

For recommendations of food resources near you

Call:

**Capital Area Food Bank
Hunger Hotline**

(202) 644-9807

Monday – Friday

8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Or visit:

<https://cafb.auntbertha.com/>

Anytime



Second Edition October 2019

HOW TO GET **FOOD** IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



A Food and Nutrition
Resource Guide For Older Adults

Published by D.C. Hunger Solutions
and AARP District of Columbia



The District of Columbia Food and Nutrition Resource Guide

This guide will help explain important information about the District's food programs for older residents including SNAP/Food Stamps, Commodity Supplemental Food Program, home delivered meals, and more.

This guide will tell you:

- about each program and its benefits
- who is eligible for each program
- how to apply for each program

Participating in these programs can help stretch food dollars. Chances are, you or your clients can use more than one program, which could really make a difference in a senior's ability to access nutritious food.

Remember – a poor diet today leads to a higher risk of obesity, diabetes, cancer, heart disease, frailty and poor health tomorrow. Everyone deserves to eat healthy food and take care of themselves and their families.

If you are a service provider or a D.C. resident and want to learn more about these programs, call D.C. Hunger Solutions at (202) 640-1088 or visit us online at www.DCHunger.org.

We have done our best to make sure this guide is accurate. Please contact us with any corrections or additions for future editions.

Get Fresh/Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program

WHAT IS THE SENIOR FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM?

This program gives eligible seniors \$40 in checks to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables, and other approved foods at farmers markets. All seniors who receive Grocery Plus/Commodity Supplemental Food will also receive Get Fresh.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

There is no cost for this program.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Seniors who sign up for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (Grocery Plus) before June 1st will receive a farmers' market check booklet along with one of their monthly food packages between June 1 – September 30. Participants can use their benefits between June 1 – October 31.

For more information, call the D.C. Department of Health Farmers Market Nutrition Program at (202) 535-2993 or go to www.dcgetfresh.com.



Grocery Plus/Commodity Supplemental Food Program

WHAT IS THE COMMODITY SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAM?

This program provides eligible seniors with a monthly food package. Clients must be D.C. residents, 60 years or older, and meet the income limits (see below).

Food packages include items such as: cereal, cheese, beans or peanut butter, canned fruit and vegetables, pasta, and others.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

There is no cost for this program.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO SIGN UP FOR THE PROGRAM?

To apply, call the Capital Area Food Bank at (202) 644-9880. After you register, complete an application, you will be enrolled or placed on a waitlist, depending on availability.

To sign up, you should bring:

- Picture ID
- Address verification (letter or a bill)
- Income verification (most recent pay stub, public assistance Medicaid notice, and/or social security statement)
- Age verification (ID or birth certificate)

For more information, call the Capital Area Food Bank at (202) 644-9880 or the D.C. Department of Health Commodity Supplemental Food Program at (202) 442-5891.

| 2019 Commodity Supplemental Food Program Eligibility Guidelines | | | |
|---|---------|---------|----------|
| Household size | Weekly | Monthly | Annually |
| 1 | \$313 | \$1,354 | \$16,237 |
| 2 | \$423 | \$1,832 | \$21,983 |
| 3 | \$534 | \$2,311 | \$27,729 |
| 4 | \$644 | \$2,790 | \$33,475 |
| 5 | \$755 | \$3,269 | \$39,221 |
| 6 | \$865 | \$3,748 | \$44,967 |
| 7 | \$976 | \$4,227 | \$50,713 |
| 8 | \$1,087 | \$4,705 | \$56,459 |
| Each Additional | +\$111 | +\$479 | +\$5,746 |

D.C. Hunger Solutions



The Organization

D.C. Hunger Solutions was founded in 2002 as an initiative of the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) to end hunger in the nation's capital.

The Mission

D.C. Hunger Solutions works to create a hunger-free community and improve the nutrition, health, economic security, and well-being of low-income District residents.

