

CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION 32186

A RESOLUTION modifying the October 30, 2025 Mayoral Civil Emergency Proclamation regarding the federal government shutdown and the disruption to SNAP benefits for Seattleites.

WHEREAS, on October 30, 2025 the Mayor declared a civil emergency related to the impending disruption to the SNAP benefit program in Seattle as a result of the federal government shutdown; and

WHEREAS, the Proclamation of Civil Emergency noted that 50,000 Seattleites receive SNAP benefits to address food insecurity, amounting to \$16 million disbursed each month; and

WHEREAS, the Council finds that the Mayor's response was a prudent measure to anticipate local disruptions to food access and burdens on our vital food distribution systems; and

WHEREAS, the Council finds that while federal courts review the legality of SNAP benefit disruption and our state stands up a state-wide response to anticipated food shortages, it is our responsibility as a Council to join these efforts by utilizing our city funds to address this crisis; and

WHEREAS, Seattle Municipal Code 10.02.010.C governs the role of Mayor and Council during a declared emergency and states: "The Council may, by resolution, modify or reject the proclamation and, if rejected, it shall be void. If the Council modifies or rejects the proclamation, said modification or rejection shall be prospective only, and shall not affect any actions taken prior to the modification or rejection of the proclamation."; and

WHEREAS, the Council affirms its role as the separately elected branch responsible for the appropriation of city funds and agrees that the Mayor's use of certain emergency powers

1 at this time will expedite resources and staffing to address a food shortage that may grow
2 if not addressed with urgency; and

3 WHEREAS, given the potential scope of food insecurity, food bank mobilization alone may be
4 inadequate; and

5 WHEREAS, the Council therefore modifies the Mayor's Proclamation to direct that the Mayor
6 not only distribute resources to food banks but also to the full spectrum of established
7 food systems in Seattle, be it meal providers for children, seniors, and other vulnerable
8 populations, community centers, food banks, and other diverse food distribution
9 channels; NOW, THEREFORE,

10 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE THAT:**

11 Section 1. The proclamation declaring a civil emergency by Mayor Harrell related to the
12 federal government shutdown's disruption of SNAP benefits, dated October 30, 2025, and
13 attached to this resolution as Exhibit A, is modified as shown in Exhibit B.

Adopted by the City Council the 3rd day of November, 2025,
and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this 3rd day of
November, 2025.



President _____ of the City Council

Filed by me this 4th day of November, 2025.



Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

(Seal)

Attachments:

Exhibit A – Mayoral Proclamation of Civil Emergency, October 30, 2025

Exhibit B – Modified Proclamation

MAYORAL PROCLAMATION OF CIVIL EMERGENCY CITY OF SEATTLE

WHEREAS, the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) provides food assistance to more than 40 million Americans, including more than 50,000 Seattleites; and

WHEREAS, approximately 930,000 Washington residents receive SNAP benefits, amounting to \$173 million in monthly payments from the federal government. Seattleites receive approximately \$16 million per month; and

WHEREAS, because of the ongoing shutdown of the federal government, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that SNAP funding will cease as of November 1, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Trump administration has cut or threatened to cut other funding for programs that serve vulnerable individuals, further eroding the social safety net; and

WHEREAS, the cuts to SNAP exacerbate existing food insecurity and inaccessibility within Seattle and the surrounding region, which already disproportionately impacts low-income and BIPOC communities; and

WHEREAS, without immediate emergency actions, the loss of SNAP funding could result in significant harm to Seattleites and cause individuals and families to go hungry. A loss of SNAP funding and access to food can also result in financial loss and hardship – including the inability to afford housing, as well as impact educational outcomes and mental and physical health; and

WHEREAS, whether the federal government will act to solve this impending crisis is presently unknown and, because of this, the City must take decisive action; and

WHEREAS, as described in Section 2 of this proclamation, the situation is sufficiently serious that it is necessary that I declare a civil emergency within the City of Seattle and exercise the Mayor's civil emergency powers; and

WHEREAS, I have consulted with City department directors, state and county partners, and community-based organizations and food providers, and verified the existence of the emergency cited below, and the necessity for me to take immediate, extraordinary action as outlined in this proclamation;

NOW, THEREFORE,

**I, BRUCE A. HARRELL AS MAYOR OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE DO
PROCLAIM THAT** the situation described herein is sufficiently serious that it is necessary that I declare a limited civil emergency within the City of Seattle and exercise my emergency powers.

SECTION 1. CIVIL EMERGENCY POWERS

A. A civil emergency exists requiring and authorizing me to exercise the emergency powers vested in me as Mayor by RCW Chapter 38.52, the Charter of the City of Seattle, Article V, Section 2, and Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 10.02 as described in this proclamation;

B. Effective upon my signing this proclamation, I will be exercising that authority through the issuance of Emergency Orders and through the use and direction of City personnel, services and equipment and additional acts necessary to the management of this emergency; and

C. It is unlawful for anyone to fail to obey an Emergency Order issued or proclaimed by me pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 10.02. Failing to comply with an order constitutes a violation as specified in that order. (SMC 10.02.110)

SECTION 2. DETERMINATION OF EMERGENCY

I have determined that the foregoing described circumstances constitute a civil emergency with a significant and severe impact to vulnerable community members, including the loss of food access and the health and safety impacts secondary to a loss of food. This harm is likely to occur in the near future to such an extent as to require me to exercise the authority assumed in Section 1 and to take the extraordinary measures in Section 3 in order to prevent the harms identified above and to protect the welfare, and alleviate damage, loss, hardship, or suffering.

