

Basic Overview of Public Benefits

SNAP: THE BASICS

What is it?

SNAP is a public benefit that helps people put food on the table.

Who can receive SNAP?

- You do not have to live with children
- You do not have to be elderly or disabled
- You do not have to be unemployed

Household Definition

- General Rule: A household is a person living alone or a group of people living together who **purchase and prepare meals together**.
- There can be exceptions for individuals who are elderly and disabled and who are unable to purchase and prepare food for themselves.
- There can be more than one SNAP household under the same roof.

REQUIRED HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

- A spouse of a member of the household.
- Children under 18 years of age who are under the parental control of an adult household member other than their parents.
- Children 21 years of age or younger who live with natural or adoptive parents, unless parental rights have been terminated, or stepparents, unless ties have been severed through divorce.

Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs)

- All individuals who are able to work must be working or actively engaged in a work activity in order to receive SNAP benefits.
- Unless exempt, individuals may receive SNAP benefits for only three months during a 36-month period

WORK REQUIREMENT EXEMPTIONS

- Any person who is under 18 years of age or 50 years of age or older.
- Any person who is medically certified as mentally or physically unfit for work.
- Any adult member of a SNAP household of which a child under age 18 is present.
- A pregnant woman.
- Any resident of an exempt locality. (The exemption may be based on the unemployment rate of the locality or its identification as a Labor Surplus Area.)
- Any person who is otherwise exempt from work registration.

Have been disqualified for a period of time because you violated SNAP Program Rules deliberately

[7 CFR 273.16(b); Virginia SNAP Manual – Part 17, Chapter L]

Live in a hospital, a jail, or one of certain other kinds of institutions that serve meals

[7 CFR 273.3; Virginia SNAP Manual – Part 7, Chapter C]

Have been cut off SNAP for a period of time because you quit a job without a good reason or did not comply with SNAP work requirements

[7 CFR 273.7 (n); Virginia SNAP Manual – Part 7, Chapter B]

Are on strike (unless you were eligible for SNAP before the strike or you have been locked out or permanently replaced)

[7 CFR 273.1 (g)(1); Virginia SNAP Manual – Part 7, Chapter D]

Who cannot receive SNAP?

- work at least 20 hours per week;
- participate in a federal work-study program;
- are under 18 or age 50 or over;
- are physically or mentally unfit;
- receive cash assistance (TANF);
- are taking care of a small child;
- taking care of a dependent HH member age 6-12 and have inadequate child care that prevents you from working at least 20 hours a week;
- are assigned to, or placed in, a college or trade school program by certain federal and state work programs;
- or are a single parent, enrolled full time and taking care of a dependent HH member under 12

Exceptions for college students enrolled at least half-time

[7 CFR 273.5; Virginia SNAP Manual – Part 7, Chapter E]

- Lawful Permanent Residents*
- Refugee
- Asylee
- Immigrant living in the U.S. and whose deportation is being withheld under INA Section 243(h) or 241(b)(3)*
- Parolee*
- Conditional Entrants*
- Cuban or Haitian Entrant
- Amerasian
- Battered Noncitizens*
- Trafficking Victims
- Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrants (SIV)

[Virginia SNAP Manual – Part 7, Chapter F]

Qualified Immigrant

- 5 years of residences
- 40 qualifying work quarters
- Children under 18
- Blind or disabled and receiving benefits for their condition
- Elderly individuals born on or before 8-22-31 and who were lawfully residing in the US on 8-22-96
- Military Connection

*Additional Requirements

FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for benefits, a household's income must meet two tests



Gross Income Test

An applicant's income before deductions are applied must be at or below 200 percent of the poverty line.



Net Income Test

An applicant's income after deductions are applied must be at or below the poverty line



Resource Test

REMOVED
FOR INDIVIDUALS BELOW 200% OF THE FEDERAL POVERTY LEVEL

WHAT COUNTS AS INCOME?

FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY

SNAP counts cash income from all sources, including earned income (before payroll taxes are deducted) and unearned income, such as cash assistance, Social Security, **unemployment insurance**, and child support.

[Virginia SNAP Manual – Part 11, Chapter B/C/E]

WHAT DOES NOT COUNT AS INCOME?

Loans, reimbursements, earnings of children, lump sum payments like tax returns (only if specifically excluded by law), self-employment expenses, and more.

DEDUCTIONS

The Standard Deduction

- 1-3 HHM: \$177
- 4 HHM: \$184
- 5 HHM: \$215
- 6 or more HHM: \$246

[7 CFR 273.9 (d); Virginia SNAP Manual – Part 10, Chapter A]

- **Earned Income Deduction:** 20 percent of all income received from a job or self-employment
- **Child Support Deduction:** Child support paid, by legal obligation, to an individual or agency outside the household
- **Dependent Care Expenses:** the full cost of childcare or care for a dependent adult

DEDUCTIONS

FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY

Medical Expense

- The cost of medical expenses incurred by elderly or disabled household members when the cost exceeds \$35 a month.
- A medical standard deduction of \$200 has been established. Households that incur more than \$235 in allowable medical expenses per month may opt out of the standard deduction and use actual costs.

[7 CFR 273.9 (d); Virginia SNAP Manual – Part 10, Chapter A]

DEDUCTIONS

FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY

Homeless Shelter Allowance: Households in which all members are homeless are allowed a deduction for incurred or estimated shelter expenses. The homeless shelter deduction is \$159.73 per month.

Excess Shelter Costs Deduction: Housing costs (including rent, mortgage, and utilities) that together are more than half of your remaining income after all of the other deductions for which you qualify have been subtracted.

