



Operation Food Search

COVID-19 Related Guidance

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or food stamps, provides food assistance for individuals and households. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues and interventions such as social distancing become more widespread, the state is allowed to adjust certain aspects of SNAP to support families in Missouri.

Program Overview

Topic	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)										
MO Department Administration	Missouri Department of Social Services (DSS)										
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be a Missouri resident • Must have gross income under the limit by household size (130% of Federal Poverty Level): <table border="1" data-bbox="678 873 1346 1094" style="margin-left: 20px;"> <thead> <tr> <th># of People in Household</th> <th>Gross Monthly Income Limit</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>\$1,354</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>\$1,832</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>\$2,311</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>\$2,790</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> • Household cannot own resources valued at more than \$2,250, <i>excluding</i> the primary home, vehicles, life insurance, savings & pension plans, and others. • Cannot be in violation of a condition of probation or parole under a Federal or State law • Either have or agree to apply for Social Security numbers for all household members 	# of People in Household	Gross Monthly Income Limit	1	\$1,354	2	\$1,832	3	\$2,311	4	\$2,790
# of People in Household	Gross Monthly Income Limit										
1	\$1,354										
2	\$1,832										
3	\$2,311										
4	\$2,790										
Application Process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submit an application <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply online using the myDSS web portal • Drop-off, mail, or fax a paper application to Family Support Division (FSD) 2. Once the application has been received, an interview will be conducted over the phone or in-person. 										
Benefits	<p>A household's monthly SNAP benefit is loaded to a Missouri Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card. The benefit amount is calculated based on income and household size.</p> <p>Watch this short video to learn how to use your EBT card.</p>										
Where can SNAP be used?	<p>SNAP benefits may be used to buy food or food products, such seeds and plants to grow food, at any local SNAP retailer. To find a SNAP retailer near you, use the SNAP Retailer Locator.</p>										
Contact Information	DSS, Family Support Division: 855-373-4636										

Questions & Answers

Will SNAP benefit amounts change during COVID-19?

Missouri is in the process of implementing two provisions of the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act \(H.R. 6201\)](#) that will increase SNAP benefits.

- ***Temporary Emergency Benefits***

Families whose children qualify for free or reduced-price meals at school, may apply to receive a temporary SNAP benefit in March, April, and May to help cover the cost of meals that normally the student would eat at school.

If you're already enrolled in SNAP, you will automatically receive the additional benefit.

If you're not currently enrolled in SNAP but qualify for the temporary SNAP benefit, you'll need to apply. Information about how to apply is coming soon.

- ***Maximum Benefit Allotment***

In March and April, families enrolled in SNAP will receive the maximum monthly benefit that is available for their household. While in place, SNAP will no longer consider income and living expenses to determine the benefit amount. Updated benefits will be automatically applied to electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards.

Are work and work training requirements for SNAP suspended during this crisis?

Individuals 18 through 49 years old who do not have a disability and are not caring for children or other dependents (occasionally referred to as “able-bodied adults without dependents”) are usually required to work in order to receive SNAP benefits. The program is not enforcing this requirement for at least the next 90 days. People who've already used their 3 months of SNAP for 2019 through 2021 can reapply to receive benefits again.

What waivers related to SNAP has the department received from the federal government?

- ***Extend certification periods by 6 months***

This waiver allows to extend renewal deadlines by 6 months to ensure that current SNAP participants continue receiving benefits without interruption during the pandemic. No SNAP participants will have to renew their benefits in March, April, or May.

Households are approved for SNAP benefits for a specified amount of time (ranging from 6 to 24 months) based on income and household characteristics. Before the certification period ends, participants typically have to renew their benefits by submitting information to verify that they are still eligible for the program.

- ***Flexibility for Quality Control Interviews Waiver***

Missouri received a waiver to conduct telephone interviews instead of face-to-face interviews for SNAP quality control. The waiver is effective March through May 2020.

The quality control process is required by the federal government to assess how accurately states determine eligibility and benefit amounts and to make corrections as needed. More information can be found on the [USDA website](#).

Have additional waivers been submitted that are waiting for approval from the federal government?

The department submitted two additional waiver requests that are outlined below.

- Waive all adverse action notices for 90 days

Adverse action notices are sent from the department when there is a change in a household's eligibility that results in reduced benefits or termination from the program.

- Waive initial in-person SNAP interviews for 90 days

The department must conduct interviews with applicants to determine SNAP eligibility. Interviews can be conducted either by phone or in-person, typically at resource center.

Does the Families First Act that was recently passed by Congress include any flexibilities for SNAP?

The [Families First Coronavirus Response Act \(H.R. 6201\)](#) includes a number of provisions related to SNAP. Missouri is implementing many of these measures and requesting USDA approval for others.

- Temporary benefits for families with students who typically receive free and reduced-price meals at school
- Maximum benefit allotment for household size
- Suspends work and training requirements
- Administrative flexibilities including extending certification periods, more methods for issuing benefits, and simplifying the interview process

Can SNAP applications and verification documents be completed without going to a resource center?

Yes. Applications and documents can be submitted online using the [myDSS web portal](#). The [department's video](#) provides instructions for submitting documents online.

[Applications](#) and verification documents (i.e. copies of paystubs, statements, identification, etc.) can also be emailed or faxed to the department. Do not send questions to the email or fax number as the department is unable to respond to these messages.

- Email: FSD.Documents@dss.mo.gov
- Fax: 573-526-9400

If in-person assistance is still preferred, are SNAP resource centers open throughout the state?

Yes. Currently all SNAP resource centers are open. To find an FSD resource office in your area, use [this map](#) on the DSS website.

Will staff be available by telephone to answer questions about applications and benefits?

You can call 1-855-373-4636 on Monday – Friday, 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM for assistance. Please note the department may experience high call volume during this time.

To check the status of an application, you can call the automated information line at 1-800-392-1261 anytime. You will need your Social Security Number and date of birth when calling.

Outstanding Questions/Concerns

1. How should families contact DSS to receive P-SNAP benefits, if they are not currently enrolled in SNAP?
2. How is DSS communicating changes to SNAP to program participants?
3. Has the federal government approved the waivers that Missouri submitted to suspend adverse action notices for 90 days and waive initial in-person interviews for 90 days?

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