

Department of Transitional Assistance

Believing you can.

FOOD ASSISTANCE • JOB ASSISTANCE • CASH ASSISTANCE

April 2019

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE



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

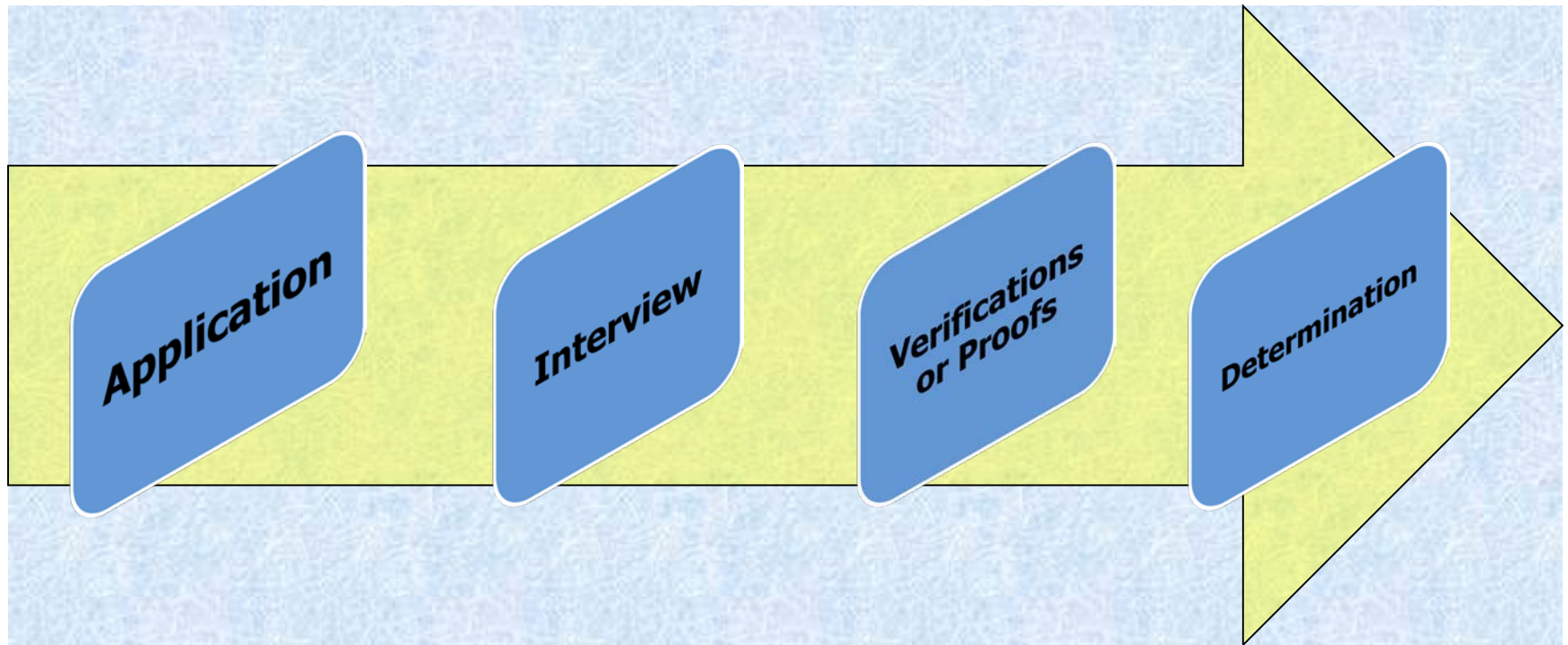
- Earned or Unearned
- Actual and anticipated "Reasonably Certain" income used to determine eligibility and benefit level

Asset Consideration

Most SNAP-only applicants **will not** have assets considered in the determination of their financial eligibility



SNAP Application Process



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 Application Form



Available in 13 Languages



Updates to SNAP Application for Seniors (60+)



Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance
SNAP Benefits Application



