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Technical questions:

Demand for State Services Continues to Grow During Holiday Season

Updated figures released by the Oregon Department of Human Services today show that assistance to Oregon families through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly the food stamp program, continued to climb during November.

There are now 664,241 people receiving food assistance, an increase of 31% over one year ago. Overall since the recession began in July of 2008, demand for SNAP is up 38%.

More Oregon families than ever before are depending on state assistance services to help them through the second holiday season of the economic crisis, and while the increases over the past months have been unprecedented, Oregon officials expect growth to continue.

In many households with little or no income, SNAP benefits can be the primary means to meet the nutritional needs of the family. The maximum benefit for an eligible household of four totals \$668 per month, and the average benefit amount per household is approximately \$250 per month.

Like SNAP benefits, demand for cash assistance through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program has also increased since last year. In November, a total of 25,074 families with children received this benefit in Oregon, an increase of 20% over last year and 26% since the beginning of the recession.

TANF is available only to parents with children 18 years of age and under; the program provides cash assistance to very low income families and builds personal responsibility and self reliance through job preparation and on-the-job training.

To learn if you might be eligible for SNAP benefits, TANF, Oregon Health Plan or other services, visit your local DHS office. You may also go online to OregonHelps and see if you may be eligible for these and other programs at <http://oregonhelps.org/>. To download applications for TANF and SNAP benefits, go to: www.oregon.gov/DHS/assistance/. DHS also partners with SafeNet to help people to find local resources such as local food pantries or other assistance. The number is 800-SAFENET (800-723-3638).

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Individuals Receiving SNAP Benefits (Food Stamps) during November 2009, Percentage Increase Over July 2008:

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| District 1 (Clatsop, Columbia & Tillamook) | = 18,776 | +46% |
| District 2 (Multnomah) | = 132,233 | +38% |
| District 3 (Polk, Marion, Yamhill) | = 97,209 | +36% |
| District 4 (Benton, Lincoln, Linn) | = 43,129 | +35% |
| District 5 (Lane) | = 70,155 | +35% |
| District 6 (Douglas) | = 23,622 | +27% |
| District 7 (Coos, Curry) | = 18,554 | +29% |
| District 8 (Jackson, Josephine) | = 63,184 | +36% |
| District 9 (Hood River, Gilliam, Sherman, Wasco, Wheeler) | = 8,395 | +23% |
| District 10 (Crook, Deschutes, Jefferson) | = 38,182 | +47% |
| District 11 (Klamath, Lake) | = 16,392 | +28% |
| District 12 (Morrow, Umatilla) | = 16,232 | +20% |
| District 13 (Baker, Union, Wallowa) | = 8,827 | +31% |
| District 14 (Grant, Harney, Malheur) | = 9,673 | +25% |
| District 15 (Clackamas) | = 39,763 | +42% |
| District 16 (Washington) | = 59,915 | +53% |
| STATE TOTAL | = 664,241 | +38% |