



D.C. Hunger Solutions

Ending hunger in the nation's capital



SNAP for Immigrants & Mixed-Status Households

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In the chat, please share:

- Your name and pronouns
- Whether you're joining as a resident or a provider
- A question you're hoping will be answered in today's training



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Participants will be able to..

#1

- Define SNAP and identify allowable foods

#2

- Describe eligibility criteria for immigrants and mixed-status households interested in SNAP

#3

- Define public charge

#4

- Explain how recent federal immigration and SNAP policy changes may affect immigrant and mixed-status households

#5

- Refer clients to D.C. Hunger Solutions for help applying, recertifying, or troubleshooting SNAP issues

Introduction to D.C. Hunger Solutions

Founded as an initiative of the Food Research and Action Center in 2002, D.C. Hunger Solutions seeks to create a hunger-free community and improve the nutrition, health, economic security, and well-being of low-income District residents by:

- Improving public policies to end hunger, reduce poverty, promote nutrition, and increase the availability of healthy, affordable food in low-income areas;
- Maximizing participation in all federal nutrition programs; and
- Educating the public about both the stark reality of hunger's existence in the midst of plenty and the real opportunities for effective solutions.



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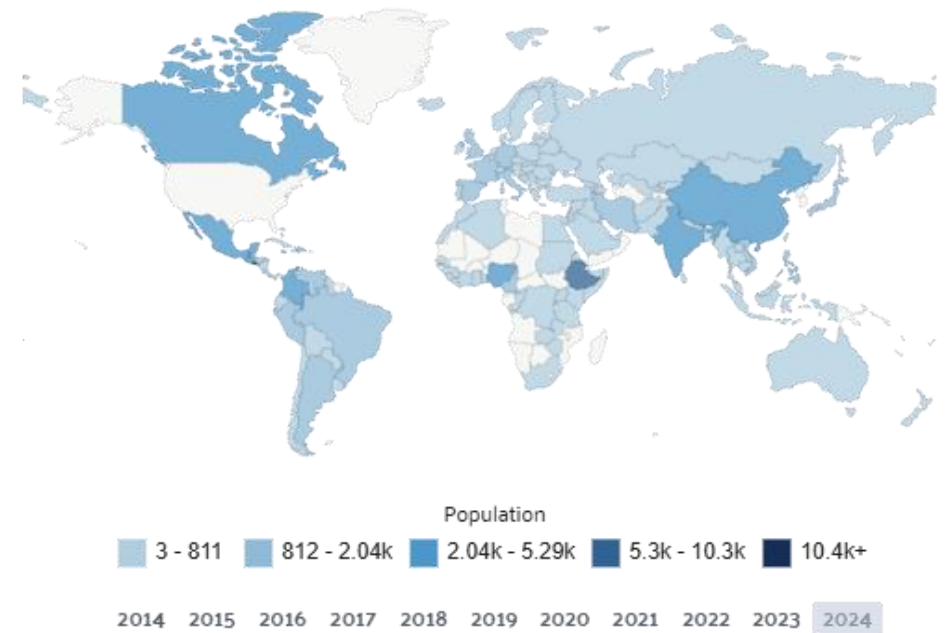
D.C. Landscape

www.dchunger.org - (202) 640-1088 - info@dchunger.org



Immigrant Families in D.C.

- **10,8542** District residents (14.3%) were born outside of the United States
- **88.4%** of District residents were U.S. citizens
- The most common birthplace for the foreign-born residents living in D.C. was **El Salvador**, followed by **Ethiopia** and **China**

