

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Brochure

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You and your family need and deserve healthy, well-balanced meals. If your income will not cover the costs of a wide choice of foods, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) can help you.

This brochure is an extension of the *Your Right to Know* brochure and will explain requirements specific to SNAP. This brochure, along with the *Your Right to Know* brochure, will provide you with your rights and responsibilities, as well as those of the Department. If you do not understand any of the information in this brochure, please call the DTA Assistance Line at 1-877-382-2363.

Please save this brochure because it is referred to in many of the notices you will receive from the Department. You may receive additional written materials later. Be sure to read them carefully.

Your Rights:

You may receive expedited SNAP benefits within seven calendar days after the date of application if your household appears eligible for SNAP benefits and meets one of the following conditions:

- your household has monthly gross income of \$150 or less and liquid assets of \$100 or less;
- your household has combined monthly gross income and liquid assets that add up to less than the sum of your rent (or mortgage) and utilities; or
- your household includes a migrant or seasonal farm worker household member with liquid assets of \$100 or less.

You also have the right to:

- speak with a supervisor if you are determined ineligible for expedited SNAP benefits and you disagree, or if you are eligible for expedited SNAP benefits but do not get your SNAP benefits by the seventh calendar day after the date of your application;
- have a decision made on your application within 30 days.

General Rules for SNAP

- You must give complete and correct information to the Department.
- You must give the SNAP application verifications to your case manager within 30 days of the date you apply. A case manager will tell you what documents, such as pay stubs and rent receipts, you may need to provide.
- You must tell the Department within required time frames of certain changes that may affect your eligibility and/or benefit amount.
- You will lose any SNAP benefits that you do not use within one year.

Assets

- If you are an applicant or receive SNAP benefits, vehicles are not counted.
- Household assets are usually not counted unless you or someone in the household is disqualified from receiving SNAP benefits because of an Intentional Program Violation (IPV), receipt of multiple SNAP benefits at the same time, trading SNAP benefits, failing to comply with the SNAP Employment and Training Program, or because a member of your household is a fleeing felon.

Reporting Rules

Reporting on shelter and/or utility costs, child/dependent care costs, and medical costs is optional. However, if you claim and verify them, these expenses could increase the amount of your SNAP benefits.

If you are an applicant or recipient of SNAP benefits who is subject to Simplified Reporting, or Transitional Benefits Alternative (TBA), special reporting rules apply to you.

Ask a case manager to explain the reporting requirements of your SNAP household type.

If you are not sure whether you have to report a change, please call the DTA Assistance Line at 1-877-382-2363. If you **have to report changes and do not do so within required time frames**, your benefits may be reduced or stopped. You may have to repay benefits overpaid to you. You may be referred for fraud that will result in you paying a fine, going to jail or both.

Depending on your SNAP household type, you may need to report changes, including but not limited to changes in:

- the number of children or adults who live with you;
- the amount of cash you have, either on hand or in a checking, savings or other kind of bank account;
- the amount of your earnings, Social Security payments or child support you receive;
- where you live;
- one-time payment income, such as a retroactive Social Security payment, or lottery winnings;
- other income and/or expenses that may affect your grant or eligibility for SNAP benefits; and
- any child/dependent care costs.

Household Composition Rules

A SNAP household is defined as:

- an individual who lives alone;
- a group of individuals living together who purchase food and prepare meals together; or
- an individual living with others who purchases food and prepares meals separately.*

* If the following individuals or groups of individuals live together, they are considered one SNAP household, **even if they do not** purchase food and prepare meals together.

Spouses: Spouses living together must be in the *same* SNAP household.

Parents/Children: A child under age 22 living with his or her natural, adopted or stepparent(s) *must* be in the *same* SNAP household as the parent. This rule applies even if the child is married or has a child of his/her own.

Parental Control: A child under age 18, except for foster children, living with an adult household member (not the child's parent) who is under the parental control of the adult household member, must be in the *same* SNAP household as the adult.

Note: Parental control means providing financial support or supervision, or both, to a child under age 18.

The following individuals or groups of individuals living together may have their own SNAP household even if they do not purchase and prepare separately:

- (1) An individual, with or without their children, in a drug or alcohol treatment center;
- (2) A blind or disabled resident of a group living arrangement;
- (3) A woman or a woman with children in a shelter for battered women;
- (4) An individual **both** elderly (age 60 or over) **and** disabled may be in a *separate* SNAP household when living with others** who purchase food and prepare meals for him or her, if *both* the following conditions are true:
 - a. The individual cannot purchase food and prepare meals for him/herself because of a disability considered permanent.
 - b. The gross income of the people in the household, excluding the individual and his/her spouse, his/her child under age 22, and a child under age 18 living under parental control, does not exceed 165 percent of the net income eligibility standard for a household of that size.

** However, an elderly and disabled individual living with his/her spouse, natural, adopted or stepchild under age 22, or a child under age 18 living under his/her parental control must be in the same household as the person listed above.

Students: Students (at least half-time) who work 20 hours per week averaged monthly, participate in a federally or state funded work-study program or have a dependent child may be eligible for SNAP benefits if they meet the special student eligibility rules. A case manager can explain these rules to you.

Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) Program Rules

- All nonexempt ABAWDs between the ages of 18 and 50 must:
- comply with General SNAP Work Requirements, and
- work for 20 hours per week averaged monthly, or
- participate in a qualifying Employment and Training (E&T) component 20 hours per week, or
- volunteer at a community service site for a specified number of hours per month

Regardless of certification type, ABAWD WP-required individuals must report:

- when work hours drop below 20 hours per week or 80 hours per month
- when the participation in a DTA-approved education or training program drops below 20 hours per week or 80 hours per month, and
- the number of hours they participate in community service each month.

