



Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Facts

What is SNAP?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as food stamps, helps low-income people 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. A household includes everyone who lives with you and who buys and prepares food with you.

If you are homeless, 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 qualify for SNAP benefits.

“Gross income” is your total income before taxes or any other deductions. There are certain things you can deduct from your gross income such as housing costs, child-support payments, and child or dependent care payments. 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. The amount left over after deductions are taken out of your gross income is called your “net income.”

A household with an elderly person 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 and benefit amounts at www.fns.usda.gov/snap/recipient/eligibility.

Resource Requirements

Households must also meet the resource limit. Resources are things you own, such as cash or money in a bank account. Currently, households may have \$2,750 in resources, or \$4,250 if at least one person is age 60 or older, or has a disability.

Certain things are not considered a resource. For example, your home and lot are not considered a resource. Also, in some states, you may own at least 1 car. The resources of people who receive SSI or TANF are not counted either.

Work Requirements

You may need to meet work requirements to be eligible for SNAP. These work requirements include:

- Registering for work.
- Not voluntarily quitting a job or reducing hours.
- Taking a job if offered.
- Participating in employment and training programs, if assigned by the state.

In addition, some people are required to work or participate in a work program for at least 80 hours per month to receive SNAP benefits for more than 3 months within a 3-year period. This is called the “time limit.”

Some special groups may not be subject to these requirements, including:

- Children.
- Seniors.
- 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, households must also meet other conditions in addition to the income and resource requirements. For example, everyone in your household must have, or have applied for, a Social Security number.

You may also be eligible for SNAP benefits if you are a lawfully present noncitizen and meet other SNAP eligibility requirements, including income and resource limits. Most eligible noncitizens must wait 5 years before getting SNAP benefits. However, certain noncitizens do not have to wait 5 years before getting benefits. These include some lawfully present children under age 18, people with disabilities, refugees, and people seeking asylum. You may also be immediately eligible for benefits if you are lawfully present and have enough work history or a military connection. You can find more information about whether you can get SNAP as a noncitizen at www.fns.usda.gov/snap/eligibility/citizen/non-citizen-policy.

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

Applying for or receiving SNAP for yourself or on behalf of eligible family members does not affect your immigration status or ability to become a citizen.

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, any Social Security office will help you fill out the SNAP application and 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, visit: www.fns.usda.gov/snap/state-directory. You can also call the SNAP information line toll-free at **1-800-221-5689**.

You will be required to complete an interview after you complete your SNAP application. In most cases, you may be interviewed by telephone. In addition to the application and interview, you will also need to provide verification of certain information. Some documents you can provide to verify the information on your SNAP application include:

- 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, a statement from an employer, current benefit verification letter for payments received from Social Security, veteran's benefits, unemployment insurance benefits, and documentation of child support or alimony.
- 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 those 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 qualifies 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?

If your household is eligible, the amount of SNAP benefits you get depends on your household size, monthly household income, and expenses for such things as mortgage or rent, utilities, and childcare or elder care needed to allow someone to work. To find your local SNAP office or to apply online, visit www.fns.usda.gov/snap/state-directory. You can also call the SNAP information line toll-free at **1-800-221-5689**. For information about other nutrition assistance programs that may be available to you, 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. If you cannot use our online services, we can help you by phone when you call our National toll-free 800 Number.

If you don't have access to the internet, we offer many automated services by telephone, 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.**



Securing today
and tomorrow

Social Security Administration
Publication No. 05-10101
December 2022 (Recycle prior editions)
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Facts
Produced and published at U.S. taxpayer expense