



**GREATER
CHICAGO**
– **FOOD** –
DEPOSITORY

SNAP & MEDICAID: AGE OPTIONS

AGENDA



Welcome

Food
Depository
Overview

SNAP and
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Assisting
Neighbors

Neighbor FAQ

Questions

OUR MISSION IS TO END HUNGER

We believe food is a basic human right.

To achieve our mission, we work in partnership with a network of community-based organizations and individuals.

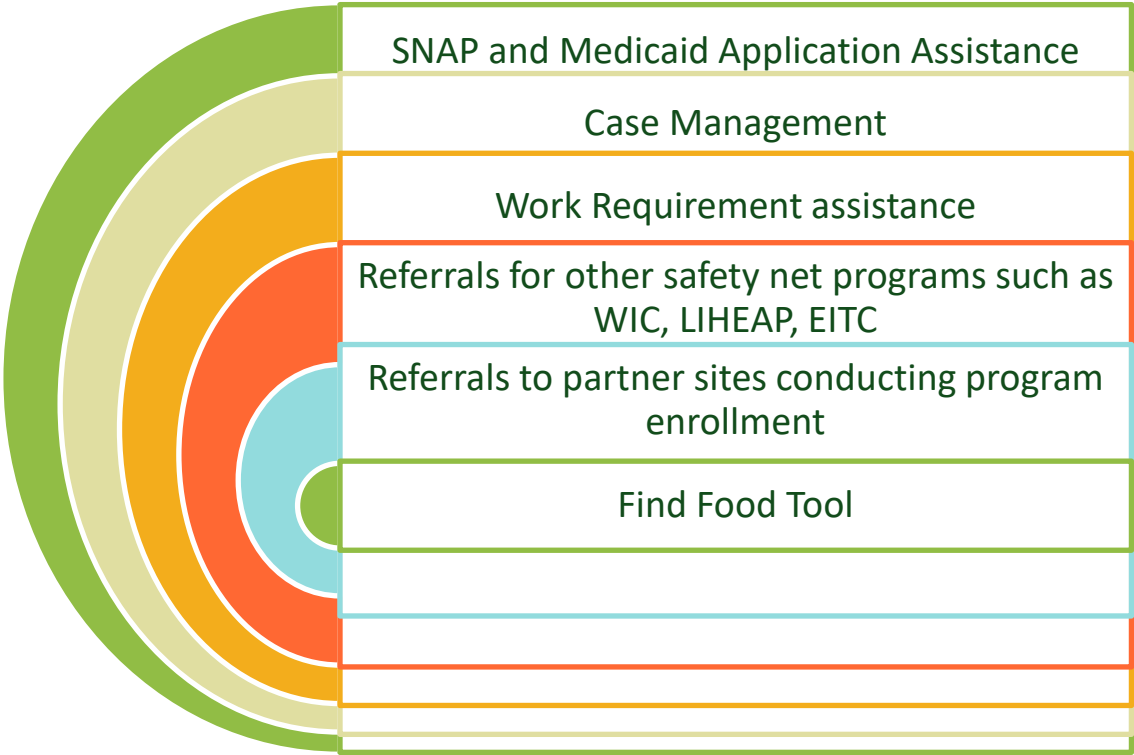
Together, we connect our neighbors with healthy food, lift our voices and advance solutions that address the root causes of hunger – poverty, systemic inequity, and structural racism.

