

SNAP Overview

WIOA Conference

Illinois Department of Human Services
Division of Family & Community Services
Bureau of Training and Development

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State of Illinois

Moderator



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Which Partner do you best represent?



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Introduction

The goal of the SNAP E&T Program is to create a pathway to family prosperity, health, and well-being by assisting customers to access Statewide Employment & Training opportunities by providing SNAP recipients with employer driven training, access to career paths (including short term training and work assignments, GED attainment, resume writing and interviewing classes) and the support they need to be successful, leading to livable wages.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

SNAP is a Federal nutrition program run by the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS). This program is for people who need help buying food for themselves and their children.

SNAP benefits are delivered electronically through the Illinois Link card to help buy food.



Information to Provide when Applying

When customers apply for SNAP benefits, a caseworker will ask to see:

- Proof of the identity of the person making application
- Social Security numbers for the customer and household members
- Paycheck stubs if employed, or proof of any other income or payments receive.

If customers need help getting this information, a caseworker will help. This information will help the caseworker understand the family situation better and figure out how much money they have available.

IDHS will review the SNAP application and all the information provided to the caseworker. This may take up to 30 days. If the application is approved, the customer will receive SNAP benefits each month.

Eligibility for SNAP

A customer may be able to get SNAP benefits in Illinois for themselves and their family if they:

- Are a United States citizen or meet certain nonresident requirements (ask a caseworker about these requirements) **and**
- Live in Illinois.

The Illinois Department of Human Services will decide if the household is eligible. The household usually includes just the customer and their family. However, if other people live with the customer, they may also be included.

The caseworker will tell the customer who IDHS considers to be part of the household.

Rights in the SNAP Program

When a customer applies for and receive SNAP benefits, they have the right to:

- Be given or mailed an application the same day of their request.
- Have their signed SNAP application accepted immediately.
- Be issued SNAP benefits within a few days if they are in immediate need and are qualified for faster service.
- Be notified in writing before their SNAP benefits are reduced or terminated.

Rights in the SNAP Program

-continued-

- Appeal any decisions made by IDHS
- Receive SNAP materials in Spanish and have an agency employee interpret for them, if the adults in their family are fluent in Spanish but not in English, or the customer is a migrant farm worker in a county with a sufficient number of migrants.

How the Amount of SNAP Benefits is Determined

The amount of SNAP benefits a customer will get each month is based on the size of their household, their income and allowable expenses.

A caseworker will decide their allowable expenses by adding up the amount they are charged each month for rent or mortgage, property taxes, owners' home insurance, utility bills, child care, child support payments and in some cases the medical bills of anyone in the household who is elderly or has a disability.

The SNAP benefit amount the household receives depends on the size of the household and the income the household has left after a caseworker subtracts allowable deductions.

What can SNAP Benefits buy?

A customer can use SNAP to buy most food items.

They can also buy plants and seeds to grow food. They cannot use SNAP to buy hot prepared foods or non-food items.

For more information about what can and cannot be bought with SNAP benefits, ask the store where groceries are purchased or call IDHS toll free at 1-800-843-6154 (voice) or (866) 324-5553 TTY/Nextalk or 711 TTY Relay.



How to Stay Eligible for SNAP Benefits?

Customers should tell IDHS when they move

A customer should tell a caseworker when they move so important information can be mailed to their new address. If a customer is homeless, they should tell a caseworker where they can be reached. If a caseworker cannot locate a customer their SNAP benefits will stop.

Customers should keep their appointments

Customers should try to keep all their appointments with the caseworker. If they cannot keep an appointment, they should tell a caseworker right away. The caseworker will work with them to set up another appointment.

How to Stay Eligible for SNAP Benefits?

Customers should report changes in their family situation

Customers should tell a caseworker if there are any changes in their family size or the amount of money they receive (income). A change may affect their SNAP benefits.

The law states that customers must tell the department the truth about their family situation so that they can get the right amount of SNAP benefits.

A customer may face penalties if they break this law or help others to break it.

NEW June 2020

Beginning June 02, 2020 SNAP customers can shop online to purchase eligible food items with SNAP benefits using their Illinois Link card.

The two retailers available for SNAP purchases on-line include:
Walmart and Amazon.

