

# S.N.A.P.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

---



OUR ATTORNEYS HELP SOLVE CIVIL LEGAL PROBLEMS AT NO COST FOR STRUGGLING INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES.

**BECAUSE NO ONE SHOULD HAVE TO FACE A LEGAL PROBLEM ALONE.**



**SCAN  
ME!**

[www.LAET.org](http://www.LAET.org)

**SERVING THESE  
TENNESSEE COUNTIES:**

Bledsoe  
Bradley  
Blount  
Carter  
Cocke  
Grainger  
Greene  
Hamblen  
Hamilton  
Hancock  
Hawkins  
Jefferson  
Johnson

Knox  
Loudon  
Marion  
McMinn  
Meigs  
Monroe  
Polk  
Rhea  
Sequatchie  
Sevier  
Sullivan  
Unicoi  
Washington

## WHAT IS SNAP?

SNAP helps low-income people buy the food they need for good health. SNAP benefits are not cash. SNAP benefits are provided on an electronic card that is used like an ATM or bank card to buy food at most grocery stores.

## CAN I GET SNAP BENEFITS?

To get SNAP benefits, your income and other resources have to be under certain limits.

### INCOME

There are two income limits: Gross and Net. Your total income, before taxes or any other subtractions, is called gross income. However, certain subtractions to your gross income, called deductions, are allowed. These can be for things like housing costs, child support payments, child or dependent care payments, and monthly medical expenses over \$35 for elderly or disabled people. The amount left over after these deductions is called net income.

Most households must meet both income limits. If everyone in your household receives Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), you do not need to meet any income limit.

A separate insert with two tables on it has been included with this booklet. Look at the income table to see what the limits are for SNAP benefits.

### RESOURCES

Talk with your local SNAP worker to see what resources you have and the maximum amount of resources you can have and still qualify for SNAP. Checking or savings accounts are resources. If you own your home, it is not counted as a resource. In some States, you may have at least one car. The resources of people who receive TANF or SSI do not count.

## HOW DO I APPLY FOR SNAP?

- You apply for benefits by completing a State application form. There are several ways to get an application form:
  - Pick it up at a local SNAP office, or
  - Call the local SNAP office. Ask the local SNAP worker to mail it to you, or
  - Ask the SNAP worker if there are other places where you can pick up the form, or
  - Print the form from your State's Web site at [www.fns.usda.gov/snap/outreach/map.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/outreach/map.htm), or
  - Apply online (this is not yet available in all States).
- Fill out the SNAP application form as much as you can. If you need help, ask the local SNAP worker. You can also ask a friend or people who work at places like legal services or food banks to help you fill out the form.

Get the application form to your local SNAP office as soon as possible by taking it to the local SNAP office, mailing or faxing it, or by submitting it online if your State provides this option.

- If you pick up your application form at a SNAP office, put your name and street address on the form and sign it. Leave that part of the form (usually the first page) at the SNAP office. This starts the process and helps you get healthy food sooner, if you are eligible. Take the rest of the form with you to fill out later.
- Before leaving the office, make an appointment for an interview with a SNAP worker. If you are at a SNAP office, ask the SNAP worker to write down what you need to bring to the interview. If you are calling for an appointment, ask the SNAP worker what you need to bring.
- Have an interview. You can also have a friend or relative go with you or in your place, or you can request an interview over the phone.
- Show the local SNAP office papers like pay stubs, rent or mortgage payments, utility bills, child or elder care bills, and child support payments. The local office can tell you exactly what other information you will need.

- After reviewing your application, the local SNAP worker will tell you if you qualify for SNAP benefits and, if so, how much you will get.

## **DO I NEED A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER?**

Yes, you must have or apply for a Social Security number if you want SNAP benefits. People who do not want to apply for SNAP benefits do not have to give a Social Security number, but they do have to give their financial information.

## **CAN I GET SNAP BENEFITS IF I AM NOT WORKING?**

Yes. But if you are able to work, you must look for work, take a job, or go to training.