✓ Maximum amount - \$597 (unless the household contains an elderly or disabled member)

[7 CFR 273.9 (d); Virginia SNAP Manual – Part 10, Chapter A]

CALCULATING BENEFIT AMOUNTS

Number of People in Household	Monthly Gross Income Limit (200% of poverty level)	Monthly Net Income Limit (100% of poverty level)	Maximum Monthly SNAP Benefit
1	\$2,147	\$1,074	250
2	\$2,904	\$1,452	459
3	\$3,660	\$1,830	658
4	\$4,417	\$2,209	835
5	\$5,174	\$2,587	992
6	\$5,930	\$2,965	1,190
7	\$6,687	\$3,344	1,316
8	\$7,444	\$3,722	1,504
Each Additional Person	\$757	\$379	+188

COOL INFORMATION

- Individuals who receive SNAP or Medicaid benefits get a discount on amazon prime.
- Individuals can purchase food online at amazon or Walmart.
- Fresh Match at Farmers Market
- Restaurant Meals for disabled, elderly, and homeless

HOW TO APPLY

- Online at CommonHelp
- Submitting a Paper Application to your local Department of Social Services
- Telephonically (800) 552-3431

RESOURCES

Calculator: [VASnap.org](https://vasnap.org)

Nutrition Education Guide: [LINK](#)

SNAP Benefits Guide: [LINK](#)

SNAP Manual: [LINK](#)

VPLC SNAP Helpline: 866-753-SNAP

TANF: THE BASICS

The Assistance Unit (AU)

Mandatory AU Members	Permissive AU Members
Natural or adoptive parents living in the home	A caretaker or relative (other than the parent) living in the home
All blood related or adoptive siblings living in the home who meet the categorical requirements of an eligible child	Persons living in the home who provide services essential to the child's well-being

* A recipient of SSI is not eligible for inclusion in the assistance unit

Standard of Assistance (SOA)

TANF

Maximum Payment Amounts

Family Size	Locality Group II	Locality Group III
1	\$249	\$348
2	366	465
3	459	559
4	549	648

Categorical Eligibility

A child will be categorically eligible for TANF if they meet ALL of the following requirements:

1. Is under age 19
2. Is living in the home of a parent or a relative (201.5) or is in foster care under certain conditions.
3. Is a resident of Virginia. (201.6)
4. Is a citizen of the United States or an eligible alien. (201.7)
5. The family is in need of financial assistance. (302.3)

Virginia TANF Manual – Chapter 201.1 A.

Income Disregards

Some types of unearned income are excluded from Standards of Need and Assistance screenings.

1. \$100 of child support
2. Foster care payments (including payments for Independent Living Assistance)
3. Income tax refunds (including Earned Income Tax Credit payments and refunds)
4. The value of SNAP benefits
5. All federal, state, or local government rent and housing subsidies and utility payments
6. Any portion of an SSI payment and/or Auxiliary Grant

Virginia TANF Manual – Chapter 305.4 A

RESOURCES

**There's no resource test for
TANF eligibility (12/1/2003)**

CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for TANF, a parent, or a caretaker-relative other than the parent, must meet the following conditions:

1. Provide a social security number or proof of application for an SSN
2. Participate, as required, in the Virginia Initiative for Employment Not Welfare Program unless otherwise exempt
3. Provide, or have provided on his behalf, a written declaration of citizenship or alien status
4. Comply with the compulsory school attendance requirement if he is a child or minor parent

CHILD SUPPORT COOPERATION AND ASSIGNMENT

Absent good cause for not cooperating, a TANF applicant/recipient is required to cooperate with DSS in:

1. identifying and locating the parent of a child for whom aid is claimed;
2. establishing the paternity of a child born out of wedlock for whom aid is claimed;
3. obtaining support payments for the applicant or recipient and for a child for whom aid is claimed; and
4. obtaining any other payments or property due the applicant or recipient or the child.

As a condition of eligibility, each applicant/recipient of TANF must assign to the State any to support from any other person that they may have.

Work Requirement Exemptions

- They are under 18;
- They are between 18 and 19, and enrolled full-time in elementary or secondary school;
- They have a temporary medical condition that prevents participation in employment/ training activities at least 20 hours per week;
- They are considered disabled by the Social Security Administration
- They are 60 or older;
- They are needed on a substantially continuous basis to care for a family member living in the household who has a verified disability;
- They personally provide care for a child under 12 months old.

As a condition of eligibility, each TANF recipient must participate in work activities, unless exempt.

SANCTIONS

- Clients who fail to participate in VIEW without good cause will be sanctioned. Good cause exists if:
 - The Client's inability to fulfill program requirements is due to circumstances outside their control or result of change in circumstances outside of their control;
 - Acceptable childcare is not available when necessary for a client to accept employment or enter or continue the program;
 - Accepting employment would result in a net loss of cash income for assistance unit;
- A sanction is the suspension of the household's entire TANF grant for program non-compliance.

Virginia TANF Manual – Chapter 901.6

TIME LIMITS

Federal	State
<p>There is a 60-month lifetime limit on the receipt of TANF benefits exception</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Caretaker (both if in a two-parent household) is totally physically or mentally disabled, and is not able to be self-supporting due to the disability; or• The caretaker is needed on a substantially continuous basis to care for a family member who is living in the household.	<p>An assistance unit participating in VIEW is limited to 24 months of cash assistance followed by 24 months of ineligibility.</p> <p>Virginia TANF Manual – Chapter 1000.5 A</p>