Department of Transitional Assistance

Believing you can.

FOOD ASSISTANCE • JOB ASSISTANCE • CASH ASSISTANCE

April 2019
Agenda

• SNAP Application Process
• Household Composition
• Financial Eligibility
• Verifications
• Maximizing SNAP Benefits
• SNAP Gap
• Healthy Incentive Program
• Accessing SNAP Benefits (EBT)
• Benefits of receiving SNAP
SNAP Eligibility Standards

Non Financial
- Residency
- Citizen/Noncitizen Status
- Elderly/Disabled Status
- Work Requirements
- Social Security Number
- Identity
- Student Status

Financial
- Earned or Unearned
- Actual and anticipated "Reasonably Certain" income used to determine eligibility and benefit level

Asset Consideration
Most SNAP-only applicants **will not** have assets considered in the determination of their financial eligibility
The application process can take up to 30 days. Within the 30 days, an interview will be conducted, verifications must be submitted and a determination will be made. If applicable, the client has an additional 30 days to submit the verifications/proofs.
### SNAP Benefits Application

#### 1. Information About You (Answer all boxes.)

If you are a noncitizen who chooses **NOT** to apply for SNAP benefits, you do not need to tell us your Social Security number or immigration status.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Middle Initial</th>
<th>Social Security Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Is this name your (check one): 
  - Name at Birth
  - Maiden Name
  - Married Name
  - Prior Marriage Name
  - Alias

- Date of Birth
- Gender: M F
- Are you pregnant?: yes no

- Marital Status (check one): 
  - Married
  - Never Married
  - Divorced
  - Separated
  - Widowed

- What is your preferred language?

**Your ethnicity/race:** This information is collected to make sure everyone is treated fairly. Your answer is voluntary, and it will not affect your eligibility or benefit amount.

- Ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino yes no
- Race: (check all applicable)
  - American Indian or Alaska Native
  - Asian
  - Black or African American
  - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - White

- Do you have a special situation? (Check all boxes that apply to you.) 
  - Physical/Mental Impairment
  - Hearing Impaired
  - Visually Impaired
  - Interpreter Required
  - Sign Language Required
  - Other____________________

#### 2. Information About Where You Live and How to Contact You (Answer all boxes.)

- Your current address
  - Number and Street
  - Apt #
  - City, State, ZIP

- Are you homeless?: yes no
- Is your current address temporary?: yes no
- Is your current address your mailing address?: yes no

If a temporary address, list your permanent address.

- If you have a different mailing address, please list.

- Type of housing you live in
  - Private Housing
  - Public Housing
  - Commercial Boarding House
  - Transitional Housing
  - Residential Facility
  - Employer-provided Housing
## SNAP – Household Composition

A SNAP Household (HH) is defined as:

- An individual who lives alone.
- An individual who lives with others and **purchases & prepares** most meals separate from others.
- A group of individuals who live together **and purchase and prepare** meals together.

### Persons that CANNOT be separate households

- Spouses living together.
- Partners living together with children in common.
- Children under 22 living with parents.
- Unrelated children under 18, where adult supervises or financially supports.

### Some Ineligible Households

- Residents of commercial boarding houses.
- Residents of institutions that provide more than 50% of meals as part of their regular services.
- College Students on meal plans that provide more than two-thirds of their meals (Effective August 2017).
# SNAP Gross Income Limits

Gross Monthly Categorical Eligibility Income Standards as referenced at: 106 CMR 364.976 - Effective 2/1/2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assistance Unit Size</th>
<th>200% of Federal Poverty Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$2082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$2818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$3555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$4292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$5028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$5765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>$6502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$7238</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For each additional member add: $737.
## SNAP Benefit Levels

Maximum Allotments for FY 2019, Effective 10/1/18-9/30/19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assistance Unit Size</th>
<th>Maximum Benefit Levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>$1011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$1155</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each add’l AU member will increase by $144
# Mandatory Verifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verification</th>
<th>Some Documents the Client May Provide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>IDENTITY</strong></td>
<td>Driver license, birth certificate, hospital birth record, court records. <em>(Note: Identity must be verified by applicant and any authorized rep applying on behalf of the Household).</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROOF OF MA RESIDENCE</strong></td>
<td>Current rent receipt or lease, deed, mortgage statement, Landlord Verification Form, Shared Housing Verification Form, Voter Registration Card, Letter of Intent to Reside (must be met by all household members).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER</strong></td>
<td>Must be provided orally or in writing for all household members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EARNED INCOME</strong></td>
<td>Proof of gross income for all household members, pay stubs of the last 4 weeks, a statement from the employer written on company letterhead, termination letter if job ended within the last 60 days, Schedule C or Business Records for self-employed, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNEARNED INCOME</strong></td>
<td>Electronic interfaces with other agencies: i.e. Social Security or Unemployment. Benefit or award letter, copy of payment document or check, or written statement from agency making the payment, Child Support income (e.g. letter from non-custodial parent if not through Department of Revenue, Contribution letter specific).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NONCITIZEN STATUS</strong></td>
<td>US Citizenship can be <em>self-declared</em> and won’t need to be verified unless the worker finds the information questionable. Alien Registration Card, Employment Authorization Card, Temporary Resident Card, Arrival-Departure Record or other written documentation from USCIS.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** DTA can *usually* verify certain income and eligibility factors such as Noncitizen status, RSDI or SSI income.
Optional Verifications

