

Where can I get help?

Any time you have questions about the application process or your SNAP benefits, call the **URI SNAP Outreach Project Hotline at 1-866-306-0270**.

You may also call the **DHS Call Center toll free: 1-855-697-4347** to find out information about your case. You can use the automated service at any time to find the status of your application or recertification, or speak with a DHS worker Monday-Friday from 8:30am-3:30pm.



You have completed or received a SNAP application with the help of _____, an outreach worker with the **URI SNAP Outreach Project**.

You met on _____ at _____

If you provided your contact information, someone from the URI SNAP Outreach Project will contact you in approximately 2 weeks to check on the progress of your application.



The SNAP Outreach Project is a collaboration among the URI Feinstein Center for a Hunger Free America, RI Department of Human Services, US Department of Agriculture. The University of Rhode Island is an equal opportunity employer committed to the principles of affirmative action. The USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender. What Happens Next/ November 2018

You've completed an application for SNAP benefits.



What happens next?



URI SNAP Outreach Project
1-866-306-0270
www.eatbettertoday.com

The URI SNAP Outreach Project helps low-income individuals and families throughout Rhode Island access the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

SNAP benefits are a great way to get a little extra help to buy food that you and your family need to stay healthy.



Now that you've completed an application for SNAP benefits, there are still a few things that must happen in order to find out if you will be eligible for benefits.

What is in this pamphlet?

This pamphlet is a guide you can use to help with answers to the following questions:

- When will DHS make a decision? (p. 3)
- What is the interview process? (p. 4-5)
- What documents do you need to provide? (p. 6-8)
- What happens after all those steps? (p. 9)
- What else do you need to know about SNAP? (p.10)
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Final SNAP eligibility can only be determined by the Rhode Island Department of Human Services (DHS), the state agency that administers SNAP.

The URI SNAP Outreach Project is available to answer your questions and help you through the process. You may call the Outreach Project toll-free at **1-866-306-0270**.

Where are the SNAP offices?

Below is a list of all DHS SNAP office locations and fax numbers.

For EBT replacement, call the EBT customer service line at 1-888-979-9939.

You can choose to bring your application or documents to the DHS office location most convenient for you, or mail them to:

**RI Department of Human Services,
P.O. Box 8709, Cranston, RI 02920**

DHS office locations:

Newport: 31 John Clarke Rd, Middletown, RI 02842

Fax: 851-2105

Pawtucket: 249 Roosevelt Ave, Pawtucket, RI 02860

Fax: 721-6659

Providence: 206 Elmwood Ave, Providence, RI 02907

Fax: 415-8349

South County: 4808 Tower Hill Rd, South Kingstown, RI 02880

Fax: 782-4316

Warwick: 195 Buttonwoods Ave, Warwick, RI 02886

Fax: 736-1443

Woonsocket: 800 Clinton St, 2nd Floor, Suite 201, Woonsocket, RI 02895, **Fax:** 768-3131

Please contact the SNAP Outreach Project if you have questions about any of the information in this booklet: 1-866-306-0270.

What else do I need to know about receiving SNAP benefits?

- **Always open your mail from DHS.**
- **Keep your notices from DHS.** Proving you receive SNAP benefits may be helpful for other programs such as school meals, subsidized housing, reduced utility bills.
- **Update your address and phone number with DHS.** If your phone number or address change, inform DHS so they can contact you.
- Contact DHS within 10 days if your income changes, if someone new enters or leaves your house, or if your expenses go up or down by completing a **change report form** and sending it with documentation to DHS. You can get a change report form from the SNAP Outreach Project. If you have questions about reporting a change, call your DHS office change line.

As long as your household remains eligible, you can continue receiving SNAP benefits. To make sure your household is still eligible, you will need to complete the following forms every 6 months and every 12 months:

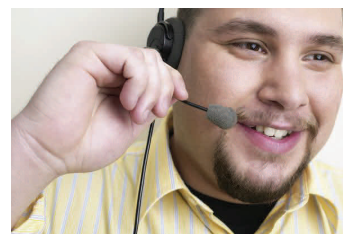
- **Six-month interim report.** You may receive this form as early as four months after you start receiving benefits.
- **Recertification form.** You must recertify *every year* (for some people it is every two years) to continue receiving benefits. You will receive your recertification forms in advance. Complete the forms and get copies of requested documents. The recertification process requires new documents and an interview with DHS, just like your application. If you have questions about recertifying, call your DHS office recertification line.

When will DHS make a decision about my eligibility?

You will find out if you are eligible for benefits within 1 to 30 days from the date DHS receives your application. For most applicants DHS is allowed up to 30 days from the date they receive your application to make a decision of eligibility.

Your eligibility will be determined more quickly if you respond promptly and provide DHS with what they request of you. Below are some examples of timelines that can help you know how long your eligibility determination might take.

- **General timeline:** DHS has 30 days to complete an interview and determine eligibility.
- **Expedited timeline:** DHS has 7 days to complete an interview and determine eligibility if the household has less than \$100 in cash and savings and less than \$150 in monthly earnings, or if housing expenses are more than monthly income. DHS will automatically put your case on the 7 day timeline based on your answers to application questions.
- **Same day service:** DHS may determine your eligibility in **1 day** if you go into the office and are able to wait for an available worker and are prepared to complete your interview that day.



To find out when your timeline begins, call the DHS automated phone line (IVR), 1-855-697-4347.

Follow the prompts to find out information on your submitted application.

What is the interview process?

Everyone must have an interview with a DHS worker before eligibility for SNAP is determined. DHS calls this interview an “intake.”