Together, we are greater. **Together, we can end hunger.**

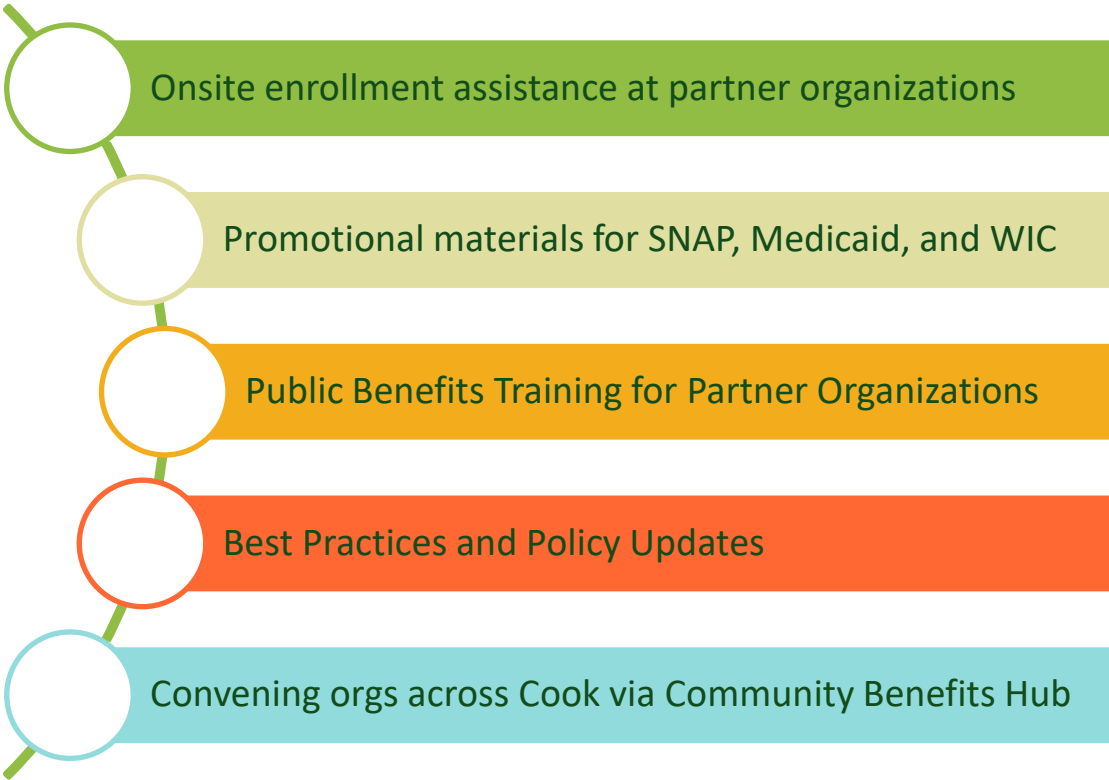
PUBLIC BENEFITS SERVICES OFFERED BY FOOD DEPOSITORY



Neighbor Support



Partner Support



SNAP AND MEDICAID

- Overview

WHAT IS SNAP?



- SNAP stands for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
 - Formerly known as food stamps
 - It is the nation's largest anti-hunger program
 - Benefits loaded to card provided to be used as a regular swipe credit card
- SNAP allows for neighbor choice when selecting food at retailers
- Funding for the program is appropriated by Congress through the Farm Bill
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulates the program at the federal level through their Bureau of Food and Nutrition Services (FNS).
The Illinois Department of Human Services administers the program at the state level



WHAT IS MEDICAID?



Medicaid is a name for health insurance from the state of Illinois. Some people refer to Medicaid as the Medical Card. Medicaid also has other names depending on what type of Medicaid coverage group you fit into. Medicaid is meant for people with limited income. Each state has its own rules about who is eligible for Medicaid, but all states must meet federal requirements.

- Jointly funded State and Federal Government program that pays for medically necessary services eligible individuals
- Two state agencies work together for Medical Program benefits.
 - Healthcare & Family Services (HFS): Makes the rules about who can qualify and pays most of the medical bills.
 - Department of Human Services (DHS): Helps by taking applications for medical benefits.

WHY SNAP MATTERS

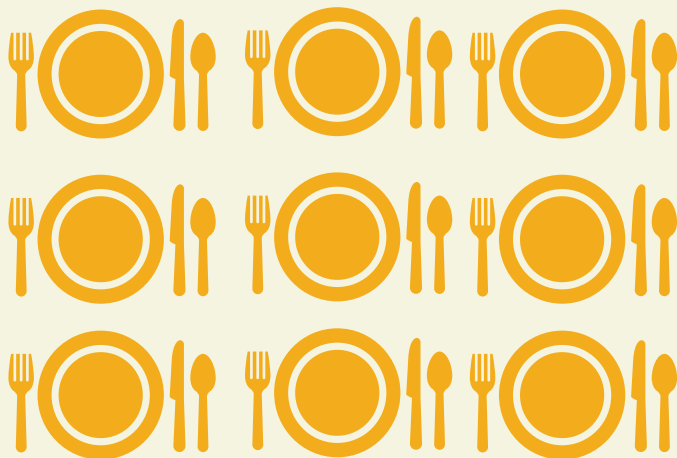
The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is our nation's most effective anti-hunger program