Note: Currently, this is only available for SNAP food items. Online Cash Link transactions are not available at this time.



SNAP

EMPLOYMENT

and

TRAINING



SNAP Employment and Training

SNAP Employment and Training provides an opportunity for SNAP Recipients to obtain employer driven training, access to career paths, and the support they need to be successful, leading to self-sufficiency.

Illinois for many years has operated a basic employment and training program that mostly served mandatory abled-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD's).

SNAP E & T Assessment

A change was made in 2019 that provided an option for IDHS to transition to a voluntary program which would offer services on a first come first serve basis to all SNAP recipients statewide who volunteer, except for those receiving TANF cash.

SNAP E & T Assessment

The Family Community Resource Center (FCRC) located in a county that does not have SNAP E & T Provider, is responsible for doing an assessment of the customer's work skills and education and making appropriate referral to a community based organization (COB) of the customer's choice that can provide the services the individual needs to become employable.

SNAP E & T Assessment

Family Community Resource Centers in counties with a SNAP E&T Provider will refer customers to a Provider.

The SNAP E&T Provider will complete the assessment and make the referral to the appropriate entity that can best serve customer's specific needs and track their progress.

The provider will notify the FCRC once the referral is made and when the customer is no longer participating or is not making progress.

Who can Volunteer?

- All work eligible individuals receiving SNAP may volunteer to participate in the program, except those receiving TANF cash.
- Participants in the program must receive SNAP benefits in every month that they receive SNAP E&T services.
- Participants in the program are not required to be with a SNAP E&T Provider.
- The redesign to a voluntary program eliminates the mandatory requirement to participate in SNAP E&T in counties that had an E & provider.

Assessment and Employability Plan

At initial Application or Redetermination

An assessment involves gathering customer background information and identifying barriers that affect employment.

A Caseworker will complete an assessment of a customer who expresses an interest in the program during the initial application or redetermination interview.

Assessment and Employability Plan -continued-

Assessment and Completing the Plan

During the assessment interview, a caseworker will complete Employment, Education and Training forms and the SNAP Employability Plan.

The caseworker will discuss the customer's education, work interest and past work experiences to determine if there are any potential barriers that may prevent the individual from achieving their goals.

Assessment and Employability Plan -continued-

Assessment and Completing the Plan

The caseworker will complete a SNAP Employability Plan based on the information obtained during the assessment.

The plan must contain:

- the specific employment goals;
- the SNAP E & T activity;
- the supportive services that must be provided or arranged in order to help the customer take part in the activity and obtain the employment goals;
- a statement that the supportive services have been provided by the Department or otherwise.

Assessment and Employability Plan -continued-

Making the Referral

A caseworker will assist the individual in determining the most effective contracted Provider, community- based organization (CBO), community college/university or other outside entity of their choice for services that can best meet their needs.

Note: The FCRC only assumes these duties if there is **NOT** a SNAP E&T Provider within the county. If there is not a Provider, the FCRC is responsible for managing the case and issuing supportive services.

Basic Education

A customer in need of additional education may be referred to testing, counseling, and educational resources at public community colleges, adult education centers, or state or local agencies, or to programs which sponsor such activities, including English as a Second Language (ESL).



Vocational Training

The Vocational Training activity is for customers who will benefit from short-term training to obtain unsubsidized employment.

This activity offers special time-limited services for customers who can benefit from short-term vocational training, such as a person with the interest and ability to complete the training program and be hired in a position for which the person has trained, or are readily employable with the addition of short-term training for specific job openings which are available.

Job Readiness

Job Readiness gives a customer a chance to return to work by refining job seeking and interviewing skills through intensive training.

Job Readiness can include counseling, job placement services, skills assessment, job seeking skills training, life skills workshops, phone bank skills sessions, and information sharing about the labor market.

Supervised Job Search

Supervised Job Search is an activity where the customer will make contact with employers in order to secure employment.

Customers attend all scheduled meetings, including pre-arranged Job Skills Workshops. The customer is sent a notice of all scheduled meetings.

The meetings include a review of progress in completing the component requirements. Job seeking skills exercises are conducted during the meeting.