## **IF I AM APPROVED, WHAT CAN I EXPECT?**

You will get an electronic card, similar to a bank card or ATM card, to use to buy food at most grocery stores.

## **IF I AM DENIED SNAP BENEFITS, CAN I ASK WHY?**

Yes. Call or visit the local SNAP office to ask why. If you wish, ask to speak with the local SNAP worker's boss. If you think there is a mistake, ask for a "fair hearing" as soon as possible. This means that a State person will meet with you and the local SNAP office to discuss your application. There is no cost for a fair hearing.

## **I AM NOT A U.S. CITIZEN. CAN I GET SNAP BENEFITS? CAN MY CHILDREN?**

You may get SNAP benefits if you are a legal immigrant. Most legal immigrants must wait 5 years before getting SNAP benefits. There is no wait for children under 18. There is no wait for some elderly and disabled. There is no wait for refugees and asylees. Some legal immigrants may get SNAP benefits if they have enough work history, and some may be eligible if they have a military connection.

If you are not eligible due to immigration status, your legal immigrant or citizen children may still qualify. You do not have to provide immigration information about yourself when you apply for your legal immigrant or citizen children.

## **IF I GET SNAP BENEFITS, WILL I BE A “PUBLIC CHARGE”?**

No. You and your family can apply for and receive SNAP benefits without hurting your chances of becoming U.S. citizens.

## **HOW CAN MY FAMILY EAT BETTER?**

You want the best for your family. You want everyone to stay well and for your kids to grow and learn. Using SNAP benefits to purchase healthy foods for your family can help make this happen. Ask your SNAP worker for information about eating and shopping for healthy food and getting physical activity for better health.

Try these tips to help your family eat better and stay healthy:

- Vary your vegetables...dark green, orange, peas and beans.
- Focus on fruits. Choose fresh, frozen, canned, or dried fruit.
- Eat at least 3 ounces of whole-grain cereal, breads, crackers, rice, or pasta every day..
- Choose lean meats and milk products that are lower in fat.
- Make physical activity a regular part of your day.

## **CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SNAP.**

**TELECOMMUNICATIONS RELAY SERVICE (TRS) IS AVAILABLE NATIONWIDE BY DIALING 711 ON ANY TELEPHONE.**

**TENNESSEE SNAP: (866) 311-4287**

## **WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SNAP IN MY STATE?**

- Locate your State phone number. (See above phone number for Tennessee)
- Call the toll-free national SNAP information line at 1-800-221-5689
- Visit [www.fns.usda.gov/snap/outreach/map.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/outreach/map.htm).
- Look in the phone book in the government pages under “social services” or “human services” for the phone number.

# LAET'S OFFICES ARE OPEN MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY FROM 8:30 AM TO 5:00 PM

## GENERAL OFFICES

Providing civil legal assistance to East Tennessee residents

---

### CHATTANOOGA

(423) 756-4013  
(800) 572-7457

### JOHNSON CITY

(423) 928-8311  
(800) 821-1312

### CLEVELAND

(423) 303-2266  
(800) 572-7457

### KNOXVILLE

(865) 637-0484

### MORRISTOWN

(423) 587-4850  
(800) 821-1309

### MARYVILLE

(865) 981-1818

## FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS

Providing legal help for those in abusive, violent, and trafficking situations

---

### BRANCH HOUSE - THE FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER OF SULLIVAN COUNTY

(423) 574-7233

### JOHNSON CITY / WASHINGTON COUNTY FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER

(423) 722-3720

### CHATTANOOGA FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER

(423) 643-7604

### KNOXVILLE FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER

(865) 215-6830

Linea Gratis en Español 1 (866) 408-6573

No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under, any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

This pamphlet is intended for general information only. The circumstances of every case are different and need to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. This is not a substitute for the advice of a lawyer. Also, the law may change and may be different from county to county.

