



SNAP Facts for Seniors



Low-income seniors may be eligible for nutrition assistance through SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly the Food Stamp Program).

The Department of Human Services (DHS) uses the term “senior” or “elderly” to describe an individual age 60 or older.

SNAP benefits vary depending on the household’s income and expenses.

The amount of SNAP benefits that a household receives is calculated based on the household’s income and expenses. Expenses that are counted in the SNAP calculation might include out-of-pocket medical costs and shelter expenses. The only way to find out how much your household will receive is to apply for SNAP.

Seniors can have a car, house or bank account and still be eligible for SNAP benefits.

Most of the time, SNAP eligibility no longer requires a resource (asset) test. That means that the value of a car or house, life insurance policy, retirement account or education savings fund does not count when SNAP eligibility is determined.

There are enough SNAP benefits for everyone who is eligible.

Anyone who applies and qualifies will receive benefits. Receiving benefits does not take away from anyone else in need.

Application assistance is available.

Applicants can call the SNAP outreach hotline, **1-866-306-0270**, to ask questions about SNAP, eligibility guidelines, and how to apply. SNAP Outreach workers are also available at community agencies throughout the state for one-on-one help.

There are alternatives to going to the Department of Human Services to receive benefits.

Paper applications may be mailed or faxed into the office or applicants may apply on-line at www.foodstamps.ri.gov. Though every SNAP applicant must have an interview with a DHS staff member to determine eligibility, every applicant has the right to choose an in person or phone interview. If an applicant is uncomfortable or unable to complete the interview, he or she may choose a trusted friend or relative to complete the interview for him or her. This person is called an *authorized representative*.

DHS will deduct a portion of the medical expenses of the senior applicant when determining eligibility.

Senior applicants may be able to have a portion of their medical expenses deducted from their income. This could increase the amount of SNAP benefit the household is able to receive. Medical expenses may include prescription costs, doctor co-pays, insurance premiums, transportation costs and medical equipment.

Seniors found eligible for SNAP who live on a fixed income may recertify every 2 years.

Most of the time, households receiving SNAP benefits must fill out paperwork with DHS every six months to show they are still eligible. In households where all adult members are elderly or disabled, the Department of Human Services will assign this household a 24-month certification period. That means they will fill out paper work every two years instead of every six months.

Senior SNAP recipients may still participate in other programs.

Households can receive SNAP and still receive Meals on Wheels, utilize Senior Farmers Market Vouchers, eat at senior meal sites and go to food pantries. SNAP households may choose to make their congregate meal site donation with their SNAP benefits, although they are not required to do so.

Seniors may be authorized to use the Restaurant Meals Program.

Some seniors of limited mobility may not be able to prepare their own meals. Those seniors may use their EBT card at select Subway restaurants. Call the URI SNAP Outreach Hotline, 1-866-306-0270 for more information about this program.

URI SNAP Outreach Project: 1-866-306-0270

www.eatbettertoday.com