Source: (please check one)

CEO Project Bread DMH
 DDS BMC Food Pantry

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.			
Last Name	First Name	Middle Initial	Social Security Number
Is this name your (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Name at Birth <input type="checkbox"/> Maiden Name <input type="checkbox"/> Married Name <input type="checkbox"/> Prior Marriage Name <input type="checkbox"/> Alias			
Date of Birth	Gender <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	Are you pregnant? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	
Marital Status (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Never Married <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced <input type="checkbox"/> Separated <input type="checkbox"/> 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 <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no Race: (check all applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> White			
Do you have a special situation? (Check all boxes that apply to you.) <input type="checkbox"/> Physical/Mental Impairment <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing Impaired <input type="checkbox"/> Visually Impaired <input type="checkbox"/> Interpreter Required <input type="checkbox"/> Sign Language Required <input type="checkbox"/> 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? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		Is your current address temporary? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	
		Is your current address your mailing address? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	
If a temporary address, list your permanent address.			
If you have a different mailing address, please list.			
Type of housing you live in <input type="checkbox"/> Private Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Public Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Boarding House <input type="checkbox"/> Transitional Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Residential Facility <input type="checkbox"/> 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

Assistance Unit Size	200% of Federal Poverty Level
1	\$2082
2	\$2818
3	\$3555
4	\$4292
5	\$5028
6	\$5765
7	\$6502
8	\$7238
For each additional member add:	\$737.

SNAP Benefit Levels

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

Assistance Unit Size	Maximum Benefit Levels
1	\$192
2	\$353
3	\$505
4	\$642
5	\$762
6	\$914
7	\$1011
8	\$1155
Each add'l AU member will increase by	\$144

Mandatory Verifications

Verification	Some Documents the Client May Provide
IDENTITY	Driver license, birth certificate, hospital birth record, court records. <i>(Note: Identity must be verified by applicant and any authorized rep applying on behalf of the Household).</i>
PROOF OF MA RESIDENCE	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).
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER	Must be provided orally or in writing for all household members.
EARNED INCOME	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.
UNEARNED INCOME	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).
NONCITIZEN STATUS	US Citizenship can be self-declared 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 .

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.

Verification	Some Documents the Client May Provide
Shelter Costs**	Current rent receipt, Landlord Verification Form or lease agreement, mortgage statement. Self-Declaration
Dependent Care Costs (Child or Adult Care)**	Written statement from the child/adult care provider or a canceled check or money order paid to the child/adult care provider. Self-Declaration
Heat and Utilities**	Current bills for oil, gas, electricity, telephone (including cellular phone), fuel assistance letter. Self-Declaration
Medical Costs	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.
Child Support Payments	Court documents showing a legal obligation AND proof of payment.

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.

Earn More SNAP Dollars
with the Healthy Incentives Program!

Spending your SNAP dollars on farm-fresh fruits and vegetables at participating Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) retailers and having the amount of your purchase instantly added back to your EBT card!

Healthy Incentive Program
Fresh Produce. Great Deals. It's HIP to be healthy!

Farmers Markets
Look for participating farmers at regularly scheduled markets in your town or nearby, selling fresh fruits and vegetables.

Farm Stands
On-farm stores where you can buy fresh fruits and vegetables, right from the hands that picked them.

Mobile Markets
Markets that bring farm-fresh produce right to your community.

CSA Farm Shares
Membership-based service that provides your family with fresh fruits and vegetables every week.

Look at what you can earn each month! (based on household size)

\$40 1-2 PEOPLE | **\$60** 3-5 PEOPLE | **\$80** 6+ PEOPLE

Healthy Incentive Program



Fresh. Canned. Dried. Frozen.

It's **HIP** to be healthy!

- 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

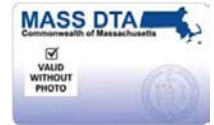
EBT **Cannot** be used to purchase the following:

- 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:

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Questions