The Strategy

D.C. Hunger Solutions (DCHS) utilizes a three-pronged strategy to overcome the barriers preventing low-income individuals and families from obtaining affordable, healthy food, and to create self-sustaining connections between city residents and nutritious food in their homes, at their schools, and throughout their communities. Specifically, DCHS:

- **Seeks to improve public policies to end hunger, reduce poverty, promote nutrition, and curb obesity**, working with District of Columbia agencies, community and faith-based organizations, schools, legislators, and private sector stakeholders to assure that public agencies increase the availability of healthy, affordable food in low-income areas of the city, and promote wellness policies in school and community settings. DCHS provides data analysis, policy advocacy, training, action alerts, and publications to help stakeholders implement these hunger solutions.
- **Maximizes participation in all federal nutrition programs** through a combination of vigorous outreach, removal of obstacles to participation, and close work with social service agencies. DCHS connects hungry families with programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and WIC; connects child, afterschool, and summer care providers with federal nutrition aid; and connects all students at risk of hunger with school breakfasts and lunches.
- **Educates the public and key audiences** both to the stark reality of hunger's existence in the midst of plenty and to solutions that are already at hand. DCHS leads and participates in coalitions to ensure that families become self-sufficient and can afford and access healthy food.

Special Thanks to Community Partners



Supporting the hunger solutions of AARP Foundation.

DrivetoEndHunger.org



Drive to End Hunger

Since 2011, AARP Foundation's Drive to End Hunger campaign has been raising awareness about the problem of food insecurity among older adults, meeting the immediate daily food needs of hungry seniors, and working to establish permanent solutions to end senior hunger once and for all. Through a collaboration with NASCAR team owner Rick Hendrick of Hendrick Motorsports, four-time Sprint Cup Champion Jeff Gordon, Hendrick teammate Kasey Kahne, and both public and private sector organizations, Drive to End Hunger has donated more than 37 million meals to help feed hungry seniors across the country.

AARP Foundation works to ensure that low-income vulnerable older Americans have nutritious food, affordable housing, a steady income, and strong and sustaining bonds. We collaborate with individuals and organizations who share our commitment to innovation and our passion for problem solving. Supported by vigorous legal advocacy, we create and advance effective solutions that help struggling older adults transform their lives. AARP Foundation is the affiliated charity of AARP. Learn more at www.aarpfoundation.org.

Age Friendly DC

Age-Friendly DC is an initiative of the D.C. Government to coordinate community members and public agencies to build an inclusive and accessible city for seniors that promotes active and healthy aging. In 2018, the District was recognized as a top city in the world for Age-Friendly policies by the World Health Organization and AARP. The initiative is led by the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services, implementing the 2023 Age-Friendly DC Strategic Plan. For more information visit <https://agefriendly.dc.gov/>.

Senior Wellness Centers

ARE THERE WAYS TO STAY ACTIVE?

There are several Senior Wellness Centers located in D.C. These centers provide seniors with gyms, nutrition education classes, Tai Chi, and other fitness opportunities.

Some centers may also provide other nutrition programs such as group meals (lunch) and free groceries from gleaning cooperatives. Call your nearest wellness center for more information. All that is required to join is proof of D.C. residency and proof of age.

Ward 1

Bernice Fontenau
Senior Wellness Center
3531 Georgia Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20011
(202) 727-0338

Ward 6

Hayes Senior
Wellness Center
500 K Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
(202) 727-0357

Ward 4

Hattie Holmes Senior
Wellness Center
324 Kennedy Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20011
(202) 291-6170

Ward 7

Washington Seniors
Wellness Center
3001 Alabama Ave., S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20020
(202) 581-9355

Ward 5

Model Cities Senior
Wellness Center
1901 Evarts Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20018
(202) 635-1900

Ward 8

Congress Heights
Senior Wellness Center
3500 MLK Jr. Ave., S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20032
(202) 563-7225

* **Wards 2 & 3:** Physical wellness centers are not available, however a senior wellness and event directory is available online at <https://www.aroundtowndc.org/> or by calling (202) 459-9634.

Lead Agency Phone Numbers

Contact the Lead Agency (also called the **D.C. Aging and Disability Resource Center**) in your Ward to participate in free meals at a site near you. You can also call the **D.C. Department of Aging & Community Living** at (202) 724-5626 to find out more about any of these programs.

