

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

What is SNAP?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, helps eligible low-income families and individuals purchase the food they need for good health. SNAP can be used to purchase food at authorized retailers. Benefits are redeemed using an electronic benefit card, which is similar to a debit card. Eligibility factors and benefit levels are based on federal law and regulations.

How is eligibility determined?

A number of factors may impact a household's eligibility for SNAP benefits, including level of income, type of income (earned or unearned), household size, age, receipt of disability benefits, shelter and utility expenses, medical expenses for certain household members, and other factors.

Applicants must provide documentation of household circumstances and an adult member of the household, or an authorized representative of the household, must participate in an interview to determine eligibility. If unemployed or underemployed, certain household members may also be required to look for work or participate in activities to help them find a job.

Social services districts must screen applicants to determine if they qualify for expedited processing of their SNAP application. Households eligible for expedited processing must receive benefits within seven days after applying. Applications not eligible for expedited processing must be approved or denied within 30 days.

What are the income guidelines?

Households must meet income tests, unless everyone in the household receives either Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Temporary Assistance. If a household's income, depending on its size, is less than or equal to the amounts in the chart below, the household may be eligible for SNAP. In determining this, the household's gross income (total before taxes or any other deductions have been made) and its net income (gross income, minus allowable deductions) can be considered.

To qualify:

- Households with any members who are age 60 or older and/or who receive certain disability benefits are not subject to a gross income limit. For these households, eligibility is determined using net income, by applying all relevant exclusions and deductions to the household's gross income to see if it yields a benefit.

- Households that have out-of-pocket dependent care expenses for a member of the household (such as child care) must have gross income that is not above 200 percent of the federal poverty level.
- Households with earned income, but without any members who are age 60 or older or who are disabled, and that do not have out-of-pocket dependent care expenses, must have gross income that is not above 150 percent of the federal poverty level.
- Households without earned income, without any members who are age 60 or older or who are disabled, and without any out-of-pocket dependent care expenses must have gross income that is not above 130 percent of the federal poverty level.

The following table shows the maximum monthly SNAP benefit available to various household sizes. A household's actual SNAP benefit may be less than the maximum benefit amount shown, depending on the household's other financial circumstances. (This table assumes that the household meets all other eligibility requirements.)

Federal SNAP Standards, Effective October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026

Household/ Family Size	Federal Poverty Limit Monthly Income Standards			Maximum Monthly SNAP Benefit
	130% Gross Income Limit	150% Gross Income Limit	200% Gross Income Limit	
1	\$1,696	\$1,957	\$2,608	\$298
2	\$2,292	\$2,644	\$3,525	\$546
3	\$2,888	\$3,332	\$4,442	\$785
4	\$3,483	\$4,019	\$5,358	\$994

- **Example:** A single parent with two children is working 37.5 hours per week, earning \$15.50 per hour. No one in the household receives SSI or Temporary Assistance. The parent incurs out-of-pocket dependent care expenses for the two children.

Weekly, the individual earns $\$15.50 \times 37.5 \text{ hours} = \581.25 gross income.
 Monthly, the individual earns $\$581.25 \times 4.333333$ (average weeks in a month) = $\$2,518.75$ gross income.

The individual has a monthly gross income well below \$4,442 (200 percent of the federal poverty level), and also below both the 150 percent and 130 percent gross income limits for a three-person household, and would be income-eligible even without the deduction for dependent care expenses. The household may be eligible for up to \$785 in SNAP benefits each month, provided that it meets all other eligibility requirements.

- **Example:** A single adult who lives alone is working 25 hours per week, earning \$17/hour.

Weekly, the individual earns $\$17 \times 25 \text{ hours} = \425 gross income. Monthly, the individual earns $\$425 \times 4.333333$ (average weeks in a month) = \$1,841.67 gross income.

Because the individual has earned income, they retain income eligibility up to 150 percent of the federal poverty level, rather than 130 percent, and may be eligible for up to \$298 in SNAP benefits each month, provided that they meet all other eligibility requirements.

How to apply?

Anyone can check their eligibility for SNAP, or apply, at <http://mybenefits.ny.gov>.

For more information on SNAP, please see:

NY State SNAP: <http://otda.ny.gov/programs/snap>

USDA SNAP: <http://fns.usda.gov/snap>

This fact sheet is intended to provide general program information and is not intended for use to determine eligibility or define program requirements for any individual or household.

SNAP Work Requirements

Are Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, recipients required to work?