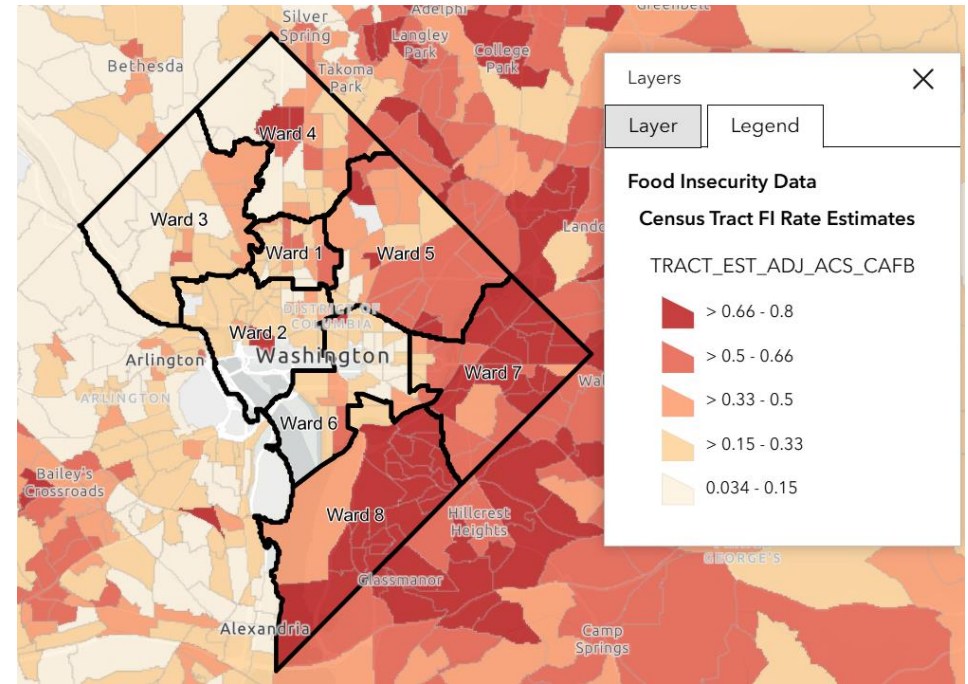


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Food Insecurity in D.C.

- **693,645** people live in the District
- Latest data from USDA shows that **12.1%** of households are food insecure
- **17%** of older adults are food insecure
- Grocery store access is highly uneven
 - Wards 7 & 8 have **just 8 of the city's 81 grocery stores**



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SNAP Overview

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What is SNAP?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a federal nutrition program that provides monthly benefits on an EBT card to eligible individuals.



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What you can buy with SNAP

- Breads and Cereals
- Fruits and Vegetables
- Meats, Fish, and Poultry
- Dairy Products
- Seeds and Plants that Produce Food
- All items fresh, frozen, or shelf stable
- Must be “unprepared”



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What you cannot buy with SNAP

- Alcohol and Tobacco products
- Vitamins, Medicines, and Supplements
- Hot Foods
- Foods that can be “eaten in the store”
- Cleaning Products
- Hygiene Products/Supplies
- Pet Food*

*Unless SNAP recipient has a medically recognized service animal



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SNAP in Washington D.C.

- Just over **132,000** D.C. residents participate in SNAP
- Average benefit allotment:
 - **\$197 per month** (~\$6.50 per person, per day)
- SNAP is an economic stimulus program
 - For every \$1 spent on SNAP, \$1.80 of economic activity is generated.

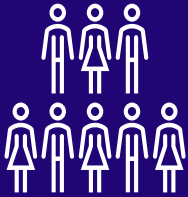


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SNAP Eligibility is based on...