Ward 1

Terrific Inc.
910 Westminster Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009
(202) 387-9000

Ward 2

Terrific, Inc.
1220 L Street, N.W., Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 232-2462

Ward 3 & Foggy Bottom

IONA Senior Services
4125 Albemarle Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016
(202) 895-9448

Ward 4

Terrific Inc.
418 Missouri Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20011
(202) 882-1824

Note: *VIDA Senior Centers offer programs dedicated to the District's Senior Latino community.*

Ward 5

Seabury Aging Services
2900 Newton Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20018
(202) 529-8701

Ward 6

Seabury Aging Services
555 Water Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024
(202) 397-1725

Ward 7

East River Family Strengthening Collaborative
3917 Minnesota Avenue, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20019
(202) 534-4880

Ward 8

East River Family Strengthening Collaborative
4301 9th Street, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20032
(202) 562-6860

VIDA Senior Centers
1842 Calvert Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009
(202) 483-5800

Inside this Guide

FOR SENIORS 60 AND OVER AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Overview of Nutrition Programs.....2

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).....3-14

| | |
|------------------------------------|------|
| Helping Seniors Purchase Food..... | 3 |
| Who SNAP Can Help..... | 4 |
| More Information..... | 5-7 |
| Special Rules for Seniors..... | 7 |
| How to Apply..... | 8-11 |
| Know Your Rights..... | 12 |
| District ESA Offices..... | 13 |
| SNAP Application Checklist..... | 14 |

Save Money on Groceries

SHARE.....15

Farmers Markets16

Community Dining.....17

Home Delivered Meals.....18

Supplement Program.....19

Lead Agencies20

Senior Wellness Centers.....21

Grocery Plus.....22

Get Fresh.....23

Overview of Nutrition Programs For People 60 Years and Older

ARE THERE FOOD PROGRAMS FOR PEOPLE OVER 60?

Yes, there are many programs for people age 60 and over. These programs can help you eat better, feel better, and even make new friends, all for no cost. A list of these programs appears below, and more details are in the pages that follow.

For seniors (age 60 and over):

- **Community Dining:** These free group meals (**voluntary donations are accepted**) are offered in senior apartment buildings, senior recreation centers, churches, and other community spaces (see page 17).
- **Commodity Supplemental Food Program:** This program provides eligible seniors with a monthly food package (see page 22).
- **Get Fresh:** This program gives eligible seniors \$40 in checks to purchase approved foods at farmers' markets (see page 23).

For seniors and persons with disabilities:

- **Home Delivered Meals:** These meals are specially delivered for people who are not able to shop and prepare for themselves. There is sometimes a wait list for these programs (see page 18).
- **SNAP:** SNAP benefits are monthly funds that you can use to buy most foods. There are special SNAP rules that make it easier for seniors or people who have disabilities to receive SNAP benefits. For example, seniors and people with disabilities can receive SNAP benefits for as long as 24 months at a time without needing to recertify (pages 3-14).

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Supplement Program

WHAT IS THE NUTRITION SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM?

The D.C. Department of Aging and Community Living provides high calorie/high protein liquid nutritional supplements (Ensure Plus, Boost Glucose Control, and Neuro) to eligible high nutrition risk seniors. Participants are assessed by a Lead Agency licensed registered dietician or nutritionist. Supplement program slots are limited.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

There is no cost for qualified participants.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE?

To participate, contact the licensed registered dietician/nutritionist at the appropriate Lead Agency in your ward (see page 20).

Clients who participate in this program must be assessed by a Lead Agency licensed registered dietician/nutritionist and are monitored on a monthly basis by telephone or a home visit. Clients may participate in this program only if a physician, registered nurse, or licensed registered dietician/nutritionist has determined that supplements are necessary as part of a nutrition care plan to reduce high nutritional risk or to correct a nutritional issue, such as unintentional weight loss.