SECTION 3. CONTRACTING AND BORROWING AUTHORITY

Pursuant to SMC Section 10.02.030, I hereby assume the authority to enter into contracts and incur obligations necessary to relieve the emergency, protect the health and safety of persons and property, and provide emergency assistance to the victims, and to exercise them in light of the exigencies of the situation without regard to time-consuming procedures and formalities prescribed by ordinance, statute, rule or regulation (excepting mandatory constitutional requirements), including, but not limited to the following limitations and requirements:

- The budget law (RCW 35.32A) and the adopted City budget;
- Competitive bidding and the publication of notices pertaining to the performance of public works (RCW 35.22.620 et seq.; RCW Chapters 39.04 through 39.12; SMC Chapter 3.39; and SMC Chapter 20.48, etc.);
- Entering into contracts;
- Incurring of obligations;
- Employment of temporary workers;
- Rental of equipment;
- Purchase of supplies and materials; and
- Appropriation and expenditure of public funds.

I intend to consult with the City Council wherever practical and present any such order at the earliest practicable time to the City Council for review and appropriate legislation.

SECTION 4. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

I delegate to the following City department heads the authority under my supervision to take the actions identified for and on behalf of the City:

A. To the Director of the City Budget Office, I delegate authority under SMC 10.02.030 to authorize spending of emergency funds by City departments to mitigate the loss of SNAP funding and food access, including, but not limited to, contracting with community-based organizations and other entities to increase food availability.

B. I delegate to City department heads generally the authority to permit the use of City facilities and equipment under their control for supplying, warehousing, and/or storing necessary food and for engaging in and providing other appropriate and related services for people in need of assistance; to reassign personnel from their ordinary duties to work deemed necessary for the emergency without regard to job classifications, and to require work beyond normal working hours; and to secure the assistance of volunteers and donations of money or supplies or the use of equipment in performing tasks that the department head deems most helpful in relieving the emergency.

SECTION 5. CIRCULATION

A copy of this Proclamation and any civil emergency orders issued hereunder shall be delivered to the Governor of the State of Washington and to the County Executive of King County. To the extent practicable, a copy of this Proclamation and any civil emergency orders issued hereunder shall be made available to all news media within the City and to the general public. In order to give the widest dissemination of this Proclamation to the public, as many other available means as may be practical to use shall be used, including but not limited to posting on public facilities, computer websites, and public address systems.

SECTION 6. PRESENTATION, RATIFICATION, TERMINATION

This Proclamation shall be filed immediately after issuance, or as soon as practical, with the City Clerk for presentation to the City Council for ratification and confirmation, modification or rejection. The Council may, by resolution, modify or reject the proclamation and, if rejected, it shall be void. If the Council modifies or rejects the proclamation, said modification or rejection shall be prospective only, and shall not affect any actions taken prior to the modification or rejection of the proclamation. The Council shall endeavor to act on any proclamation of civil emergency within 48 hours of its being presented to the Council by the Mayor.

This Proclamation shall be terminated by the issuance of another proclamation when I determine that extraordinary measures are no longer required for the protection of the public peace, safety and welfare (including if SNAP funding resumes), or by the passage of a termination resolution by vote of not less than 2/3 of all the members of the City Council. Before termination of this civil emergency I, or the City Council, shall consult with relevant City departments to determine if there are any fiscal, health, or other imperatives that require the continuation of emergency measures.

DATED at Seattle, Washington, this 30th day of October, 2025, at 4:10 o'clock p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bruce A. Harrell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "B" and "H".

BRUCE A. HARRELL
MAYOR OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE

MAYORAL PROCLAMATION OF CIVIL EMERGENCY CITY OF SEATTLE

WHEREAS, the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) provides food assistance to more than 40 million Americans, including more than 50,000 Seattleites; and

WHEREAS, approximately 930,000 Washington residents receive SNAP benefits, amounting to \$173 million in monthly payments from the federal government. Seattleites receive approximately \$16 million per month; and

WHEREAS, because of the ongoing shutdown of the federal government, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that SNAP funding will cease as of November 1, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Trump administration has cut or threatened to cut other funding for programs that serve vulnerable individuals, further eroding the social safety net; and

WHEREAS, the cuts to SNAP exacerbate existing food insecurity and inaccessibility within Seattle and the surrounding region, which already disproportionately impacts low-income and BIPOC communities; and

WHEREAS, without immediate emergency actions, the loss of SNAP funding could result in significant harm to Seattleites and cause individuals and families to go hungry. A loss of SNAP funding and access to food can also result in financial loss and hardship – including the inability to afford housing, as well as impact educational outcomes and mental and physical health; and