All SNAP recipients ages 16 to 59 are required to work, unless they meet at least one of these conditions:

- Responsible for the care of a child under age six;
- Unable to work due to a physical or mental health condition;
- Needed to provide care for an incapacitated individual; or
- Applying for or receiving unemployment insurance benefits; or
- A student enrolled at least half time in school, a training program, or an institution of higher education; or
- A regular participant in a drug addiction or alcoholic treatment or rehabilitation program.
- Employed or self-employed 30 or more hours per week or earning at least the equivalent of 30 times the federal minimum wage on a weekly basis.

What are the requirements?

Those subject to SNAP work requirements must:

- Accept suitable employment when referred or offered;
- Respond to requests from the social services district regarding employment status and availability for work;
- Participate in work activities for up to 30 hours per week, if assigned; and
- Not voluntarily quit a job or reduce work hours.

SNAP participants may receive assignments, including:

- **Work Experience:** Work assignments at public or not-for-profit entities designed to improve an individual's chances of getting a job by demonstrating and developing workplace skills;
- **Supervised Job Search and Job Readiness Assistance:** Help locating available jobs and preparing for work by learning to prepare a résumé, complete job applications, interview for jobs, explore careers and other activities;
- **Education:** Activities such as literacy training, High School Equivalency Diploma preparation, English-as-a-Second-Language study, and other education activities; and/or
- **Job Skills Training:** Help learning job-specific skills, often obtaining a credential to demonstrate to employers that the training was completed.

What happens if someone refuses to comply?

Anyone who refuses or fails, without good cause, to comply with SNAP work requirements is subject to a penalty and will be ineligible to receive SNAP while that penalty is in effect. The length of the penalty depends on the number of times an individual has been previously penalized for not complying with SNAP work requirements.

What is an ABAWD?

ABAWD stands for "able-bodied adult without dependents." Federal law requires ABAWDs to meet additional work requirements to receive SNAP benefits for more than three months in a 36-month period. They must participate in qualifying work activities for at least 80 hours a month, be granted an exclusion consistent with their social services district's ABAWD exclusion policy, or reside in an area with a waiver approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The federal government has strict rules regarding which areas of the state may waive the work requirements, generally requiring that the area has a high unemployment rate.

Are there any exceptions?

SNAP recipients who are subject to the SNAP work requirements and meet any of the following criteria are not subject to ABAWD work requirements, but they may still be required to participate in work activities that are assigned under Temporary Assistance and/or SNAP Employment and Training programs:

- The parent or other adult resides in a SNAP household with an individual under 18 years of age,
- Under 18 or 50 years of age or older,
- Pregnant,
- Determined by the district to be medically certified as physically or mentally unfit for employment,

Individuals are unfit for employment when a district deems them as obviously unfit. Where the unfitness is not obvious; the individuals are medically certified as physically or mentally unfit for employment when:

- They are receiving temporary or permanent disability benefits issued by governmental or private sources, or
- Such individuals provide a statement from a medical professional the district determines appropriate, that they are physically or mentally unfit for work.

An individual receiving SNAP benefits is exempt from the ABAWD requirements if they document that they are not able to work at least 80 hours per month, but may still be subject to SNAP work requirements, unless documentation is provided to confirm that they are exempt from SNAP work requirements consistent with 18 NYCRR §385.3

What are the requirements for ABAWDs?

To maintain eligibility for SNAP benefits for more than three months in a 36-month period, ABAWDs must complete and document participation in at least one of the following each month:

- Work (including “in-kind” and volunteer work) for at least 80 hours;
- Attendance at a qualifying work/training program approved by the social services district for at least 80 hours;
- Compliance with a Work Experience Program (WEP) assignment for a number of hours equal to the monthly SNAP benefit, divided by the higher of the federal or State minimum wage;
- Participation in a program under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) or Trade Act, which may include job search, job readiness, occupational skills training or education activities for at least 80 hours;
- Participation in an employment and training program for veterans operated by the Department of Labor or the Department of Veterans Affairs; or
- Participation in a combination of work or qualifying work programs for at least 80 hours.

Any ABAWD who needs help finding a job or participating in a work activity so they can continue to receive SNAP benefits beyond three months, should ask the social services district for help. The district will make sure the individual has the opportunity to participate in an activity to retain SNAP benefits.

What is the SNAP E&T Program?

Throughout New York State there are 39 organizations that provide work focused education and training services through the SNAP Employment and Training Program (SNAP E&T). The Venture IV SNAP E&T Program provides opportunities for SNAP recipients to gain skills, training or work experience to help them get a job.

The program is aimed at supporting individuals faced with barriers to employment, such as criminal or substance abuse history, low literacy, limited work history, unemployment or underemployment, limited English proficiency, or lack of a high school diploma. The program also benefits eligible youth between the ages of 16 and 24. Providers work closely with local Workforce Investment Boards to assist participants in achieving a credential that is in demand by local employers.

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