

For immediate release
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LASTING IMPACT OF FEDERAL SHUTDOWN CREATES HARDSHIP FOR FAMILIES AT RISK OF HUNGER IN ARIZONA

Angie Rodgers, President and CEO of the Association of Arizona Food Banks released the following statement

PHOENIX, February 7, 2019 - People in poverty are already living on the edge, at times just scraping by. It doesn't take much to throw a family just barely making ends meet into a full on crisis. And Arizona families are at risk of experiencing a crisis now and through March.

This need reflects the lasting impact from the government shutdown. SNAP (food stamp) recipients are at higher risk of running out of their household budget for food, because timing of benefits has been disrupted. Federal workers had their paychecks delayed for weeks. Some contractors may not get paid at all. And if the government shuts down again, things will only get worse.

Many will reach out to food banks for help, possibly for the first time ever.

"When you're living less than paycheck to paycheck, SNAP benefits can be the difference between eating and your family – including your kids – going hungry. Your delayed wages can cause a big crisis that doesn't go away, even once back pay is received," said Angie Rodgers, President and CEO of the Association of Arizona Food Banks.

In Arizona, where nearly one in four children face the risk of hunger, families can't afford this disruption. The Food for Families First (#F4F1st) Emergency Fund for Arizona food banks will help hunger relief charities statewide prepare for increased need beginning at the end of February 2019.

"Arizona food banks are anticipating that the additional need may be almost 3,000,000 pounds of food, or the equivalent of 2.3 million meals" Rodgers added.

Donations to the #F4F1st Emergency Fund will be used to meet this increased call for services, and will support food banks statewide with increased costs. Donate online at www.azfoodbanks.org or <http://bit.ly/F4F1st>. All donations are Arizona state tax-credit eligible and will be used directly to help during this crisis.

- AZFOODBANKS.ORG -

About the Association of Arizona Food Banks

Established in 1984, the Association of Arizona Food Banks is a private, non-profit organization serving five-member regional food banks (Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona, Desert Mission Food Bank, St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance, United Food Bank, Yuma Community Food Bank) and a network of nearly 1,000 food pantries and agencies. AAFB is a partner state association of Feeding America. AAFB was instrumental in the development of a statewide gleaning project, and our advocacy efforts have brought about beneficial state and federal legislation for our member food banks and the people they serve. For more information, to find a food bank or pantry in your area, or to learn more about donation and volunteer opportunities, please visit www.azfoodbanks.org.

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