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Home Delivered Meals

There are two programs that home-deliver meals: Meals on Wheels and Home Delivered Meals. These meals are available for homebound seniors and people with disabilities (physical and emotional health inabilities).

| | Meals on Wheels | Home Delivered Meals |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| WHAT DO PARTICIPANTS RECIEVE? | Participants receive 2 meals per day, Monday through Friday, 1 hot and 1 cold, for a total of 10 weekday meals each week. | Participants receive 10 or 14 refrigerated meals delivered every 2 weeks available to clients deemed eligible for this service. |
| WHO CAN PARTICIPATE? | Seniors 60 or older who are homebound; people with disabilities who are homebound may also be eligible. | Seniors 60 or older who are homebound. A limited number of meals are served in each Ward, and priority goes to those with highest need. |
| IS THERE A WAIT LIST? | Yes, there is sometimes a wait list. | Yes, there is sometimes a wait list. |
| HOW MUCH DOES IT COST? | Depending on individual circumstances, pay on sliding scale from no cost to \$7.39/meal. <i>(price may vary from site to site)</i> | There is no cost but participants have the option to make a voluntary contribution. |
| HOW TO PARTICIPATE? | Meals on Wheels is available throughout DC. Call 888-998-6325, or your Lead Agency in your ward (see page 20). www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/find-meals - to find an agency closest to you. | Contact the Lead Agency in your ward (see page 20). You may also call the D.C. Department of Aging & Community Living at (202) 724-5626. |

Other Options for Home Delivery

Grocery Delivery:

Giant Peapod: <http://www.peapod.com/>

Safeway: www.safeway.com/OnlineGrocery

Meal Delivery:

Mom's Meals: 1-877-508-6667 *

Home Bistro: 1-800-628-5588

Silver Cuisine: 1-844-404-0366*

Diet-to-Go: 1-800-743-7546*

* has special diet menus

SNAP: Helping Seniors Purchase Food

WHAT IS SNAP AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Each month more than 111,000 District residents benefit from SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly known as the Food Stamp program). With SNAP, seniors are able to shop for diet-appropriate foods, like fresh produce and whole-grains, at grocery stores, farmers' markets, and corner stores.

Even still, many older residents do not apply for SNAP benefits although they qualify. This means that many people are missing out on one way to stretch their food dollars and buy healthier food. As food prices, energy bills, and housing expenses increase, SNAP benefits can be a huge help for seniors on a fixed income.

This guide will teach you about SNAP and give you the facts you need to apply quickly and easily.

SNAP benefits are monthly funds that you can use to buy most foods. The average monthly benefit for a senior living alone is \$116 per person, and the minimum monthly benefit is \$30 per person. Most grocery stores, convenience stores, and corner stores accept SNAP benefits, which are distributed on an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card that works much like a debit or credit card. SNAP will help you save some cash to put toward other food, rent, energy bills, child care, or other things that you need.

SNAP is the federal government's largest nutrition program. **The program is not welfare.** It is a good way to increase your food buying power. Your taxes have paid for SNAP – we all have the right to apply for SNAP benefits in times of need.

SNAP benefits can be used to buy uncooked foods and seeds or plants for growing food.

SNAP benefits **cannot** be used to buy:

- Alcohol
- Paper products or soap
- Hot meals
- Vitamins and Minerals
- Pet food (except for assistive service pets)
- Tobacco

WHAT CAN SNAP BENEFITS BUY?

Who SNAP Can Help

WHO CAN RECEIVE SNAP BENEFITS?

Generally, people who fall into one of these groups can qualify for SNAP:

- U.S. citizens
- Legal Permanent Residents
- Citizen children of non-eligible immigrants

People receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, or Supplemental Social Security Income (SSI) automatically qualify for SNAP.

People who typically cannot receive SNAP ARE:

- Most people on strike
- Undocumented immigrants
- Most college and university students who are not working or raising young children
- People who quit their jobs without reason
- People who have not followed SNAP rules

Legal Permanent Residents who have been in the U.S. for at least five years may be eligible to receive SNAP benefits. A few special classes of immigrants, including refugees, asylees, and survivors of human trafficking, may be eligible for SNAP even if they came to the U.S. more recently.

Some immigrants who were not eligible for the program in the past due to their immigrant status may now be eligible.

Applying for SNAP will not affect your immigration status or make you a “public charge.” You can apply on behalf of your children who were born in the U.S., even if you are not a U.S. citizen. You only need to provide social security numbers for your children. **You do not have to provide your own social security number or answer questions about your own immigration status.** Contact D.C. Hunger Solutions for more information.

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Community Dining

WHAT IS COMMUNITY DINING?