Household Size



Household Expenses



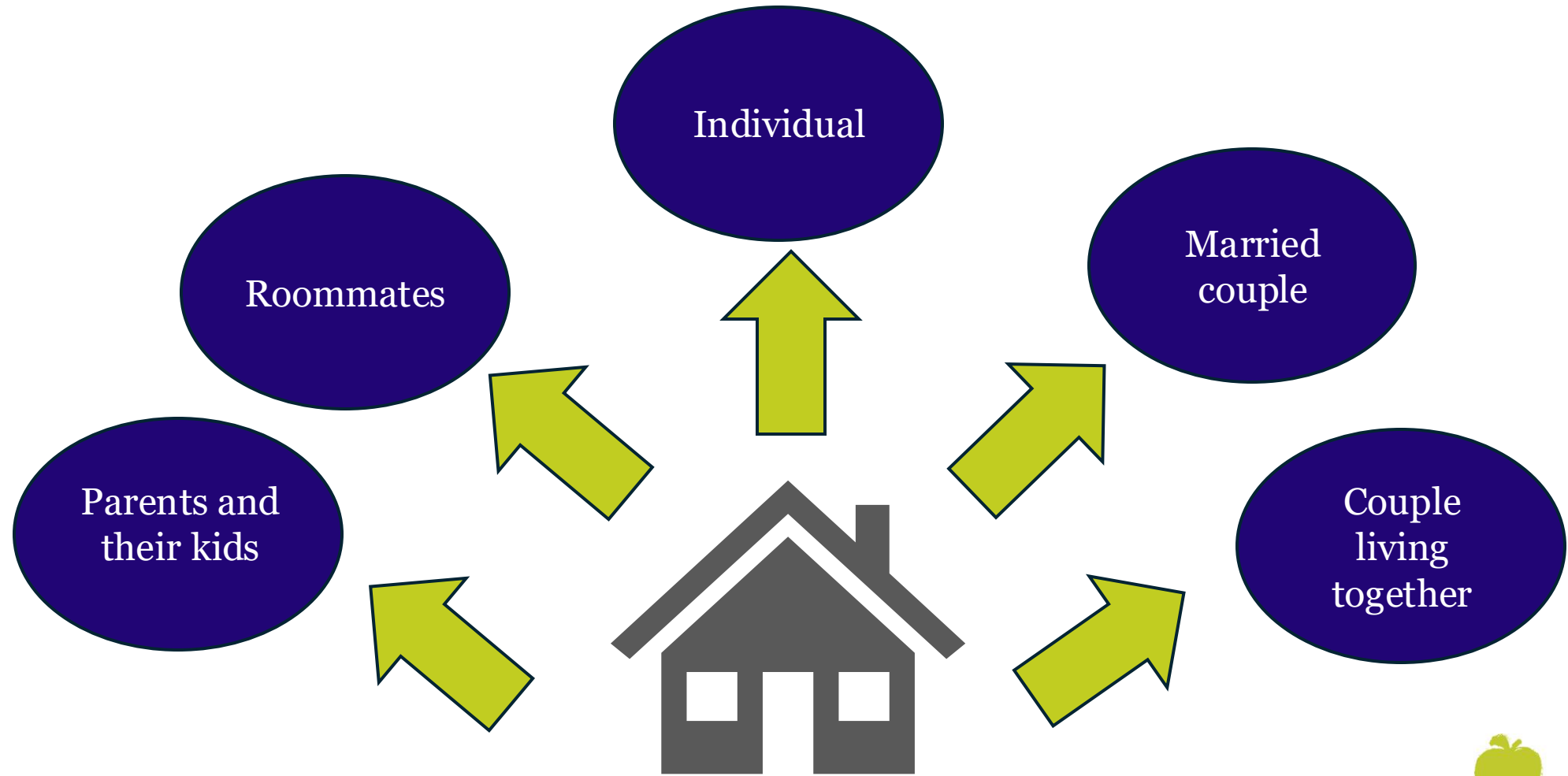
Household Income



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What is a SNAP Household?



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What is a SNAP Household?

- A group of people who **live together, buy food as a group, and prepare meals as a group**. They do not have to be related.
- There are many scenarios in which more than one SNAP household can share the same residence.
- A SNAP household does not necessarily need a permanent mailing address.



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What is a SNAP Household? (cont.)