SNAP increases food access



For every meal provided by food banks



SNAP provides the equivalent of **9 meals**

Participation in SNAP generates hundreds of millions of dollars for the local economy



\$6.6 billion dollars
to the Illinois economy

Every dollar spent on SNAP generates over \$1.50 in local economic activity during an economic downturn.

881,937 Individuals enrolled in SNAP in Cook County
\$262 million/month in Cook County alone

(September 2025 estimates)

WHY MEDICAID MATTERS



Medicaid serves our most vulnerable

- Over half of Medicaid spending goes to providing services for seniors and people with disabilities, and children make up 1/3 of the program's enrollees
- Kids enrolled in Medicaid do better in school, miss fewer days due to illness, are more likely to complete their schooling, attend and graduate from college, have fewer emergency room visits, and earn more as adults



Medicaid improves access to care & financial security

- Fewer premature deaths for older adults and the chronically ill, and lower maternal and infant mortality rates
- Lowers medical debt for individuals and families
- Lowers amount of uncompensated care for health institutions, resulting in healthier budgets and fewer closures



Medicaid is an economic driver

- Similar to SNAP, every time Medicaid pays for a medical service, that payment supports a job in the community
- Boosts workforce participation- people stay healthier and miss fewer workdays
- Cuts to Medicaid = cuts to economic output as people lose jobs in healthcare institutions

EXTRA BENEFITS FOR SNAP RECIPIENTS



If you have SNAP Benefits, you can:

- Use benefits at select restaurants
- Reduced Internet from [AT&T](#) or [Comcast](#)
- [Free museum visits](#)
- [Reduced amazon prime](#)
- [Free school readiness and Head Start program](#)
- Discounted technology
- Discounted cell phone service at [Assurance Wireless](#) and [Safelink](#)
- [\\$5 Year-long Divy membership](#)
- Potential automatic eligibility for additional programs
 - WIC
 - Reduced Price School Lunches *
 - Low Income Heat and Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
 - Summer EBT

BASIC ELIGIBILITY FACTORS



- Household size and composition
- Gross and net income
- Illinois residency
- Citizenship/ immigration status
 - Certain noncitizens may be eligible for SNAP and Medicaid.
- Work Requirements*



GROSS INCOME REQUIREMENTS FY26



Number in SNAP Household	SNAP Maximum Gross Income Standard 165% FPL	SNAP Maximum for Qualifying Member Gross Income Standard 200% FPL
1	\$2,152	\$2,608
2	\$2,909	\$3,525
3	\$3,665	\$4,441
4	\$4,421	\$5,358
5	\$5,177	\$6,275
6	\$5,934	\$7,191
7	\$6,690	\$8,108
8	\$7,446	\$9,025
9	\$8,203	\$9,941
10	\$8,960	\$10,858
Each add'l	+\$757	+\$917

IDHS considers all income received 30 days prior to application submission

***Qualifying Member: Elderly (60+) or Disabled**

QUALIFYING MEMBERS



To be a qualifying member a person must be either

- Over 60 yrs. old
- Disabled (receiving Social Security Disability, SSI, or VA Disability at 100%)

Benefits of being a qualifying member include:

- Higher gross income threshold of 200% of FPL
 - If income is over this limit, they may still be eligible if they have less than \$4,250 in assets and meet the net income standard
- Eligibility for the medical deduction
 - Need to amount to more than \$36 out of pocket
 - Expenses must have been incurred in the last 30 days prior to date of application
 - Need to provide proof of those expenses
 - Eligible expenses include
 - Medicare premium(s)
 - Supplemental insurance premiums
 - Prescriptions
 - Medical supplies (diabetes test supplies, infusion and injection materials, etc.)
 - Doctor visit co-pays
 - Medical transportation
 - Hospital bills
 - Dental and vision care
- No cap on the excess shelter deduction

