

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Fighting Hunger, Supporting Work, Boosting the Economy

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as the Food Stamp Program) is the nation's largest anti-hunger program. The program provides timely, targeted and temporary support to low-income households for the purchase of food.

Anyone who qualifies can receive the nutrition support. SNAP serves households with income up to 130% of the federal poverty line that meet asset limitations. About 87% of SNAP participants live in households with children, elderly individuals, or individuals with disabilitiesⁱ. SNAP amounts are based on the Thrifty Food Plan, a market-basket of food updated annually by the United States Department of Agriculture to reflect the minimum amount a family could spend for a nutritiously adequate diet. SNAP allocations vary by composition of household and income level to ensure those most in need can afford an adequate diet. The average monthly SNAP benefit per person in 2017 was about \$126ⁱⁱ – roughly \$4.13 a day or \$1.38 per meal.

SNAP benefits are delivered monthly through an electronic debit card (EBT) programmed to allow only the purchase of food. Most households must reapply for SNAP every six to twelve months. Workers and their families turn to SNAP to temporarily supplement low or fluctuating pay or to help them get by during spells of unemployment. The federal government pays for SNAP benefits and shares the administration costs with states, with 93% of program costs going directly to foodⁱⁱⁱ. In 2017, about 42 million people accessed food through SNAP^{iv}.

SNAP Works for Families, Communities and the Economy

- **SNAP supports work:** SNAP supplements the income of low-wage earners helping working families make ends meet and is carefully structured to encourage work. SNAP Employment & Training dollars help workers prepare for and secure jobs.
- **SNAP is responsive in economic downturns and natural disaster:** SNAP enrollment is counter-cyclical, expanding when the economy weakens and contracting when the economy recovers, making it one of our country's most responsive programs in stabilizing families. Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP) is swift at extending SNAP to those suddenly in need of food assistance due to natural disasters like wildfires and hurricanes.
- **SNAP reduces poverty:** In 2014, SNAP kept over 8 million people– including 4 million children – out of poverty and boosted up more than 25 million others^v.
- **SNAP promotes economic activity:** SNAP helps families buy food, freeing up resources to pay for other basic needs to get by, which infuses additional dollars into the local economy Moody's Analytics estimates that every \$1 increase in household SNAP generates about \$1.70 in economic activity^{vi}.
- **SNAP supports health and education:** Children with regular access to nutritious food have improved academic performance and have decreased risk of behavior problems, obesity, illness and infection. Further, pregnant mothers have improved birth outcomes & the elderly are less likely to forego prescription medications.

United Way's Principles for SNAP in the Farm Bill

- ***Protect and strengthen SNAP** to maintain its responsiveness to combat hunger and provide financial stability.*
- ***Ensure policies promote access** and facilitate enrollment rather than create roadblocks.*

State	Residents participating in FY17 ^{vii}	Percentage of residents participating in FY17 ^{viii}	Authorized retailers participating in SNAP in FY17 ^{viii}	Amount retailers redeemed through SNAP in FY2017 ^x
United States	42,138,000	13%	263,105	\$63.3B
Alabama	804,000	17%	5,548	\$1.16B
Alaska	89,000	12%	556	\$191M
Arizona	919,000	13%	4,256	\$1.33B
Arkansas	388,000	13%	4,845	\$525M
California	4,112,000	10%	27,215	\$6.78B
Colorado	459,000	8%	2,889	\$707M
Connecticut	410,000	11%	2,619	\$648M
Delaware	147,000	15%	815	\$216M
District of Columbia	123,000	18%	479	\$112M
Florida	3,187,000	15%	16,176	\$4.79B
Georgia	1,604,000	16%	10,349	\$2.54B
Hawaii	169,000	12%	1,059	\$474M
Idaho	171,000	10%	1,098	\$240M
Illinois	1,879,000	15%	9,479	\$2.88B
Indiana	672,000	10%	5,299	\$996M
Iowa	366,000	12%	2,944	\$485M
Kansas	234,000	8%	2,079	\$325M
Kentucky	655,000	15%	4,736	\$965M
Louisiana	909,000	19%	4,876	\$1.45B
Maine	180,000	14%	1,571	\$230M
Maryland	684,000	11%	3,986	\$1.06B
Massachusetts	764,000	11%	5,618	\$1.16B
Michigan	1,375,000	14%	10,115	\$2.05B
Minnesota	454,000	8%	3,505	\$554M
Mississippi	537,000	18%	3,623	\$776M
Missouri	759,000	12%	5,041	\$1.12B
Montana	121,000	12%	804	\$170M
Nebraska	176,000	9%	1,283	\$246M
Nevada	441,000	15%	1,863	\$640M
New Hampshire	92,000	7%	1,094	\$146M
New Jersey	818,000	9%	6,150	\$1.17B
New Mexico	461,000	22%	1,600	\$650M
New York	2,911,000	15%	18,633	\$4.67B
North Carolina	1,365,000	13%	9,693	\$2.1B
North Dakota	54,000	7%	549	\$85M
Ohio	1,502,000	13%	9,755	\$2.21B
Oklahoma	604,000	15%	3,626	\$857M
Oregon	686,000	17%	3,528	\$996M
Pennsylvania	1,843,000	14%	10,405	\$2.65B
Rhode Island	158,000	15%	994	\$241M
South Carolina	720,000	15%	5,460	\$1.08B
South Dakota	93,000	11%	779	\$135M
Tennessee	1,047,000	16%	7,019	\$1.55B
Texas	3,868,000	14%	20,126	\$5.6B
Utah	206,000	7%	1,487	\$283M
Vermont	77,000	12%	720	\$76M
Virginia	776,000	9%	6,531	\$1.15B
Washington	933,000	13%	5,052	\$1.35B
West Virginia	340,000	19%	2,193	\$453M
Wisconsin	692,000	12%	4,247	\$875M
Wyoming	33,000	6%	389	\$48M

ⁱUnited States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). Characteristics of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Households: Fiscal Year 2015 p.52 <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/ops/Characteristics2015.pdf> ⁱⁱ USDA, FNS SNAP Program Participation and Costs <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/pd/SNAPsummary.pdf> ⁱⁱⁱ. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), Chart Book: SNAP Helps Struggling Families Put Food on the Table <https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/chart-book-snap-helps-struggling-families-put-food-on-the-table#part4> ^{iv}. USDA, FNS SNAP Program Participation and Costs <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/pd/SNAPsummary.pdf> ^v. CBPP Policy Basics: Introduction to the SNAP <https://www.cbpp.org/research/policy-basics-introduction-to-the-supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap> ^{vi} Ibid ^{vii} USDA <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap> ^{viii} Ibid ^{viii} USDA 2017 SNAP Retailer Management Year End Summary <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/snap/2017-SNAP-Retailer-Management-Year-End-Summary.pdf> ^x Ibid