The following people **must** be considered a household, even if they purchase food separately:

- Spouses who live together
- Parents and children under 22, even if the child is married or has a child of their own, who live together



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SNAP Income Guidelines

(effective 10/1/2026 to 09/30/2027)

Household Size	Maximum Gross Monthly Income for Categorical Eligibility (200% FPL)	Maximum Net Monthly Income (100% FPL)	Maximum SNAP Allotment
1	\$1,330	\$1,729	\$306
2	\$1,804	\$2,345	\$562
3	\$2,277	\$2,960	\$808
4	\$2,750	\$3,575	\$1,023
5	\$3,224	\$4,191	\$1,217
6	\$3,697	\$4,806	\$1,463
7	\$4,170	\$5,421	\$1,616
8	\$4,644	\$6,037	\$1,841
Each Additional Member	+\$474	+\$616	+\$225

SNAP Income Guidelines

(effective 10/1/2026 to 09/30/2027)



Knowledge Check!

A SNAP household is
made up of people
who _____, _____,
and _____.



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Knowledge Check!

**A SNAP household is
made up of people
who live, buy, and
prepare food
together.**



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Deductions

- A household's benefit level is determined by net income.
 - Net monthly income = gross income minus applicable deductions
- The more expenses you have, the more likely you are to be eligible and the higher your benefit level could be.



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Deductions

Earned Income Deduction

- 20% of job earnings

Dependent Care Expenses

- Out-of-pocket dependent care expenses that are necessary for a household member to go to work or school

Excess Shelter Deduction

- For housing costs over half of net income
- Capped at \$744 unless at least one household member is an older adult or has a disability

Child Support Deduction

- For legally-obligated child support a household member pays

Medical Expense Deduction

- For out-of-pocket medical expenses over \$35/month
- Only for older adults and people with disabilities

Standard Utility Allowance Deduction

- For households who pay utilities like water, gas, electric, phone

Standard Deduction

- Applied to all households



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SNAP Pre-Screening

1 Household

2 Income

3 Medical Deductions

4 Dependent Care

5 Child Support

6 Housing and Utilities

7 Benefits

Step 7: Benefits

You are likely eligible for SNAP ([details](#))

Your benefit should be around \$298

Apply for SNAP/Food Stamps as Soon As Possible!

- Call D.C. Hunger Solutions at (202) 640-1088 for application assistance. We can complete the application with you over the phone.
- Download a [SNAP/Food Stamp application](#).
- Call (202) 727-5355 to find out at which [service center](#) you should apply.
- Read the [SNAP guide](#) on the [SNAP page](#) of our website to learn about the application process.
- Visit [FindHelp.org](#) for additional food resources

Start Over

Important Information

These results are only an ESTIMATE based on the information you submitted. You may get more or less food stamp benefits than the estimate shows. If these results say you are NOT eligible for food stamps, you MAY STILL be eligible. The only way you can know officially if you are eligible for food stamps is to submit an application to the D.C. Department of Human Services' Economic Security Administration (ESA).

Normally, the ESA has 30 days to determine eligibility for food stamps. However, some people may qualify for emergency food stamps, known as expedited food stamps, and can receive benefits in less than 7 days. If you have less than \$150 in gross monthly income and less than \$100 in resources, or if your shelter costs are higher than your gross monthly income, you could be eligible for emergency food stamps. Call (202) 727-5355 to find your ESA service office and apply.

Previous

Next

Exit

Before submitting and application, check if you (or the applicant) are eligible for SNAP by completing our quick pre-screening tool online!

<https://www.dchunger.org/calculator/>



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Verification Documents

1. Proof of Identity
2. Proof of D.C. Residency
3. Proof of Social Security number
4. Proof of Income
5. Proof of Shelter Expenses
6. Proof of Medical Expenses (for older adults and people with disabilities)
7. Proof of Dependent Care Expenses
8. Proof of Immigration Status (if not a U.S.-born citizen)*

Note: Applicants will now have to provide proof of work and medical exemption documentation (if applicable). Visit [DHS's SNAP work requirements website](#) to find out more about reporting.