BASIC MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY



Age

Citizenship or status

Income

- Percentage of FPL varies by program and Qualified member status

Tax filing status

- Helps to determine HH Size

Assets

- Only for individuals who are 60+, blind and/or disabled
- Recently raised to \$17,500 for an individual or couple

GOOD NEWS



SNAP and Medicaid share an application! Just remember to check the box.
The state will automatically decide which Medicaid program an individual is eligible for.



WHO CAN RECEIVE BENEFITS

- U.S. Citizens are eligible SNAP and Medicaid for benefits if they meet all other eligibility criteria
- Non-Citizens can be eligible if they meet one of the following additional eligibility criteria
 - Legal Permanent Residents
 - 18 yrs. old or older are eligible after they have had a green card for 5 years
 - 17 yrs. old or younger, blind, or disabled are eligible without time restrictions
 - Refugees or Asylees*
 - Certain victims of domestic violence or human trafficking and their children under the age of 18*
 - Non-citizens who are ineligible can still apply on behalf of their children who meet the citizenship or residency criteria



SNAP AND MEDICAID CHANGES

H.R. 1 “ONE BIG BEAUTIFUL BILL” ACT

Federal Budget Reconciliation Bill signed into law July 4, 2025 will increase poverty and hunger



- Largest cuts to SNAP and Medicaid in history – **removing food access and health care from millions of people.**
- **Need for food assistance will surge.** Food Banks and pantries are not currently equipped to fill the gap.
- Loss of SNAP benefits will impact local economies everywhere: **less money spent at grocery stores, fewer jobs, less food produced.**



Congress voted to cut almost **\$200 billion** from SNAP food assistance.

These cuts will have a **human and economic cost** in our community.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM CUTS



Increases the amount that the State is required to cover to administer the SNAP program

Restricts the State's ability to pay their share to administer Medicaid, leading to overall cuts



Removes SNAP benefits for many legally present immigrants

Removes Medicaid and Medicare eligibility for many legally present immigrants *and* also limits their access to ACA marketplace coverage



Expands work requirements for SNAP

Creates BRAND NEW work requirements as a condition of **Medicaid** eligibility for adults covered under the ACA expansion

Federal Child Tax Credit (CTC)

Under H.R. 1, the 2017 exclusion of ITIN children's access to the CTC is made permanent, and the credit is further restricted by denying the CTC to more than **2 million citizen children**, by requiring at least one parent to have an SSN.



CHANGE TO IMMIGRANT ELIGIBILITY

Severely limits SNAP eligibility for **thousands of immigrants in Illinois**



This change in eligibility **severely limits SNAP access for approximately 15,900** legally present refugees, asylees, and humanitarian parolees receiving SNAP benefits in Illinois who ***have begun*** to be removed from their benefits beginning in **April 2026**

Status	Eligible for SNAP <u>BEFORE</u> the bill	Eligible for SNAP <u>AFTER</u> the bill
Legal Permanent Resident (subject to the 5-year bar)	Yes	Yes
Cuban / Haitian entrant	Yes	Yes
Compact of Free Association (COFA) migrant	Yes	Yes
Refugee	Yes	NO
Asylee	Yes	NO*
T-visa holder	Yes	NO*
Parolee > 1 year	Yes	NO
VAWA self-petitioner	Yes	NO

WORK REQUIREMENTS

Many SNAP customers need to **report work or volunteer hours to keep benefits**



What's changed?	Who is impacted?	Who may be exempt?
Adults ages 18 – 64 must report any of the following for at least 80 hours per month to continue receiving SNAP. To meet this requirement, a person must: • Work (paid or unpaid) • Participate in SNAP Employment & Training Programs • Volunteer • Any combination of the above	• Anyone between 18 - 64 <i>unless exempt</i> • Failure to meet requirements may result in loss of SNAP for up to 3 years, unless work requirements are met • The first countable month was February 2026 meaning May 1st	• People younger than 18 or older than 64 • A parent or other member of a household that includes a child under the age of 14 • People who are certified as physically or mentally unable to work • People who are pregnant • Some Native Americans • People caring for an incapacitated person • Regular participants of drug or alcoholic treatment programs • And others

Encourage neighbors to still report exemptions

WHAT MAKES SOMEONE EXEMPT?