WHEREAS, whether the federal government will act to solve this impending crisis is presently unknown and, because of this, the City must take decisive action; and

WHEREAS, as described in Section 2 of this proclamation, the situation is sufficiently serious that it is necessary that I declare a civil emergency within the City of Seattle and exercise the Mayor's civil emergency powers; and

WHEREAS, the scope of a food shortage will likely necessitate distribution to the full spectrum of established food systems in Seattle, be it meal providers for children, seniors, and other vulnerable populations, community centers, food banks, and other diverse food distribution channels; and

WHEREAS, I have consulted with City department directors, state and county partners, and community-based organizations and food providers, and verified the existence of the emergency cited below, and the necessity for me to take immediate, extraordinary action as outlined in this proclamation;

NOW, THEREFORE,

I, BRUCE A. HARRELL AS MAYOR OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE DO PROCLAIM THAT the situation described herein is sufficiently serious that it is necessary that I declare a limited civil emergency within the City of Seattle and exercise my emergency powers.

SECTION 1. CIVIL EMERGENCY POWERS

A. A civil emergency exists requiring and authorizing me to exercise the emergency powers vested in me as Mayor by RCW Chapter 38.52, the Charter of the City of Seattle, Article V, Section 2, and Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 10.02 as described in this proclamation;

B. Effective upon my signing this proclamation, I will be exercising that authority through the issuance of Emergency Orders and through the use and direction of City personnel, services and equipment and additional acts necessary to the management of this emergency; and

C. It is unlawful for anyone to fail to obey an Emergency Order issued or proclaimed by me pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 10.02. Failing to comply with an order constitutes a violation as specified in that order. (SMC 10.02.110)

SECTION 2. DETERMINATION OF EMERGENCY

I have determined that the foregoing described circumstances constitute a civil emergency with a significant and severe impact to vulnerable community members, including the loss of food access and the health and safety impacts secondary to a loss of food. This harm is likely to occur in the near future to such an extent as to require me to exercise the authority assumed in Section 1 and to take the extraordinary measures in Section 3 in order to prevent the harms identified above and to protect the welfare, and alleviate damage, loss, hardship, or suffering.

SECTION 3. CONTRACTING AND BORROWING AUTHORITY

Pursuant to SMC Section 10.02.030, I hereby assume the authority to enter into contracts and incur obligations necessary to relieve the emergency, protect the health and safety of persons and property, and provide emergency assistance to the victims, and to exercise them in light of the exigencies of the situation without regard to time-consuming procedures and formalities prescribed by ordinance, statute, rule or regulation (excepting mandatory constitutional requirements), including, but not limited to the following limitations and requirements:

- The budget law (RCW 35.32A) and the adopted City budget;
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- Entering into contracts;
- Incurring of obligations;
- Employment of temporary workers;
- Rental of equipment;
- Purchase of supplies and materials; and

Mayoral Proclamation of Civil Emergency

Appropriation and expenditure of public funds.

I will distribute resources to the full spectrum of established food systems in Seattle to address anticipated losses of food access, be it to meal providers for children, seniors, and other vulnerable populations, community centers, food banks, and other diverse food distribution channels.

I intend to consult with the City Council wherever practical and present any such order at the earliest practicable time to the City Council for review and appropriate legislation. In consultation with Council, I will identify the sources of public funds available to address food shortages and plans to distribute resources and staffing equitably to our communities.

SECTION 4. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

I delegate to the following City department heads the authority under my supervision to take the actions identified for and on behalf of the City:

A. To the Director of the City Budget Office, I delegate authority under SMC 10.02.030 to authorize spending of emergency funds by City departments to mitigate the loss of SNAP funding and food access, including, but not limited to, contracting with community-based organizations and other entities to increase food availability.

B. I delegate to City department heads generally the authority to permit the use of City facilities and equipment under their control for supplying, warehousing, and/or storing necessary food and for engaging in and providing other appropriate and related services for people in need of assistance; to reassign personnel from their ordinary duties to work deemed necessary for the emergency without regard to job classifications, and to require work beyond normal working hours; and to secure the assistance of volunteers and donations of money or supplies or the use of equipment in performing tasks that the department head deems most helpful in relieving the emergency.

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shall be prospective only, and shall not affect any actions taken prior to the modification or rejection of the proclamation. The Council shall endeavor to act on any proclamation of civil emergency within 48 hours of its being presented to the Council by the Mayor.

This Proclamation shall be terminated by the issuance of another proclamation when I determine that extraordinary measures are no longer required for the protection of the public peace, safety and welfare (including if SNAP funding resumes), or by the passage of a termination resolution by vote of not less than 2/3 of all the members of the City Council. Before termination of this civil emergency I, or the City Council, shall consult with relevant City departments to determine if there are any fiscal, health, or other imperatives that require the continuation of emergency measures.

DATED at Seattle, Washington, this 30th day of October, 2025, at 4:10 o'clock p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bruce A. Harrell". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

BRUCE A. HARRELL
MAYOR OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE