

PUBLIC BENEFITS EXPLAINED

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Welcome the stranger.
Protect the refugee.

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SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), commonly known as food stamps, helps people with limited income buy food. SNAP offers nutrition assistance to millions of eligible, low-income individuals and families.

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) works with state agencies, nutrition educators, and neighborhood and faith-based organizations to ensure that those eligible for nutrition assistance are able to apply for the program and access benefits. FNS also works with state partners and the retail community to improve program administration and ensure program integrity.

Individuals or families that are interested in getting SNAP benefits need to apply for them. In New York City, the application can be accessed by going to the following website:

<http://www1.nyc.gov/nyc-resources/service/1113/snap-food-stamps>

Eligibility

Under federal rules, to be eligible for SNAP a household's income and resources must meet three tests:

1. Gross monthly income (household income before any of the program's deductions are applied) generally must be at, or below, 130 percent of the poverty line. For a family of three, the poverty line used to calculate SNAP benefits in federal fiscal year 2018 is \$1,702 a month. Therefore, 130 percent of the poverty line for a three-person family is \$2,213 a month, or about \$26,600 a year. The poverty level is higher for bigger families and lower for smaller families.
2. Net income, or household income after deductions are applied, must be at or below the poverty line.
3. Assets must fall below certain limits: households without an elderly or disabled member must have assets of \$2,250 or less, and households with an elderly or disabled member must have assets of \$3,500 or less.

Maximum SNAP benefit allowances are based on household size:

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Maximum Monthly Allotment</u>
1	\$194
2	\$357
3	\$511
4	\$649
5	\$771
6	\$925
7	\$1,022
8	\$1,169

SNAP benefits can be used to buy foods for the household to eat, such as, but not limited to:

- Breads and cereals
- Fruits and vegetables
- Meats, fish and poultry
- Dairy products
- Seeds and plants which produce food for the household to eat

SNAP benefits cannot be used to buy:

- Beer, wine, liquor, cigarettes or tobacco
- Food that will be eaten in the store
- Hot foods
- Any nonfood items, such as:
 - Pet foods
 - Soaps, paper products
 - Household supplies
 - Vitamins and medicines

TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families)

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program is designed to help needy families achieve self-sufficiency. States receive block grants to design and operate programs that accomplish one of the purposes of the TANF program.

The four purposes of the TANF program are to:

- Provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes
- Reduce the dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage
- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families

Temporary Assistance (TA) is temporary help for needy men, women and children. If you are unable to work, cannot find a job, or your job does not pay enough, TA may be able to help you pay for your expenses.

New York state Family Assistance (FA) provides cash assistance to needy families that include a minor child living with a parent (including families where both parents are in the household) or a caretaker relative. FA operates under Federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) guidelines.

Under FA, eligible adults are limited to receiving benefits for a total of 60 months in their lifetime, including months of TANF-funded assistance granted in other states. Once this limit is reached, that adult and all members of his or her FA household are ineligible to receive any more FA benefits. The months need not be consecutive, but rather each individual month in which TANF-funded benefits are received is included in the lifetime count

In order to qualify for this benefit program, you must be a resident of New York, have no or low income, be either pregnant or responsible for a child under 18 years of age or under 19 years of age and the child regularly attends secondary school, a U.S. national, citizen, legal alien, or permanent resident.

WIC (The Women, Infants and Children Program)

The Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program is a special supplemental food program for women, infants, and children up to the age of 5. All applicants must be income eligible and have a medical or nutritional risk. The WIC Program provides nutritious foods along with nutrition education and information on where to apply for free or low-cost health care or other needed services in the community. The WIC program of New York is administered by the New York Department of Health.

In order to qualify for this benefit program, you must be a resident of the state of New York; a pregnant, breastfeeding and/or postpartum woman; an infant or child up to 5 years of age; and individually determined by a health professional to be at nutrition risk.

A person who participates or has family members who participate in certain other benefit programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), automatically meets the income eligibility requirement.

The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) is associated with the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, popularly known as WIC. The FMNP provides coupons for fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits, vegetables and herbs to WIC participants that have been certified to receive WIC program benefits. FMNP coupons can be redeemed to buy eligible foods from farmers, farmers' markets or roadside stands that have been approved by the State agency to accept FMNP coupons.

REFUGEE CASH ASSISTANCE (RCA)

The Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) Program provides a small amount of money to refugees during the first eight months in the USA. The money is used to pay basic expenses like rent for a house/apartment and electricity bills.

As part of the RCA program, a refugee will also receive eight months of case management from a resettlement agency. The RCA program may also include other things to help a refugee adjust to life in the US. The program may include scheduling medical appointments, teaching on how to use public transportation and helping find other resources and programs in local communities.

The RCA also helps a refugee connect with Refugee Social Service (RSS) program for employment assistance and for long-term case-work to meet individual needs.

In New York State Refugee Cash Assistance and Refugee Medical Assistance Services are provided by the [local department of social services](#).

New York Medicaid

Medicaid is a program for New Yorkers who can't afford to pay for medical care. It provides free or low-cost health coverage to some low-income people, families and children, pregnant women, the elderly, and people with disabilities. The federal government provides a portion of the funding for Medicaid and sets guidelines for the program. In order to qualify for this benefit program, one must be a resident of the state of New York, a U.S. national, citizen, have satisfactory immigration status, in need of health care/insurance assistance, whose financial situation would be characterized as low income or very low income.

In general, the following services are paid for by Medicaid, but some may not be covered because of an individual's age, financial circumstances, family situation, transfer of resource requirements, or living arrangements. Some services have small co-payments. These services may be provided using one's Medicaid card or through a managed care plan if enrolled in one. There will not be a co-pay if one is in a managed care plan, except for pharmacy services, where a small co-pay will be applied.

Services covered:

- smoking cessation agents
- treatment and preventive health and dental care (doctors and dentists)
- hospital inpatient and outpatient services
- laboratory and X-ray services
- care in a nursing home
- care through home health agencies and personal care
- treatment in psychiatric hospitals (for persons under 21 or those 65 and older), mental health facilities, and facilities for the mentally retarded or the developmentally disabled
- family planning services
- early periodic screening, diagnosis, and treatment for children under 21 years of age under the Child/Teen Health Program
- medicine, supplies, medical equipment, and appliances (wheelchairs, etc.)
- clinic services
- transportation to medical appointments, including public transportation and car mileage
- emergency ambulance transportation to a hospital
- prenatal care

ADDITIONAL NEW YORK STATE BENEFITS

New York Child Health Plus (CHIP)

New York State offers Child Health Plus as a health insurance plan for kids.

New York Head Start

Head Start is a Federal program that promotes the school readiness of children from birth to age five from low-income families by enhancing their cognitive, social, and emotional development.

New York Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a federally funded energy assistance program.

New York School Breakfast and Lunch Program

The School Breakfast Program provides funding that makes it possible for schools to offer a nutritious breakfast to students each day. Similarly, the goal of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is to protect the health and well-being of the nation's children by providing nutritious school meals every day.

New York Unemployment Insurance

Unemployment insurance benefits provide temporary financial assistance to workers unemployed through no fault of their own that meet New York's eligibility requirements.

For more information on any of these go to: <https://www.benefits.gov/benefits/browse-by-state/state/173>