A person is exempt from the SNAP Work Requirement if they:

- Are age 17 or younger or age 65 or older
- Have a physical or mental condition that prevents you from working or makes it difficult to maintain work
- Are experiencing chronic homelessness
- Are pregnant
- Live in a SNAP household with a child under age 14
- Are attending a school, college, or training program at least half-time
- Have applied for or are receiving unemployment benefits or SSI/SSDI
- Are in a drug or alcohol addiction treatment program or suffering from substance addiction
- Are currently receiving TANF and are participating and complying with the TANF work and training requirements

- Are an Alaska Native, American Indian, American Urban Indian, or California Indian (as defined in the Indian Health Care Improvement Act)
- Are providing care for another person who needs help caring for themselves. (This person does not have to be living in your home)
- Are responsible for the care of a child under the age of 6. (Does not have to be your child or living in your home)
- Are an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer working 30 or more hours a week paid, unpaid, or paid in kind (living stipend)
- Are working under 80hrs per month but or earning wages at least equal to \$217.50 (\$935 per month)

SO...WHAT IS CHANGING IN ILLINOIS?



Here's what we know so far in terms of changes to SNAP application and process in our state.

Focus on "Program Accuracy" to reduce the PER and overall cost

- 6-month Redes
- Shelter Cost Verification
- Other data checks (income, medical expenses, etc.)

Vastly Expands Failed Work Requirements (Time-Limited SNAP Benefits)

- Defining exemptions and updating policy and case worker training
- Launched ABE screener and updated forms (2340 & 2341)
- Updating process for complying

Narrows State Option to Calculate Utility Deductions

- Changed deduction formula to the USDA pre-approved one

QUESTIONS?



ASSISTING NEIGHBORS

- With Program Changes In
Mind

6-MONTH REDETERMINATION



- Neighbors that submit applications after 10/21 will have to start doing redeterminations every 6 months, these redeterminations are expected to be longer and ask for more information.
 - Neighbors that are currently on benefits will be on the 6-month reporting period after their next redetermination date
 - Neighbors who applied before 10/21 and are still on a 12-month certification period, must still submit their mid point report at the 6-month mark
- Neighbors that are on EDSRP will not have to report every 6 months, they will still follow the 2-year reporting period
- Interviews - Neighbors must complete a SNAP interview at their first 6-month redetermination. After that interviews will take place every 12-months.

VERIFICATIONS



Income

- Earned (paystubs, employer statement)
- Unearned (social security, pensions, VA benefits, court ordered child support, unemployment benefits)
- Self Employed (self employment record)

Expenses

- Child/dependent care expense
- Medical (applicants 60 and over)
- Shelter Costs

Work Requirement

- Exemption Request
- Volunteer Verification
- SNAP E&T Participation Verification

WORK REQUIREMENTS SCREENER

- ABE has a screener built in that specifically focuses on whether someone is subject to the work requirements: [Work Requirements Screener](#)
- The screener will ask questions to see if individuals qualify for an exemption



The screenshot shows the ABE (Application for Benefits Eligibility) homepage. At the top, there's a header with the ABE logo, a language selector (Español), and a "Sign In" button. Below the header, a banner states: "IDHS is working to distribute full SNAP benefits, now that the federal government shutdown has ended. We anticipate that the remaining benefit payments will be made over the coming days, with all SNAP recipients receiving their full November benefits by Nov. 20. Customers should continue applying and managing their cases as normal." Below this, there's a section for "Got Medicaid? Get ready to renew!" and a link to "Login". The main content area features a large image of a man and a young girl smiling, with the text "Welcome to ABE Helping people in Illinois lead healthy and independent lives". Below this, a prompt says "Use this site to apply for and manage your healthcare, food, and cash assistance benefits." At the bottom, there are five buttons: "Check if I Should Apply", "Apply for Benefits", "Manage My Case", "Check if I Should Apply for Summer EBT", and "Check if I Meet SNAP Work Requirements". The last button is circled in orange with a yellow star next to it. Below the buttons is a link for "ABE Provider Sign In".

