

SNAP Benefits come on a plastic card that looks like a credit card. It is called the Benefit Security Card. You can get more information about the card at your local Department of Human Services or your local Legal Services/ Legal Aid office.



Contact Information
731.423.0616 or 1.800.372.8346
Fax: 731.423.2600 • www.wtls.org
wtls@wtls.org

Local Offices:

Jackson
210 West Main Street
Jackson, TN 38301

Dyersburg
208 South Church Avenue
Dyersburg, TN 38024

Huntingdon
113 West Paris Street
Huntingdon, TN 38344

Selmer
141 North Third Street
Selmer, TN 38375

WEST TENNESSEE LEGAL SERVICES



SNAP Benefits for The Homeless

formerly Food Stamps

This Fact Sheet is not meant to take the place of legal advice. If you have a legal problem, consult a private attorney or call your local legal services office.

FACT SHEET

This publication was funded all or in part under an agreement with the USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Tennessee Department of Human Services.



Get a SNAP Benefit Application form—and apply

You can get SNAP Benefit applications at the local Department of Human Services (DHS) Office. Everyone who comes to DHS to apply for SNAP Benefits must be given an application, be allowed to fill it out and turn it in the same day. You can also apply online at www.tn.gov.

Verifying identity

When you apply, you will have to verify your identity (ID). Usually people use papers, such as a birth certificate or driver's license for ID. If you don't have any of these papers, someone else can "vouch" for you and verify your identity and where you stay. Often staff at the shelter or where you stay can do this for you.

Institutionalized persons

Usually people who live in an institution, and get most of their meals there, are not eligible for SNAP Benefits. However, there are some exceptions to this rule. If you live at a public or private nonprofit shelter for homeless persons, you can still get SNAP Benefits.

Shelter costs

If you are homeless, but still have any shelter costs you can get a shelter deduction. You may be allowed deduction for shelter costs, without verifying the actual amount of costs that you have.

Fixed address—needed or not?

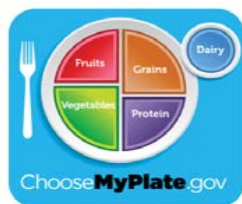
Homeless persons generally don't have an address, and sometimes this has been a problem when applying for SNAP or other benefits. A fixed address is not necessary! You can get SNAP Benefits, even if you do not have an address.

Cooking facilities—needed or not?

You no longer have to have a place to cook food in order to get SNAP Benefits.

Waiting time to get SNAP Benefits

Sometimes, in emergency cases, you can get SNAP Benefits within 7 days. This is called "Expedited Service". In many cases, a homeless person meets the requirements for expedited service. (You must have less than \$150 in monthly gross income, and not more than \$100 in liquid resources such as cash.) If your income or resources are too high for the expedited service, you will get benefits within 30 days.



Using SNAP Benefits to get food

Once you are certified for SNAP Benefits, you can use SNAP Benefits to buy food in authorized stores. Most grocery stores are authorized. Also, you can use your SNAP Benefits to buy prepared meals from authorized homeless meal providers like nonprofit soup kitchens. You may be able to use SNAP Benefits to buy meals at certain communal dining facilities or from a meal delivery system. Your local Department of Human Services office can tell you where you can use SNAP Benefits.



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal and, where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities and wish to file either an EEO or program complaint please contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish). Persons with disabilities who wish to file a program complaint, please see information above on how to contact us by mail directly or by email. If you require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) please contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.