

SNAP Frequently Asked Questions

What documents do I need to apply for SNAP?

The list below is the necessary documents, but there are some additional documents necessary on occasion. Check the **document checklist** for these additional documents.

- Copy of driver's license or identification
- Pay stub (or other income, such as social security, or disability, or a note from your employer stating how much you make)
- Rental agreement (or a note from your landlord stating how much you pay)
- Utility bills, if not included in your rent
- Recent bank statement
- Child care expenses (if applicable)
- (if over 60) Copy of medical receipts/expenses that are greater than \$35, not covered by insurance

Do I have to have a job to get SNAP benefits?

No, you do not have to be working to be eligible for SNAP benefits. However, if you are between 16-59 years old and are able-bodied you must register to work and work on a plan towards employment with SNAP Education and Training Program.

Does it matter how long I have lived in Montana to get SNAP?

No. This doesn't matter. You can get SNAP even if you just came to Montana. You can also get SNAP even if you don't plan to stay in Montana for a long time.

Do I have to have children or live with someone to be eligible?

No, having children or other people in your household is not required for SNAP.

How is the amount of SNAP benefits I will get figured out?

It depends on your income, expenses, resources, and the number of people who live with you. People who live together and buy food and prepare meals together are grouped as a "household" for SNAP. To be eligible for SNAP, household members must be US citizens or legal residents.

- First see if your household **gross income** (before taxes) is below the monthly income standard. If it is not then unfortunately you do not qualify for SNAP
- If your gross household income is below the gross monthly income standard, then you may qualify. The Office of Public Assistance will subtract some deductions from your gross monthly income to see if you qualify. Some deductions include medical expenses, child support, 20% of gross income, and a standard deduction based on the number of people in your household.

People in Household	Gross Monthly Income Standard	Net Monthly Income Standard
1	\$2,148	\$1,074
2	\$2,904	\$1,452
3	\$3,660	\$1,830
4	\$4,418	\$2,209
5	\$5,174	\$2,587
6	\$5,930	\$2,965
7	\$6,688	\$3,344
8	\$7,444	\$3,722
Each Additional Member	+ \$758	+ \$379

How much money will I get each month on my card?

The average recipient of SNAP in Montana in 2021 received \$227 a month. The minimum amount received is \$16/month.

Is the minimum amount worth it?

The minimum of \$16 per month for an individual can provide up to a week's worth of food. This money can also be saved up to 12 months, which would be just under \$200 for the year or about \$100 after six months. This money could be used for a month of groceries that would allow you to spend grocery money on other things, such as holiday presents or to pay other bills.

When will I start getting my benefits?

You have 30 days to complete an interview with the Office of Public Assistance after your application is submitted. If you are approved after the interview, the card will be mailed to you within a few days. Benefits will back-date to the day the application was submitted, so if you were approved on October 21st and submitted the application on October 1st, the whole month of October would be eligible for benefits.

Is there any way that I can get benefits faster?

Yes, certain households can get benefits within 7 days if they answer YES to one of these questions.

- Do you have less than \$150 in monthly gross (before taxes) income? AND \$100 less in liquid resources (money in your wallet or bank)
- Are you a migrant or seasonal farm workers households with \$100 or less in liquid resources
- Is your combined monthly gross income and liquid resources are less than your monthly rent or mortgage?

I'm a student. Do I qualify for SNAP?

You can have SNAP as a university student, but you either have to work an average of 20 hours a week OR be employed through a federal work study program OR have a child under age 5 OR be a single parent with a child under age 12 and a lack of available child care. If you are in high school, working towards a GED, over 50, or have a disability these rules also do not apply.

I dropped out of school. Do the rules of being a student still apply?

No. The student rules apply only when you are enrolled in school.

You must be under the net monthly income standard to receive benefits, but if you are below the gross income monthly standard and have any question if you are eligible, please apply.

Contact Sarah if you would like assistance with the application.

406-549-0543

sarah@missoulafoodbank.org

