

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

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 is a powerful tool for improving nutrition among low-income people.

Benefits come to the household via electronic debit cards, known as Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards which can be used in more than 246,000 approved retail stores nationwide to purchase food.

Eligibility is based on financial factors such as income and expenses available to the household, as well as immigrant status.

Participation

In fiscal year 2012, SNAP, the Nation's largest nutrition assistance program, served over 46 million low-income people in an average month.

The Program requires able-bodied adults between 16 and 60 (with some exceptions) to register for work, to take part in employment/training programs referred by the SNAP office, and to accept or continue suitable employment.

Only U.S. citizens and many lawfully present non-citizens are eligible for program benefits, most of whom must have 5 years of residence in the U.S. in a qualified alien status before qualifying for benefits.

Budget

In FY 2012 \$86.5 billion was appropriated to SNAP (benefits and administration), including a \$3 billion contingency fund.

Contact Information

For more information about this program, we suggest that you visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap> or call the National Hunger Hotline at 1-866-348-6479.