A customer in Supervised Job Search must register with the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) and follow-up on scheduled job interviews. A customer who fails to comply with this Work Provision requirement may be sanctioned, even though they are a volunteer.

Work Experience

A customer may participate in the Work Experience component to:

- obtain a meaningful work experience; **or**
- maintain or enhance existing employment skills.

Unpaid work is performed for public or private not-for-profit organizations (employers). Employers must not use SNAP E&T customers to displace employees.

Earnfare

Earnfare gives adult customers who receive SNAP benefits the opportunity to earn cash assistance and gain work experience.

Earnfare participants may earn up to a maximum of \$325 per month after completing their SNAP work off hours.

SNAP work off hours are participation hours in Community Workfare that are equal to the value of their SNAP benefit amount divided by the State minimum wage.

Community Workfare

- Community workfare includes unpaid work a person performs at a not for profit organization, such as a school, church, or a government agency that has an agreement with IDHS.
- The person chooses their own placement with an approved organization/agency, with input from the worker.
- Community workfare provides the person with employment skills and references that can help them get a job.

Community Workfare

Entry into the Activity

A person may participate in this activity when they have little or no work experience and need to obtain employment skills or as a precursor to Earnfare.

Activity Requirements

A person's monthly participation hours are based on the amount of SNAP benefits received divided by the State minimum wage. A person who participates in Community Workfare for the number of hours required, meets the work requirement for SNAP benefits.

Community Service

A customer may self-initiate Community Service with a community-based organization. Community Service offers individuals receiving SNAP an opportunity to meet the Work Requirement when the policy is in effect. The customer is required to work an average of 20 hours per week (80 hours per month) to meet the SNAP Work Requirement.

Supportive Services

Community Service is a way for customers subject to the SNAP Work Requirement to meet the requirement.

Note: Since Community Service is not a component of SNAP E&T supportive services cannot be issued.

Supportive Services

Supportive Services are intended to help the customer during their participation in any SNAP E&T activities to include employment.

Participant costs should be reasonable and necessary to engage in a SNAP E&T activity.

A cost is reasonable if, in its nature and amount, it does not exceed that which a prudent person would pay under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur this cost.

Work Provision Sanctions

A customer who is participating in the voluntary SNAP E&T Program and later decides to stop **cannot** be sanctioned for nonparticipation.

The participant can stop participation or choose another activity if they are not progressing.

A sanction can only be imposed on customers who are not exempt from the Work Provisions.

Work Provision Sanctions

These individuals must:

- register for work by receipt of the SNAP Work Registration Notice
 - at the time of application and every 12 months after initial registration.
 - during the certification period when an exempt individual becomes nonexempt.
- provide sufficient information regarding employment status or availability to work.
- cooperate with TANF work and training program requirements, if receiving TANF cash.

Note: TANF participants cannot participate in SNAP E&T.

Work Provision Sanctions

–continued–

- accept a bona fide offer of suitable employment.
- report to an employer to whom referred if the potential employment meets the suitability requirement.
- not voluntarily and without good cause quit a job of 30 hours a week.
- not voluntarily reduce work hours to less than 30 hours per week without good cause.

Provider and E & T Meetings

A staffing is case management and how IDHS staff and the Provider assess and support a customer's progress in an activity. All participants must have a staffing.

The FCRC and Workforce Development staff along with the Provider and other interested parties, will work together to help a customer who is not progressing get back on track.

Other interested parties included in the staffing may be counseling prevention service providers or other professionals who are involved in the customer's plan.

Provider and E & T Meetings

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If a participant is engaged with a Provider for 6 months or more, a full staffing must be completed. A participant who is cooperating but not progressing should be evaluated at the time of the staffing to determine if a change is appropriate.

A staffing may be held in-person or via telephone conference. A Provider staffing should be scheduled monthly. A customer staffing is scheduled as needed.

Temporary Changes Due to COVID-19

Cook County and DuPage County have a temporary suspension of the SNAP Work Requirement policy in Illinois effective 04/01/2020.

This temporary suspension begins 04/01/2020 and continues until the public health emergency declaration by the Secretary of Health and Human Services based on the outbreak of COVID-19 is lifted.

Staff will be notified when to resume the SNAP Work Requirement.

The End!

Any
Questions