During the interview the DHS worker will review your answers to questions on the application to make sure everything is correct. The interview can be done by you, someone in your household, or someone you trust who can answer questions on your behalf.

Where is the interview?

You can choose to have an interview in person or have a telephone interview. Office locations for DHS are listed on page 11 of this pamphlet.

If you request a telephone interview, the DHS worker will call you at the phone number you listed on your application.



When is the interview?

If you go to the office for same day service, your interview will be that day. If you mail, fax or drop off your application, or you apply for SNAP online, someone from DHS may call you when they receive your application to complete the interview right away. If you cannot complete the interview when they call, or if they do not call right away, DHS will send you a letter in the mail with the date and time of your interview. The letter will also say whether your interview is scheduled to be in the office or over the phone.

What happens after all these steps?

After DHS receives your application, completes your interview, and reviews your documents, you will either be approved or denied for SNAP benefits.

What happens if my letter says I am denied?

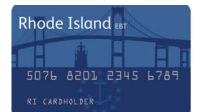
If you are denied, you will not get SNAP benefits. You will get a letter explaining why you were denied. If you don't understand the letter you can call the URI SNAP Outreach Project at 1-866-306-0270 for help.

If you are denied you have a right to appeal the decision. You can speak with a worker at DHS about the appeals process.

What happens if my letter says I am approved?

If you are approved, you will need an EBT card.

If you went into the office for an interview, you should have received a card there. If you didn't get an EBT card at your interview, or you completed your interview over the phone, a card will be mailed to you. If you have not received your card within 10 days of your approval, contact DHS right away.



Benefits will be automatically deposited on your EBT card on the first of the month, every month. Use those benefits to buy food at grocery stores, supermarkets, convenience stores and some farmers markets.

The EBT card looks and works just like a debit card and you will need to set up a PIN to use it. Keep your card in a safe place. Do not throw away your card.

If you lose your EBT card, call the EBT customer service line: 1-888-979-9939

Documents continued

What if I don't have a document I was asked for?

- If you don't have the exact document requested ask the worker if there is something else you can provide instead.
- If you need help getting a document, you can ask a DHS worker to help.
- Some things can be verified with a note from a landlord or co-worker.
- Ask a DHS worker if the document is needed to determine your *eligibility* or your *benefit amount*.
 - ◆ Documents for eligibility are needed to start your benefits.
 - ◆ If the document is for benefit amount and you can't find it, you can still be found eligible and then your benefits will change when you send the additional document(s).
- If you are asked for documents during your interview that you don't have with you or you haven't sent in, DHS must receive them within 10 days.

What happens if DHS doesn't receive my documents in 10 days?

If you do not submit the documents within 10 days, you will get a denial notice in the mail. Even after you get the denial notice, you may still be eligible for SNAP benefits .

If you send in your documents within 60 days of your initial application date, you can still get benefits. After 60 days you have to start a new application to get benefits.

What if I need to reschedule my interview?

If you will not be available at the time your interview is scheduled, call the DHS Call Center right away at 1-855-697-4347 between the hours of 8:30am-3:30pm, Monday - Friday. You may also go into your local office before the scheduled date and time to reschedule, or to see if you may be able to have your interview sooner.

What if I need help with the interview?

If you are unable to answer the questions for yourself, you can ask someone else to complete the interview for you. That person is called an ***authorized representative***. You may list the authorized representative on the application or submit a separate form if you've already submitted your application.

An authorized representative has permission to talk to DHS about your case, answer questions and sign forms for you. The authorized representative does not have power over your finances or access to your benefits.

If you need an ***interpreter*** at your interview, DHS must provide one for you. Call DHS before your interview to make sure the interpreter will be there for the day of your interview. You have the right to bring someone to the interview with you. Just tell the DHS worker that you'd like someone to be with you and that is okay.



What documents do I need to provide?

Whenever someone applies for SNAP the DHS workers must ask for documents to verify the responses on the application. Documents are only necessary for household members applying for benefits. Photocopies are recommended. **Please note that as of October 1, 2017, DHS no longer requires documentation to verify housing, utility and/or dependent care expenses.**

Below is a list of items you may need to provide:

- 1.) **Proof of identity** for each person listed on the application (one of the below):
 - Birth certificate
 - Driver's license or other photo ID
 - US passport
- 2.) For non-citizens who are applying for benefits, **verification of alien status**
 - Visa/resident alien card
- 3.) **Social security number:**

You do not need to provide a Social Security card, but if you have never had a card you will need to apply for one.
- 4.) **Proof of Rhode Island residency**

Provide documentation that shows your home address such as a lease, bank statement, personal check, a bill or other mail with your address on it.
- 5.) **Proof of income** (all that apply, for each household member with income).
 - Paystubs for last month worked
 - Income tax return if self employed
 - Worker's compensation
 - TDI/Unemployment Insurance
 - Social Security letter
 - Child support/alimony received
 - Proof that income has ended (letter from former employer, termination or lay off notice)

6.) **Proof of payment of court-ordered child support** (one of below)

- Cancelled checks/money orders
- Copy of the court order

7.) **Proof of disability** (one of below)

- Letter from Social Security
- A DHS disability form completed by your doctor

8.) If over the age of 59 or disabled, **proof of medical expenses** not covered by insurance (all that apply)

- Prescriptions
- Co-payments
- Health care premiums
- Medical equipment such as glasses, hearing aids, etc.

How do my documents get to DHS?

- You can send your documents with your application at the time you submit your application to DHS.
- You can bring your documents to your in-office interview. If you have a telephone interview, you can mail, fax or drop them off.
- If you drop off your documents in an office, be sure to ask for a receipt.
- DHS office information is on page 11.