**Applicants should only provide immigration documents for household members applying for benefits.*

Benefits Timelines



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SNAP Eligibility for Immigrants

SNAP Rules for Immigrant Households

Currently, to be eligible for SNAP, individuals must be U.S. citizens or meet specific qualified non-citizen criteria:

- Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs/green card holders) who:
 - Have held LPR status for at least 5 years, or
 - Have 40 qualifying work quarters, or
 - Are receiving disability-related benefits (e.g., for blindness or disability), or
 - Are under age 18 (no 5-year waiting period), or
 - Meet certain additional criteria (e.g., military connection)



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- Asylees and refugees (eligible without a 5-year waiting period)*
- Other qualified non-citizens including:
 - Parolees (for at least one year)
 - Individuals with withholding of removal or deportation
 - Conditional entrants
 - Cuban/Haitian entrants
 - Certain battered non-citizens (e.g., VAWA petitioners)
 - Victims of trafficking (T visa holders)
 - Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrants (SIVs)
 - Certain American Indians born abroad
 - Hmong or Highland Laotian tribal members



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What changed?

- * In the future, asylees, refugees, and others with certain humanitarian statuses will not be eligible for SNAP
 - **However...** when residents in one of these categories obtain a green card and adjust their status, they are typically eligible for SNAP **WITHOUT** the 5-year bar.
- These new rules will go into effect October 1, 2026.
- For now, residents in one of these categories should continue to apply for and recertify their SNAP benefits
- After October 1, DHS will begin checking for eligibility at the client's recertification.



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The Public Charge Test

- Some individuals applying for a U.S. visa or a green card must undergo a **public charge test**.
- The test evaluates whether an applicant is likely to become primarily dependent on government support in the future.
- This rule generally does not affect people who already have a green card or those who are not currently eligible to apply for one.



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What's Changing?

- Historically, the public charge test only reviewed the following safety net programs:
 - Federal or state cash assistance for income maintenance
 - Long-term institutional care paid for by the government
- New guidance under the Trump administration **expands the range of public benefits that immigration officials may consider**, including programs such as SNAP and WIC.
- Officials may also consider a **dependent's use of certain public benefits** as evidence of an applicant's financial circumstances.
- **These changes are scheduled to take effect on September 18, 2026.**



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The Chilling Effect

- Only a relatively small number of individuals are expected to be subject to the public charge test.
- The broader effect extends beyond those directly affected.
- A key concern is the **chilling effect** of these regulations, as some families may forgo services they qualify for out of concern that using benefits could affect their immigration status.



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Not sure?

When in doubt, refer clients to D.C. Hunger Solutions!

- We screen clients for SNAP eligibility and explain all available options.
- We connect households to other food resources if they are not eligible for SNAP or prefer not to apply.
- All services are confidential and can be completed entirely by phone.
- Interpretation services are available to ensure language is never a barrier.



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Public Charge Reminders

- Public charge does not apply to everyone.
- Most immigrants are never subject to a public charge determination.
- Each case is different.
- Individuals with concerns should seek legal advice from a qualified immigration attorney.
- D.C. Hunger Solutions can help determine whether SNAP is appropriate before someone applies.



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Benefit Calculation for Immigrant Households

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Benefit Calculation for Immigrant Households

Two state options for calculating mixed-status household income:

- Count a pro-rated share of income and deductions of the ineligible household member, **OR**
- Count none of the income and deductions of the ineligible household member

D.C. counts a pro-rated share. What does this mean?

- To calculate a benefit, D.C. will use a fraction of the income and deductions that reflects the number of eligible people in the household.



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Benefit Calculation for Immigrant Households

- Imagine a household of four people. In this household, there are three eligible members, and one non-eligible non-citizen.
- In this scenario, the person with the non-eligible status earns \$1000/month in income and pays \$400/month in shelter expenses.



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Benefit Calculation for Immigrant Households

- To calculate the household's benefit, income and expenses are divided by the total number of household members then multiplied by the total number of *eligible* household members.
- To calculate the household's benefit, the household's income would be calculated as $\$1000/4$ household members = \$250, multiplied by 3 eligible members = \$750 in household income.
- Similarly, the household's shelter expenses would be calculated as $\$400/4 = \100 , multiplied by 3 eligible members = \$300 in household shelter expenses.