These free group meals are offered to all D.C. residents age 60 or older in senior apartment buildings, senior recreation centers, churches, and other community spaces. Sites offer seniors a chance to chat, play cards, and go on trips to farmers’ markets, museums, and other local spots. Some sites provide transportation.

Meals are served 5 days a week, all year long (except on holidays).

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Seniors have the option to make a voluntary contribution for the meals, **but no payment is necessary.**

HOW DO I PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY DINING?

There are over 40 Community Dining sites across D.C. To participate, call the Lead Agency in your ward (see page 20). The Agency can locate your nearest site for you.



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Farmers Markets & Farmers Market Vouchers

WHAT ARE FARMERS MARKETS?

At farmers markets you can buy fruits and vegetables directly from local farmers. There are about 40 markets in D.C. Most are open between June and October. Markets often feature nutrition education, cooking demonstrations, and special events. For a list of farmers markets around the District, visit dcgetfresh.com or cafb.auntbertha.com, enter zip code, and select "Farmers Markets" under "Affordable Groceries":

BENEFITS AVAILABLE FOR FARMERS MARKETS?

- Over 30 farmers markets in the District now accept EBT/SNAP.
- You can shop at most markets with cash or farmers market Get Fresh senior checks (read more about this on pages 22-23).
- Some markets have programs where you can double your SNAP dollars when using your EBT card and GetFresh checks.
- Some markets accept Produce Plus. Eligible DC residents can receive \$10 worth of Produce Plus checks when they visit a participating DC farmers' market, up to two times per week.

For more information visit:
<https://dchealth.dc.gov/service/produce-plus-program>.



More Information on SNAP

WHAT ARE THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR SNAP?

Two things determine SNAP eligibility in Washington, D.C.:

- The size of the SNAP household (How many people buy and prepare food together?)
- The household total gross income (BEFORE TAXES) each month/year. If it is below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, you may be eligible.

DID YOU KNOW?

Due to the Food Stamp Expansion Act of 2010, Washington, D.C. does not count assets (savings) when determining eligibility for SNAP benefits. Also, more households are eligible to apply. Households that earn 200% of the Federal Poverty Level or less may be eligible for SNAP, **especially if you have high housing and/or medical expenses.**

| SNAP Eligibility Guidelines | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| October 2019 | |
| Number of people in household | 200% of Federal Poverty Level Gross Monthly Income Limits |
| 1 | \$2,082 |
| 2 | \$2,820 |
| 3 | \$3,556 |
| 4 | \$4,292 |
| 5 | \$5,030 |
| 6 | \$5,766 |
| 7 | \$6,502 |
| 8 | \$7,204 |
| each additional person | +\$738 |

Below are a few examples of what can count as income. If you are unsure if something can count as income, bring it to your interview anyway.

WHAT COUNTS AS INCOME?

- Wages from work (previous 30 days paystubs)
- Unemployment or Workers Compensation
- Social Security Income
- Pensions and Retirement
- SSI/Disability
- Child Support or Alimony
- Foster Care/Adoption Subsidy
- Veteran's Benefits
- Regularly Scheduled Income from a relative or friend

More Information on SNAP

WHAT DEDUCTIONS APPLY TO SNAP ELIGIBILITY?

These deductions are applied to your gross income to determine your net income. You must provide verification for most:

- Standard deduction
- Earned income deduction (20% of earned income)
- Excess medical deduction (for persons with disabilities or persons over age 60 only)
- Dependent care deduction
- Child support payment deduction
- Excess shelter deduction (including rent or mortgage, property taxes, fees, and insurance)
- Utility deduction (gas, water, electric, land line or cell phone, and other utilities)

The average SNAP benefit for a senior living alone is \$116 per person per month and, the minimum benefit is \$30.

For the maximum SNAP benefit, see chart below.

Generally, the lower your net income, the higher your SNAP benefits.

HOW MUCH ARE SNAP BENEFITS?

| SNAP Maximum Benefit Levels | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Note: The minimum benefit for any household size is \$30 per month | |
| Number of people in household | October 2019 Maximum Benefit Level |
| 1 | \$194 |
| 2 | \$355 |
| 3 | \$509 |
| 4 | \$646 |
| 5 | \$768 |
| 6 | \$921 |
| 7 | \$1,018 |
| 8 | \$1,164 |
| each additional person | add \$146 |

DID YOU KNOW?

