

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

As of April 27, 2015, Pennsylvania is **eliminating the SNAP asset test**. This will save millions in state funds and better protect Pennsylvania's most vulnerable.

The test disproportionately impacted households with a disabled individual or an older Pennsylvanian.



The anticipated state savings from eliminating the asset test are \$3.5 million annually. This will also remove unnecessary administrative burdens and costs to the commonwealth, as well as increased errors that could potentially result in federal sanctions for the state.

What is SNAP?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is the new name for the food stamp program. SNAP is a federal program that provides monthly benefits to approximately **1.83 million low-income Pennsylvanians** in need of nutrition assistance.

These benefits are used to buy food and help eligible low-income households in Pennsylvania obtain more nutritious diets by increasing their food purchasing power at grocery stores and supermarkets. If you are eligible, you will receive a Pennsylvania Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) ACCESS Card, which is used to make food purchases at participating grocery stores, supermarkets, farmers' markets, and other authorized food sources.

How do I apply?

The fastest way to find out if you qualify for SNAP is to apply online at COMPASS.state.pa.us.

Download an application below for SNAP benefits and return it to [your county assistance office](#). Paper applications are also available at your local county assistance office.

- [Application for cash assistance, SNAP and Medical Assistance Benefits \(English version\)](#)
- [Solicitud para recibir beneficios\(Solicitud para recibir beneficios\)](#)

If you need help completing the application form or need more information about benefits, trained county assistance office staff can help you.

If you have questions about SNAP you may call the DHS Helpline toll-free at 1-800-692-7462 (1-800-451-5886 TDD number for individuals with hearing impairments) or your local county assistance office.

The following persons may apply:

- The head of the household;
- The spouse of the head of household;
- Any other responsible household member; or
- A designated authorized representative, who can be a friend, relative, neighbor, or anyone else the applicant trusts to go food shopping for the applicant's SNAP benefits.

What are the minimum and maximum monthly benefit amounts?

Family Size	Maximum
1	\$194
2	\$357
3	\$511
4	\$649
5	\$771
6	\$925
7	\$1022
8	\$1169
9	\$1315
10	\$1461
Each Additional	+\$146

**The minimum benefit for eligible households is \$16 per month.

**SNAP households may receive deductions from their gross income for things like housing costs, child or dependent care payments, and medical expenses over \$35 for elderly or disabled people.

More information about the eligibility requirements for SNAP can be found in the [SNAP Handbook](#).

How do SNAP benefits work?

SNAP benefits are placed in an "electronic" account that only the recipient or someone authorized to buy food for the recipient's household can use. This system is called Electronic Benefits Transfer or EBT. The eligible household receives a plastic card, the Pennsylvania EBT ACCESS Card. This card allows for food purchases at grocery stores and supermarkets. The store simply uses the EBT ACCESS card to "electronically" subtract purchases from the SNAP account. The eligible household can only spend the amount that is in the account. This is not a credit card.

What should I do if I need food right away?

You may qualify for expedited SNAP benefits (within 5 calendar days). Apply on COMPASS.state.pa.us or contact your local CAO. You can also contact your regional food bank and ask for the nearest food distribution site. For information on food banks in your area, visit feedingamerica.org.