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Frequently Asked Questions

SNAP FAQs

1. Do I need to speak English to receive benefits?

- No. You can receive benefits regardless of the language you speak, and you have the right to receive interpretation services. Additionally, written translation of vital documents into commonly-spoken non-English languages must be provided by DHS.
- D.C. agencies with major public contact must follow the requirements of the Language Access Act of 2004.



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SNAP FAQs

2. Can I apply for an eligible family member even if I am not eligible based on my immigration status?

- Yes! Only eligible household members are required to share information about their immigration status. DHS *cannot* ask for immigration information from ineligible members.
- For example, ineligible parents can apply on behalf of their eligible children. The parents will need to provide proof of identity and D.C. residency, as well as proof of income and shelter expenses if applicable. DHS *cannot* ask for immigration information from ineligible members.



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SNAP FAQs

3. Will using SNAP and WIC automatically affect someone's immigration status?

- The impact of SNAP and WIC participation depends on an individual's immigration status and circumstances. Recent federal changes have expanded how public benefits may be considered in some public charge determinations.
- Most green card holders can continue receiving SNAP if otherwise eligible.
- D.C. Hunger Solutions cannot guarantee that SNAP participation will have no immigration consequences for every individual. Individuals with concerns should consult a qualified immigration attorney before applying.

SNAP FAQs

4. Can DHS share SNAP information with ICE?

- Federal and local agencies collect information from SNAP applicants to determine eligibility and administer benefits. Recent federal efforts to obtain SNAP participant data have been challenged in court by D.C. and numerous other states because of privacy concerns. Litigation on this issue is ongoing.
- Individuals who are not applying for benefits *are not required* to provide immigration information solely for the purpose of determining another household member's eligibility. Individuals with concerns about how their information may be used should seek advice from a qualified immigration attorney.



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SNAP FAQs

5. What if someone is afraid to apply?

- Encourage them to speak with a trusted benefits advisor or advocate before deciding not to apply. Many families wrongly assume they are ineligible or that applying will negatively affect their immigration situation.
- *If eligibility is unclear, do not tell clients they are ineligible.* Refer them to D.C. Hunger Solutions for pre-screening first.



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Federal Nutrition Programs

The following federal nutrition programs are available to all people, regardless of immigration status:

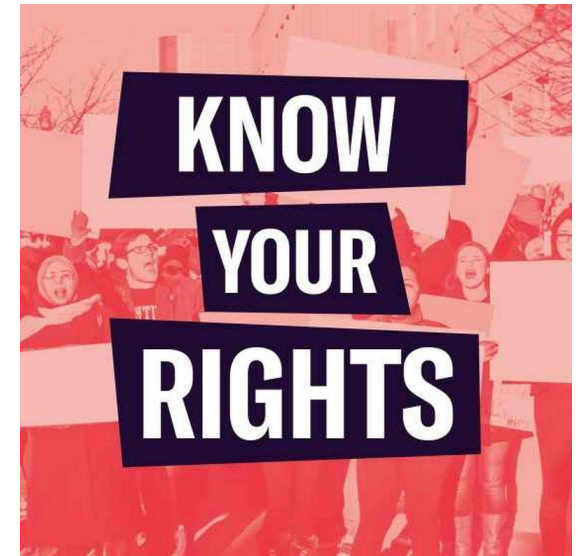
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)*
- School Meals
- Summer Nutrition Programs
 - Summer EBT (SunBucks) - \$120 benefit/eligible child
 - DC Youth Meals Program
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

**WIC eligibility is not based on immigration status. However, WIC may be considered in public charge determinations for certain individuals. Clients with concerns should consult a qualified immigration attorney if they believe that this may impact them.*

Know Your Rights!

Public benefit applicants in D.C. are entitled to certain rights including:

- Right to apply regardless of primary language.
- Right to receive documents in your preferred language.
- Right to free interpretation services.
- Right to receive a written notice if benefits are denied.
- Right to request a fair hearing if you disagree with a decision or if benefits are terminated.



