draw down available federal SNAP dollars

Strong administration protects both families and taxpayer dollars.

3SQUARESVT IS ESSENTIAL TO LEVERAGING FEDERAL DOLLARS TO SUPPORT OUR ECONOMY AND COSTS

By investing \$6.3 million in FY27, Vermont can continue to leverage over \$150 million in federal SNAP benefits each year. These are dollars that are spent directly in Vermont grocery stores, farms, and local food systems.

This is one of the strongest federal return-on-investment opportunities available to the state.

VERMONT MUST APPROPRIATE FULL FUNDING NEEDED TO ADMINISTER 3SQUARESVT, INCLUDING THE ADDITIONAL \$6.3 MILLION IN FY27 TO COVER THE INCREASED STATE SHARE OF SNAP ADMINISTRATION.

This funding is essential to maintaining program performance and maximizing federal resources.

No state can replace every federal dollar lost—but Vermont can protect what works.

Investing in SNAP administration:

- Preserves access to food for Vermonters
- Protects hundreds of millions in federal funding
- Protects a low payment error rate
- Continues Vermont's legacy of leadership on food security