Exemptions from SNAP/E&T

DTA operates a voluntary SNAP E&T program. SNAP E&T is an employment and training program for clients who receive SNAP but not cash assistance. All SNAP-only participants must be offered the opportunity to volunteer to participate in the SNAP E&T program.

You are exempt from SNAP/E&T if you are:

- under age 16 or over age 59;
- pregnant (second or third trimester);
- 16 or 17 years of age and:
 - are not the head of household; or
 - are attending school at least half-time; or
 - are enrolled in an employment and training program at least half time.
- physically or mentally unfit for employment either permanently or temporarily (less than 30 days);
- a client receiving TAFDC or EAEDC and are meeting the cash assistance program work requirement;
- an Unemployment Compensation applicant or recipient subject to and participating in a comparable work program;
- enrolled at least half-time in any recognized school (including high school), training program or institution of higher education;
- a participant, resident or nonresident, in a drug or alcohol treatment and rehabilitation program;
- employed or self-employed and working at least 30 hours a week or earning each week as much or more than the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours, or
- responsible for the care of a dependent child under six or an incapacitated person, even if the child or incapacitated person does not live in the same household.

Noncitizen Rules

Depending on their status, certain noncitizens are eligible for SNAP benefits.

Eligible U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Statuses

- Asylee
- Cuban/Haitian Entrant
- Amerasians
- Refugees
- Noncitizens whose deportation or removal is being withheld
- Victims of severe forms of trafficking
- Legal Permanent Residents (LPRs) (*must also meet additional conditions*)
- Conditional entrants (*must also meet additional conditions*)
- Parolees (*must also meet additional conditions*)
- Battered noncitizens (*must also meet additional conditions*)
- Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) eligibility for TAFDC

Additional Conditions for LPRs, Conditional Entrants, Parolees and Battered Noncitizens

- 65 or older on 8/22/96 and lawfully residing in the U.S.; or
- Currently disabled as defined by SNAP rules; or
- Under 18 years of age; or
- Have resided in the U.S. as a qualified noncitizen for five years; or
- Are veterans or active duty personnel (includes spouse, widow, or unmarried dependent child(ren)).

Other Eligibility Criteria for LPRs Only

- Adjusted to LPR status from a former status of Refugee (including victims of severe forms of trafficking), Asylee, Cuban/Haitian, or Amerasian; or
- Can claim 40 qualifying quarters of work by a combination of:
 - ♦ the noncitizen's work quarters;
 - ♦ his/her parents' work quarters (worked before the noncitizen turned 18); and
 - ♦ his/her spouse's work quarters (worked during the marriage); or
- A noncitizen whose deportation was being withheld.

If you are a legal noncitizen and you have questions about your eligibility for SNAP benefits, you may call the DTA Assistance Line at 1-877-382-2363.

Disqualification Penalties

If you or any member of your household intentionally breaks any of the rules below, that person will be disqualified from SNAP for *one year* after the first violation, *two years* after the second violation and *permanently* after the third violation. The individual may also face criminal prosecution under applicable state and federal laws.

- Do not give false information or hide information to continue to get SNAP benefits.
- Do not trade or sell SNAP benefits or authorization cards.
- Do not alter authorization cards to get SNAP benefits you are not entitled to receive.
- Do not use SNAP benefits to buy nonfood items, such as alcohol or tobacco.
- Do not use someone else's SNAP benefits or authorization cards for your household.

You or any member of your household making a fraudulent statement or representation with respect to identity or place of residence to receive multiple benefits *simultaneously* under SNAP will be ineligible for SNAP for ten years.

You or any member of your household trading (buying or selling) SNAP benefits for a controlled substance/illegal drug(s) will be ineligible for SNAP for a period of two years for the first finding, and *permanently* for the second finding.

You or any member of your household trading (buying or selling) SNAP benefits for firearms, ammunition or explosives will be ineligible for SNAP *permanently*.

You or any member of your household trading (buying or selling) SNAP benefits worth \$500 or more will be ineligible for SNAP *permanently*.

You or any member of your household fleeing to avoid prosecution, custody or confinement after conviction of a felony or violating a condition of probation or parole will be *ineligible* for SNAP *while fleeing or in violation*.

Other Federal Rules

DTA is authorized to collect application information, including the Social Security numbers of each household member, under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008. Information will be used to decide whether your household is eligible or continues to be eligible for SNAP. DTA will verify this information through computer matching, and the information will be used to make sure households are following program rules and for program management.

DTA processes applications for SNAP according to federal SNAP procedures, including timeliness, notice and fair hearings requirements, even when the application is for both SNAP and another program. You cannot be denied SNAP benefits just because you were denied benefits from another program.

Information may be shared with federal and state agencies for official review, and with law enforcement for the purpose of apprehending persons fleeing to avoid the law.

If DTA overpays you and makes a claim for you to repay the benefits, the information on this application, including all Social Security numbers, may be referred to federal and state agencies, as well as private claims collection agencies, for claims collection action.

If you apply for SNAP and Social Security at the same time and you are living in an institution, the filing date is the date of release from the institution.

How to Buy Food with Your SNAP Benefits:

- (1) Before you shop, check your last receipt to find out how much money is in your SNAP account, or call **1-800-997-2555** for your balance.
- (2) Look for the Quest® mark on the door or window of the store.
- (3) Swipe your EBT card at the check-out counter.
- (4) Enter your secret PIN on the number pad, then press Enter.
- (5) Tell the clerk how much money to enter or enter the amount yourself. Remember, you can only buy eligible food items with your SNAP benefits.

Always check your receipt to make sure that the amount on the receipt is the same as the amount of your purchase.

For more information on EBT, see the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) brochure.