Each October, SNAP benefits change because of federal laws that effect the whole country. Get more information about these changes online at www.dchungersolutions.org or by contacting the Department of Human Services at (202) 727-5355 or www.dhs.dc.gov.

Save Money on Groceries: SHARE

WHAT PROGRAMS CAN HELP SAVE MONEY ON GROCERIES?

The SHARE Food Network is a program that allows you to purchase food packages with your SNAP benefits, cash, or credit card, filled with staple food items at discounted, wholesale prices. The program is open to everyone – there are no member fees or income limits.

WHAT IS THE SHARE FOOD NETWORK?

The SHARE Food Network is a wholesale food cooperative and volunteer organization. SHARE food packages cost \$22 and require 2 hours of volunteer service per month, usually helping assemble food packages.

WHAT KIND OF FOOD COMES IN A SHARE PACKAGE?

A SHARE food package is valued at \$40-\$50 and contains fruits and vegetables, meats, and staples such as potatoes, pasta, rice, beans, and more. Special packages are also available for the holidays. A typical package might include chicken wings, fish fillets, ground beef patties, sausage, potatoes, onions, rice, broccoli, carrots, apples, nectarines, and pie.

HOW TO ORDER A SHARE FOOD PACKAGE

To order a SHARE package

1. Call SHARE at 1-800-21-SHARE (74273), or (301) 864-3115. You can also visit www.sharedc.org.
2. Sign up online at www.sharedc.org and order your package at the host site nearest you at the beginning of the month.
3. Pre-pay \$22 with Visa or Mastercard over the phone, or pre-pay at the site with cash, SNAP (with your EBT card), or money order.
4. Volunteer for 2 hours during the month at a SHARE location.
5. Pick up your package on distribution day.



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SNAP Application Checklist

WHAT TO BRING TO THE INTERVIEW

For the ESA office to accept your application, all you need to fill in is your name, address and signature. You can provide the rest of the documentation below at your interview.

Proof of Identity – Bring a photo ID. If you don't have a photo ID, you can bring along a friend, neighbor, or family member who can verify your name and identity.

Proof that you live in D.C. – Bring a D.C. ID, recent rent receipt, copy of your lease, mortgage payment, or your landlord's name and phone number. Or, you can bring a signed letter from a person you live with stating that you live at that address.

Proof of Income – Bring proof of income for ALL sources of income for ALL members of the household. This may include your paystubs for the last month, Social Security, VA benefits, pension, unemployment payments, child support, and/or your employer's name and phone number.

Proof of Housing Expenses – Bring recent rent or mortgage payment receipts. Be sure that all of these documents have your address printed on them.

Income and Other Deductions – You may claim all dependent care costs (child, elderly, invalid, etc.). If you are 60 years or over, or receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits or Social Security Disability payments, bring proof of any medical or dental expenses you might have that are in excess of \$35/month.

Social Security Number (SSN) – You will need to provide the Social Security Number for everyone who you are applying for. If you do not have a card you can also bring a driver's license, pay stub, unemployment statement, or Social Security Income Award Letter, as long as it has your SSN on it.

Proof of Immigration Status – If you do not have a social security number, you must provide your Alien ID Number. You should bring the immigration and naturalization papers for yourself or for whomever you are applying. Your papers are not required if you only are applying for your children who were born in the United States.

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More Information on SNAP

ARE THERE SPECIAL RULES FOR SENIORS OVER 60 OR PERSONS WITH DISABILITY?

HOW LONG BEFORE THE BENEFITS BEGIN?

There are many special rules that make it easier for seniors (age 60 and older) and persons with disabilities (who receive federal disability benefits) to get SNAP.