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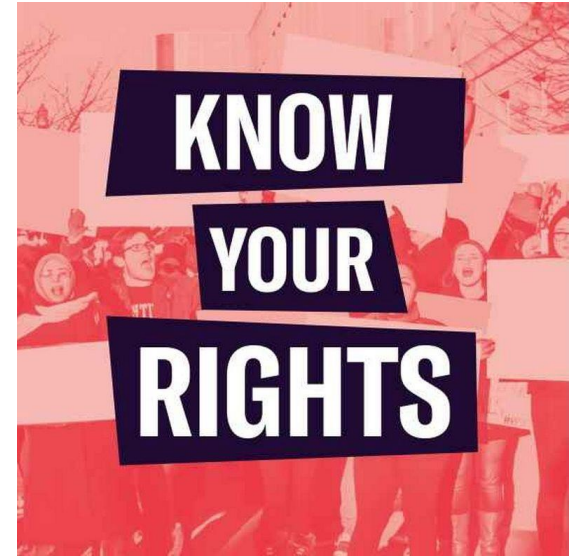
Resources

- **Benefit Access Information**

- [Protecting Immigrant Families \(PIF\): Public Charge Toolkit](#)
- [The Center for Law and Social Policy \(CLASP\)](#)
- [The National Immigration Law Center](#)

- **Legal Aid and Immigration Assistance**

- [keepyourbenefits.org](#)
- [Legal Aid DC](#)
- [Immigrant Advocates Network: National Immigration Legal Services Directory](#)



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How to Refer to D.C. Hunger Solutions

www.dchunger.org - (202) 640-1088 - info@dchunger.org



Common Scenarios DCHS Can Help With

- "I'm not sure if I'm eligible for SNAP and need to be prescreened"
- "I think I'm eligible, but I'm not sure how to apply"
- "I already have SNAP, but need to submit my mid-cert or re-cert"
- "My SNAP benefits decreased and I'm not sure why"
- "I need to report that I've moved, started a new job, had a baby, etc."
- "I think someone stole my SNAP card"



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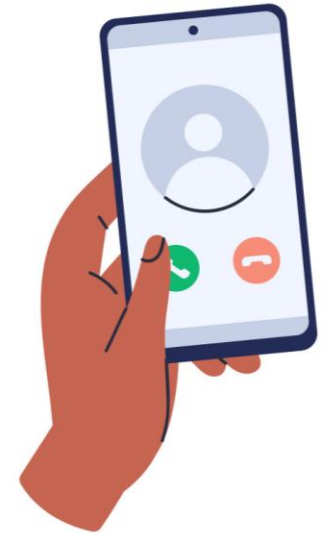
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How to Connect with DCHS

Clients can connect with DCHS in the following ways:

1. Call us: 202-640-1088
2. Email us: info@dchunger.org
3. Fill out the [online form](#) on our website
4. At an outreach event!

Note: Providers and advocates can refer clients to us directly by emailing us the client's name and contact information.



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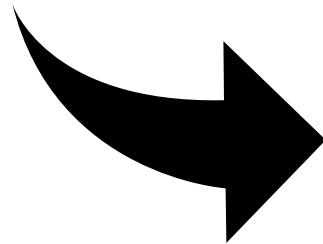
Other Food Resources

www.dchunger.org - (202) 640-1088 - info@dchunger.org



D.C. Food Resources

**Scan or click
below for our full
list of food
resources!**



www.dchunger.org/get-help



Questions?

www.dchunger.org - (202) 640-1088 - info@dchunger.org



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Tell us what you thought!



<https://forms.gle/X6q9bsWWFaVQQ6QZ6>

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Connect With Us!

D.C. Hunger Solutions

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- DC Youth Meals Program - [DC Youth Meals Program | osse](#)
- LegalAid DC - [Food Stamps \(SNAP\): Know Your Rights](#)



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