Optional Verifications *may be verified* to maximize SNAP benefits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verification</th>
<th>Some Documents the Client May Provide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shelter Costs**</td>
<td>Current rent receipt, Landlord Verification Form or lease agreement, mortgage statement. Self-Declaration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent Care Costs (Child or Adult Care)**</td>
<td>Written statement from the child/adult care provider or a canceled check or money order paid to the child/adult care provider. Self-Declaration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heat and Utilities**</td>
<td>Current bills for oil, gas, electricity, telephone (including cellular phone), fuel assistance letter. Self-Declaration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Costs</td>
<td>Only eligible to the Elderly or Disabled and only if costs exceed $35 per month. Receipts for out-of-pocket expenses, such as co-payments or premiums on health insurance, prescription costs, transportation expenses, vitamins, service animal expenses, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Support Payments</td>
<td>Court documents showing a legal obligation <strong>AND</strong> proof of payment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Can be verified through **Self-Declaration** (unless questionable) – **but must be in writing.**
Maximizing SNAP Benefits
7 Allowable Deductions

- 20% Earned Income
- Standard Deduction
- Child Support
- Dependent Care
- Excess Medical Expense
- Shelter Deduction (Rent/Mortgage & SUA)
- Homeless
Understanding SNAP Certification

After being approved as a SNAP recipient, clients will be designated a benefit certification period of 12 or 36 months depending on their household situation:

**SIMP-12**

If a member of SNAP Household is *Work Program Required*, the Household is placed on a 6 month certification period.

If the SNAP Household has mixed income (earned and unearned), or no income at all, it is placed on a 12 month certification period.

**EDSAP -36**

If the SNAP Household has unearned income only, and is elderly or disabled, it is placed on a 36 month certification period.
“SNAP Gap”

• The SNAP gap refers to individuals who are Masshealth recipients and are likely eligible for SNAP but are not currently receiving it.
• DTA has a data exchange with MassHealth to identify people that are currently receiving MassHealth and may be eligible for SNAP.
• DTA is working with our community partners to address the participation gap by providing client information so our partners can contact potential applicants.
Healthy Incentive Program

HIP is a seasonal program. The last day to earn additional dollars through the program was February 28, 2019. HIP is planned to resume operations on May 25, 2019 during the spring. Clients do not need to re-enroll in the program. This will occur automatically.
Healthy Incentive Program

- Funds are immediately added to SNAP recipients’ EBT cards. The earned incentives can be used right away, or saved for a future purchase at any SNAP retailer on any SNAP eligible foods.

- Families will need to **SPEND** SNAP dollars on local fruits and vegetables to **EARN** HIP incentives.
Accessing SNAP Benefits (EBT)
(EBT) Electronic Benefit Transfer

For more information on EBT, see the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) brochure. Clients can only buy eligible food items with their SNAP benefits. A list of eligible purchases can be found at:

http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/eligible-food-items

EBT can be used to purchase the following:

- Eligible foods
- Seeds
- Plants

EBT Cannot be used to purchase the following:

- Toiletries
- Cups, Plates, Napkins
- Prepared Food
- Alcohol, tobacco
- Lottery tickets
- Firearms
(EBT) Electronic Benefit Transfer

Once a client has been approved for benefits, an EBT card provides convenient access to SNAP benefits.

- Based on a client’s profile, some SNAP recipients are not required to have a picture ID.

- Before you shop, find out how much money is in your SNAP account by accessing DTA Connect or calling 1-800-997-2555 for your balance.

- Look for the Quest® mark on the door or window of the store or signage for acceptance of EBT.

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

• EBT card to culture discounts
• Free or reduced school lunch
• Discount on utilities
• Nutrition education classes
• Employment & training
• Blue bike discounts
Contact Information

For additional outreach questions please contact:
DTA.SNAPOutreach@massmail.state.ma.us

Lorraine Ward, Assistant Director for SNAP Outreach
600 Washington Street | 5th Floor | Boston MA 02111

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Questions