- **Income Limits:** Households with seniors or persons with disabilities may be eligible for the program even if their income is above the guidelines, especially if they have unreimbursed medical expenses or high shelter costs.
- **Re-certification:** Unlike most households that have to recertify for SNAP benefits every 12 months, senior households only need to recertify for their benefits every 24 months.
- **Interview Options:**
 1. Applicants who prefer to have someone else complete their SNAP application can assign an authorized representative. The representative can complete the SNAP application and go to the interview on behalf of the applicant.
 2. The applicant also can request a phone interview or home visit if they have difficulty getting to the office. If you have questions about how to schedule a phone interview or home visit, call D.C. Hunger Solutions at (202) 640-1088.
- **Household Size:** Typically, SNAP eligibility is based on the number of people living in the household who purchase and prepare food together. However, a person 60 years or older who is living with others and cannot purchase and prepare their own meals due to a permanent disability may be considered a separate SNAP household. By applying as a separate household, the elderly person (and their spouse), would likely receive a greater SNAP benefit.

Once the complete application is submitted, the D.C. Department of Human Services, Economic Security Administration (ESA) should send a written notice of eligibility within 30 days. However, if your income is less than \$150 a month or your shelter expenses exceed your income, you may qualify for expedited benefits. That means you have a right to receive benefits in 7 days or less.

How to Apply for SNAP

Step 1: Get an Application

- Go to the nearest Economic Security Administration (ESA) office, which administers the SNAP program, to pick up an application (See page 13 for the address of an office near you); or
- Go online to <https://dhs.dc.gov/>, then underneath the “Benefits” tab click on “Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP)” and download the application; or
- Contact D.C. Hunger Solutions to be mailed an application.

Step 2: Complete Your Application and Turn It In

- Fill out your application as complete as possible.
- Start gathering as much documentation as you can. See the checklist on page 14. These materials are not required to start the application process, but having all of this information with you may prevent you from having to go back to the office multiple times.
- Take the application to an ESA office. You have the right to bring your SNAP application to any District office, but if possible, call (202) 727-5355 to identify which office will be your “service office” and turn it in there. You will only be given an interview at your determined “service office.”
- Contact D.C. Hunger Solutions for other ways to submit your application.

T Turn in your application even if it is not complete. Turning in an application with just a name, signature, and address will “start the clock,” making sure the SNAP/ESA office starts working on your application, so you can get your benefits as soon as possible. If deemed eligible, you will be paid benefits from the date you first turned in your application.

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ESA Offices

The D.C. Department of Human Services Economic Security Administration (ESA) administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). If you are not sure which office is nearest to you, call ESA at (202) 727-5355.

Anacostia

2100 Martin Luther King Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20020
Phone: (202) 645-4614
Fax: (202) 727-3527

Congress Heights

4049 South Capitol Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20032
Phone: (202) 645-4546
Fax: (202) 654-4524

H Street

645 H Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
Phone: (202) 698-4350
Fax: (202) 724-8964

Taylor Street

1207 Taylor Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20011
Phone: (202) 576-8000
Fax: (202) 576-8740

Fort Davis

3851 Alabama Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20020
Phone: (202) 645-4500
Fax: (202) 645-6205



**The offices are open
Monday through Friday from
7:30 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.**

NOTE: If you cannot make it to the ESA office, you can assign someone to be your authorized representative. Your authorized representative should be someone you trust. All you need to do is to check the boxes on the SNAP application that lets someone act on your behalf. You can have that person attend the interview, file your paperwork, and/or use your EBT card for you.

If you cannot get to the ESA office because of sickness, disability, or some other reason,” you can request a phone interview. The ESA office is working to allow for more phone interviews so eventually most applicants will be able to waive the face-to-face interview.

T D.C. Hunger Solutions can help!

I If you need assistance in any area of the application process, you can contact us at:

P (202) 640-1088 or info@dchunger.org

Know Your Rights!

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS DURING A SNAP INTERVIEW?

When you go to an ESA office to apply for SNAP benefits, you have the right to:

- Get the forms on the same day you ask for them.
- Be screened to see if you can receive expedited benefits, which you can get in 7 days.
- Hand in your application after filling in only your name, address, telephone number, and signature (you can finish it later).
- Fill out your application the day that you get it, at any time during office hours.
- Get a list of documents you will need to complete your application.
- Get help from someone who speaks your primary language.
- Submit the application at any office.

WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES?

