

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Quick Facts



Programs

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

National School Lunch Program

School Breakfast Program

Summer Food Service Program

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants & Children (WIC)

Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

Special Milk Program

Child and Adult Care Food Program

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations

WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

Nutrition Assistance Block Grants

Commodity Supplemental Food Program

The Emergency Food Assistance Program

Disaster Assistance

Description

- For more than 40 years, SNAP has served as the foundation of America's national nutrition safety net. It is the first line of defense against hunger and offers a powerful tool for improving nutrition among low-income people.
- It is available to nearly anyone with low income and few resources. Eligibility is based on income and assets available to the household, as well as household characteristics namely immigrant status or one's ability to work.
 - ◇ Only legal immigrants are eligible for program benefits, most of whom must wait 5 years in legal status before qualifying for benefits.
 - ◇ The Program requires able-bodied adults between 16 and 60 (with some exceptions) to register for work, to take part in employment/training programs, and to accept or continue suitable employment.
- Benefits come to the household via electronic debit cards, known as Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards which can be used in 162,000 approved retail stores nationwide to purchase food.

Background

- The modern program was established by the federal government in 1964, significantly altered in 1977, and is the largest federal nutrition program for low-income households.
- It is administered by the Food and Nutrition Service at the federal level and is operated by State and local welfare offices in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Participants

- 26.4 million people participated in FY 2007 in an average month (not including disaster relief).
- The national participation rate is 67 percent. Nearly 50 percent of participants are children. Less than one third are age 60 or above.
- The average monthly food stamp benefit for all participants in FY 2007 was \$214 per household.

Budget

- \$40 billion in Federal spending in FY 2007 (benefits and administration.).

Contact Information

- For complete information, visit www.fns.usda.gov/snap or call or visit your local office. Look in the blue pages of your phone book under "Social Services" or "Human Services" to find the number. If you need help finding your local office, call 1-800-221-5689.

