

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture through its Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). SNAP is the federal name for the program, however, state programs may have different names.

SNAP provides low-income households with [electronic benefits](#) they can use like cash at most grocery stores. SNAP provides crucial support to needy households and to those making the transition from welfare to work.

Services and Benefits

The average monthly benefit was about \$101 per person and \$227 per household in FY 2008. Households can use SNAP benefits to buy:

- Food for the household to eat, such as:
 - Breads and cereals
 - Fruits and vegetables
 - Meats, fish and poultry; and
 - Dairy products
 - Seeds and plants which produce food for the household to eat.

Eligibility

To participate in SNAP:

- Households may have no more than \$2,000 in countable resources, such as a bank account (\$3,000 if at least one person in the household is age 60 or older, or is disabled). Certain resources are not counted, such as a home and lot. Special rules are used to determine the resource value of vehicles owned by household members.
- The gross monthly income of most households must be 130 percent or less of the Federal poverty guidelines (\$2,389 per month for a family of four in most places, effective Oct. 1, 2009 through September 20, 2010). Gross income includes all cash payments to the household, with a few exceptions specified in the law or the program regulations.
- Net monthly income must be 100 percent or less of Federal poverty guidelines (\$1,838 per month for a household of four in most places, effective Oct. 1, 2009 through Sept. 30, 2010). Net income is figured by adding all of a household's

gross income, and then taking a number of approved deductions for child care, some shelter costs and other expenses. Households with an elderly or disabled member are subject only to the net income test.

- Most able-bodied adult applicants must meet certain work requirements.
- All household members must provide a Social Security Number or apply for one.

Military Issues

Military Pay:

If you reside on an installation, your housing will not be counted when computing eligibility. It will be treated as an in-kind benefit for income eligibility purposes.

If you receive Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) and reside off the installation then your BAH will be included as income when computing eligibility and will count against you.

Relocation/Portability:

Contact your [local SNAP office](#) prior to your move.

Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards can be used in all States including the District of Columbia, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. EBT cards cannot be used in Puerto Rico because Puerto Rico is operating under a block grant instead of the Federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistant Program.

Availability Overseas: SNAP is not available overseas.

Application Process: States are responsible for the development of their own application forms. The Food and Nutrition Service has a [national map](#) of state SNAP applications and local officers, as well as a [State Applications](#) page with links to each state's SNAP application. Some states may allow you to fax the form to the local SNAP office.

- [Locate your local SNAP Office](#) or call your [State's SNAP hotline number](#)
- [Find online applications and application procedures](#)
- [SNAP Pre-screening tool](#)