

SNAP Can Help You Increase Your Food Budget

Over 800,000 Virginia residents participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), previously called the Food Stamp program. Many people are eligible for SNAP, including working families, senior citizens age 60 or over, individuals living with a disability, and more. To see if you are eligible for SNAP in Virginia, follow the questions in this guide.

For Immediate Food Assistance

If you or anyone you know needs immediate food assistance, call the USDA's National Hunger Hotline at 1-866-3 HUNGRY (1-866-348-6479) or 1-877-8 HAMBRE (1-877-842-6273) to locate food resources in your area.

How many people live in your home and buy/prepare meals together?

This number is the size of your “household,” which determines the income guidelines and benefits amount for your SNAP case.

What is your household’s monthly income?

Your household’s gross and net income levels determine if you are eligible for SNAP benefits. If a member of your household is age 60 or older or has a disability, your household only needs to meet the net income test.

Countable income includes wages/salaries, self-employment income, public assistance benefits, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and other monetary gains. Income that is NOT counted includes loans, earnings of children under age 18, educational scholarships or grants, subsidies for housing/utility payments, and others. You can ask your SNAP caseworker when you apply if you are unsure what income should count.

SNAP Income Eligibility Guidelines and Maximum Monthly SNAP Benefit			
October 2015-September 2016			
Household Size	Gross Income Level (income level before taxes/deductions)	Net Income Level (income level after taxes/deductions)	Maximum Monthly SNAP Benefit
1	\$1,276	\$981	\$194
2	\$1,726	\$1,328	\$357
3	\$2,177	\$1,675	\$511
4	\$2,628	\$2,021	\$649
5	\$3,078	\$2,368	\$771
6	\$3,529	\$2,715	\$925
7	\$3,980	\$3,061	\$1,022
8	\$4,430	\$3,408	\$1,169
Each additional person	+\$451	+\$347	+\$146

How much does your household have in resources?

Your household must report all resources held by each household member at the time of application. To be eligible for SNAP, the limit of your household's total resources is:

- \$3,250 if your household has at least one member who is 60 years of age, or disabled
- \$2,250 if your household does not have a member who is 60 years of age or older, or disabled

Only “countable” resources are evaluated for the resource test. These include cash on hand, bank accounts, stocks/bonds, lump sum payments, and other liquid assets. Exempt or “non-countable” resources include property, vehicles, life insurance policies, pension/retirement plans, and money in educational accounts, among others.

How is the SNAP interview conducted?

If you submit all of the required information with your application, you may be able to be interviewed on the same day you submit your application. If you work during the hours your Department of Social Services (DSS) office is open or have a disability/other hardship that prevents you from having an in-person interview, you can request a phone interview. You can also give written permission to someone else (a friend or relative) to act as your Authorized Representative to complete the interview on your behalf.

How do I apply for SNAP benefits?

You can apply for SNAP online through Virginia CommonHelp at

<https://commonhelp.virginia.gov/access/>

You can also apply for SNAP in person or by mail through your local DSS office. To find contact information for your local DSS office (based on county or city), check the list provided here

<http://www.dss.virginia.gov/localagency/>

If you need help filling out your SNAP application, call 1-855-635-4370 for assistance.

What information is needed to apply?

You can submit your application and copies of your paperwork and come back later to provide further information. You will need to submit the following information for your application to be complete:

- Proof of Virginia residency*
 - Lease, utility bill, etc.
- Proof of identity*
 - ID card
 - Voter registration card
 - Birth certificate, etc.
- Proof of income
 - Pay stubs
 - Social Security or unemployment benefit
 - Child support payments, etc.
- Social Security Numbers for all household members applying for benefits
- Proof of expenses
 - Rent/mortgage receipt
 - Utility bills
 - Child/dependent care costs, etc.
- Proof of medical expenses (if over 60 or living with a disability)
- Proof of shelter expenses
- Proof of resources
 - Checking and savings account statements
 - Credit union statements, etc.
- Proof of disability (if applicable)
 - Statement from a licensed medical provider
 - Receipt of disability payments, etc.

***Don't have official documentation? A written letter from a collateral contact (neighbor, landlord, employer, etc.) can be used for certain verifications.**