When you are dealing with the ESA office, you should:

- Give true and complete information. If you give false information, you may lose your benefits. You could also face other consequences, such as fines or, in rare cases, criminal proceedings.
- Tell your caseworker about any changes that they ask you to report, including changes in income or who is in your household.
- Keep your appointments at the ESA office.

At your initial interview, your case worker should:

- Tell you the program rules and explain them.
- Ask you questions to complete your application.
- Give you a list with examples of the kinds of documents or contacts you can use to prove your income, your expenses, who is in your household, and who you are. Your caseworker will ask you to collect any information on the list you did not bring.

T At your interview, make sure that you ask
I questions about things that you don't understand.
P It is important that you know what you will have to do to get SNAP benefits.

How to Apply for SNAP

Step 3: Talk With a Case Worker

- When you arrive at the ESA office to turn in your application, you will likely speak with a case worker who will help you complete the application process and assist you with other programs you might be eligible for.
- Your case worker will help you complete your application if it is not complete and ask you questions about information you've provided or left off. Ask your case worker any questions you have. Make sure to ask about reporting and recertification requirements.

DID YOU KNOW?

If it is hard for you to go to the office in person, you can request a phone interview, a home visit, or ask if someone can go to the interview for you. Be sure to sign a note or indicate on your application that you give this person consent to be your authorized representative.

Get copies of everything you submit and try to keep everything handy, because you may need them again. Keep a list of the people you talk to. Know how to contact a case worker.

Step 4: Submit Any Other Necessary Information

- Usually, applicants do not have all of the documents they need to complete the application the first time they go to the office.
- Your case worker should tell you what other information you need to bring in and will ask you to return within 30 days. Make copies of the documents for your records and bring them in as soon as possible since the office cannot tell you whether you are eligible until the application is complete.
- **Do not forget this step.** Your application will not be processed until all your information is received. If you wait too long, your case will be closed and you may have to start the application process all over again.

How to Apply for SNAP

Step 5: Find Out if Your Application for SNAP was Approved

- Once your application is complete, the ESA office will send you a letter within 30 days (or 7 if you qualify for expedited benefits) to let you know if you qualify.
- If you qualify, you will need to go to an EBT card center to pick up your card and learn how to use your SNAP benefits.
- If you don't receive a letter within 30 days from the ESA office telling you whether or not you qualify, call the office.

Step 6: Pick up your EBT Card

- You must pick up your EBT card at one of two card centers, located at 611 H Street, N.E. and 1649 Good Hope Road, S.E.
- There is an optional training video that will help you understand how to use your EBT card. The training takes 15 to 20 minutes.
- At the end of the training, you will be issued an EBT card. It will have your SNAP benefits loaded on it.
- Use your EBT card to buy food, just like you would use a credit or debit card.

DID YOU KNOW?

SNAP benefits are distributed from the 1st to the 10th of each month depending on the first letter of your last name.

Step 7: Keep Up With the Program

- Be sure to follow reporting requirements. SNAP customers are required to tell the ESA office about certain changes (for example, changes in income or household size.) You should receive a form telling you what changes you have to report.
- To report a change, call the ESA Customer Service Center at (202) 727-5355 or fax changes to (202) 535-1487.

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How to Apply for SNAP

Step 8: Be Aware of When You Have to 1) Submit a Mid-Certification Form and When You Need to 2) Re-Certify.

1) Mid-Certification

- Most seniors and persons with disabilities are approved for SNAP benefits for 24 months.
- But, clients must still submit a mid-certification form to inform ESA of any changes. The office will send a mid-certification form at the end of the tenth month of benefits. **This form must be completed, signed, and returned or the SNAP benefits will be cut off.**

2) Re-Certification

- About two months before your SNAP benefits are supposed to end, you will receive a letter in the mail telling you a date to come into the office to recertify. If you cannot go to the office on that day, you can call to reschedule.
- When you go to the SNAP office, you should take all of your documents, just like you did when you applied the first time. The SNAP office will want current information on what you earn and where you live. For a list of documents to take with you, see page 14.
- Be sure to re-certify on time so that your SNAP benefits keep coming without a break.
- **NOTE:** Homeless households are typically approved for only 6 months.

* TIP *

The ESA office will send you a reminder to recertify, but try not to cut it close! Setting up an interview in advance helps your benefits to keep coming on time.

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