



Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Facts

What is SNAP?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) helps people with low income buy nutritious food. Although SNAP is a federal program, state agencies run the program through local offices. You may be eligible to receive SNAP benefits if you meet certain income and resource requirements.

Can you get SNAP?

To get SNAP benefits, your household must meet certain conditions and requirements. Your household includes everyone who lives with you and who buys and prepares food with you.

If you are experiencing homelessness, you can still get SNAP benefits even if you do not have an address, a place to stay, or a place to cook meals. You are considered homeless if you do not have a fixed regular nighttime residence or your primary nighttime residence is a temporary accommodation in a:

- Supervised shelter.
- Halfway house.
- Residence of another person.
- Place not designated for regular sleeping, such as a hallway, bus station, or lobby.

Income Requirements

Most households must meet both gross and net income limits to be eligible for SNAP benefits.

Your “gross income” is your total non-excludable income before taxes or any other deductions. You can deduct certain items from your gross income such as housing costs, child-support payments, and child or dependent care expenses. You or other household members who are age 60 or older, or receiving certain disability payments, can also deduct monthly out-of-pocket medical expenses over \$35 from the household income. Expenses cannot be deducted if an insurance company or someone who is not a household member pays for them. Your “net income” is the amount left after deductions are taken out of your gross income.

A household with an older adult or a person receiving disability payments only has to meet the net income test. Households are considered income-eligible if everyone in

the household receives Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

Income limits vary by household size and may change each year. You can find more information about SNAP income limits at www.fns.usda.gov/snap/recipient/eligibility.

Resource Requirements

Your household must also meet a resource limit, depending on your state. Resources are things you own, such as cash or money in a bank account. Limits vary by state and household size and may change each year. You can ask your state SNAP agency if resource limits apply to you.

Certain things are NOT counted as resources for SNAP, including:

- Your home and lot.
- Resources of people who receive SSI or TANF.
- Most retirement and pension plans.

You can find more information about SNAP resource limits at www.fns.usda.gov/snap/recipient/eligibility.

Work Requirements

If you are age 16-59 and able to work, you will probably need to meet work requirements to get SNAP. To meet the general work requirements, you will need to:

- Register for work.
- Not voluntarily quit a job or reduce your hours.
- Take a job if offered.
- Participate in employment and training or workfare programs, if assigned by the state.

If you are age 18-54, able to work, and don't have any dependents, you might need to meet both the general work requirements and an additional work requirement to get SNAP for more than 3 months in 3 years. This additional work requirement is called the “time limit.” You can meet this additional work requirement by working (paid or unpaid) or participating in a qualifying work program — or any combination of the two — for an average of 80 hours every month. You can also meet the additional work requirement if you participate in workfare programs.

People who do not have to meet the time limit include:

- Children younger than 18.
- Adults older than 54.
- Veterans.
- People experiencing homelessness.
- People 24 or younger and in foster care on their 18th birthday.
- People who are caring for a child or incapacitated family member.
- People who are pregnant.
- People who are exempt for physical or mental health reasons.

Other Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for SNAP benefits, your household must also meet other conditions in addition to income and resource requirements. For example, everyone in the household must have, or have applied for, a Social Security number.

Only U.S. citizens and certain lawfully present noncitizens may receive SNAP benefits. Some lawfully present noncitizens must wait 5 years before getting SNAP benefits. You can find more information about whether you can get SNAP as a noncitizen at www.fns.usda.gov/snap/recipient/eligibility/non-citizen.

If your children are lawfully present or are U.S. citizens, they may still be eligible for SNAP benefits even if you are not eligible. You can apply for your children without providing information about your immigration status.

How can you apply for SNAP?

Applications for SNAP benefits are available at any Social Security office. If you and everyone in your household are applying for or already **getting SSI** payments, a representative at any Social Security office can help you fill out the SNAP application. They will also send it to the SNAP office for you.

All other applicants, including those **applying** for or **getting only Social Security benefits**, must take or send their applications to the local SNAP office. To find your local SNAP office or to apply online or by phone, visit www.fns.usda.gov/snap/state-directory. You can also call the toll-free SNAP information line at **1-800-221-5689**.

You must have an interview with your local SNAP office after you complete your SNAP application. In most cases, the local SNAP office can conduct the interview by phone. In addition to the application and interview, you may need to verify certain information on your SNAP application. You can use the following documents as verification:

- Identification such as a driver's license, state ID card, birth certificate, work or school ID card, health insurance card, voter registration card, or proof of alien status
- Proof of income for each member of your household, such as pay stubs, employer statement, current Social Security benefit verification letter, veteran's benefits, unemployment benefits, and documentation of child support or alimony payments
- Proof of how much you spend for dependent care
- Rent receipts or proof of your mortgage payments
- Records of your utility costs
- Medical bills for members of your household who are age 60 or older and for those who receive disability benefits, such as Social Security disability or SSI

After you apply, the SNAP office processing your application will decide if your household is eligible for benefits. You should find out if you are eligible within 30 days. Households eligible for expedited service get benefits within 7 days. If you do not hear within 30 days after you apply for benefits, call or visit the SNAP office.

How much can you get in SNAP benefits?

If your household is eligible for SNAP, the benefit you get depends on your household size, monthly household income, and expenses for such things as mortgage or rent, utilities, and child or elder care needed to allow someone to work. To find the maximum monthly SNAP benefit based on your household size, visit www.fns.usda.gov/snap/recipient/eligibility.

For information about other nutrition assistance programs, read *Nutrition Assistance Programs* (Publication No. 05-10100) or visit www.fns.usda.gov.

Contacting Us

There are several ways to contact us including online, by mail, by phone, and in person (by appointment). If you cannot use our online services, we can help you by phone or make an appointment to come into an office when you call our National toll-free 800 Number.

If you don't have access to the internet, we offer many automated services by phone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, so you may not need to speak with a representative. Call us toll-free at 1-800-772-1213 or at our TTY number, 1-800-325-0778, if you're deaf or hard of hearing. We provide free interpreter services upon request. For quicker access to a representative, try calling early in the day (between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. local time) or later in the day. We are less busy later in the week (Wednesday to Friday) and later in the month.



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