The screenshot shows the "SNAP Work Requirements" screener. The header includes the ABE logo, the title "SNAP Work Requirements", a language selector (English), and a help icon. The main heading is "Let's see if you are meeting SNAP Work Requirements." followed by the instruction "Check which work requirements you need to meet for SNAP." Below this, there's a prompt "Please Enter Your Date of Birth" with a help icon. A date input field is shown with the placeholder "mm/dd/yyyy" and a calendar icon. Below the input field, the text "MM/DD/YYYY" is displayed. At the bottom, there are two buttons: "Previous" and "Next". A link "Back to Home Page" is also visible at the very bottom.

CITIZENSHIP AND RESIDENCY PROOF

Citizenship proof samples:

- Birth Certificate
- Certificate of Naturalization
- U.S. Passport issued to a person born in one of the 50 U.S. states (NOTE: a passport that has expired is acceptable)
- U.S. Passport issued to a person born in Puerto Rico (NOTE: only an unexpired passport is acceptable)

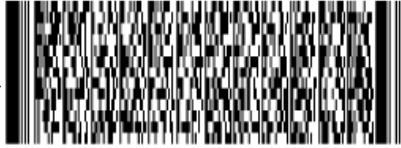
Illinois residency proof samples:

- Valid State ID or Driver's License
- Copy of lease
- City Key ID
- Utility Bills
- Consular ID
- Collateral statement

COMPLETING AN EXEMPTION FORM

- Fill in all of the information that you can
- Check all of the boxes that apply
- Sign and date the form
- ***You can help filling out the form, but the neighbor must sign/mark unless you are an approved representative***

 State of Illinois - Department of Human Services
SNAP WORK RULES - REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION


49604C33-0212-4349-0271-350480301140

Date:

Case Name: Case Number:

Address: Office Name:

Address: Office Address:

City/State/Zip:

Tenemos este aviso en español. Para solicitar avisos en español, por Internet vaya al sitio ABE-MMC o llamas al 1-800-843-6154 (TTY 1-866-324-5553 TTY/ Nextalk, 711 TTY Relay).

Phone:

TTY:

Fax:

You can manage your account online at: ABE.illinois.gov.

Complete this section to request an exemption from the SNAP work requirement. You may be asked to provide proof that you qualify for an exemption. If your request is denied you will need to meet the SNAP work requirement to maintain your eligibility for SNAP. You have the right to appeal the decision.

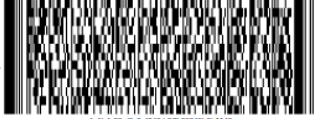
I, request to be exempt from meeting the SNAP work requirement because (select all that apply):

☐ I have a physical or mental condition that prevents me from working or makes it difficult to maintain work.
☐ I am experiencing chronic homelessness.
☐ I am pregnant.
☐ I live in a SNAP household with a child under age 14.
☐ I am attending a school, college, or training program at least half-time.
☐ I have applied for or am receiving unemployment benefits.
☐ I am in a drug or alcohol addiction treatment program or suffering from substance addiction.
☐ I am currently receiving TANF and am participating and complying with the TANF work and training requirements.
☐ I am an Alaskan Native, American Indian, American Urban Indian, or California Indian (as defined in the Indian Health Care Improvement Act).
☐ I am providing care for another person who needs help caring for themselves. (This person does not have to be living in your home).
☐ I am responsible for the care of a child under the age of 6. (Does not have to be your child or living in your home).
☐ I am an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer working 30 or more hours a week paid, unpaid, or paid in-kind (living stipend).
☐ I am a migrant or seasonal farm worker under contract with an employer to begin employment within 30 days for an average of 30 hours per week or earning wages at least equal to \$217.50 per week before taxes and other deductions (federal minimum wage \$7.25 multiplied by 30 hours).



Anything below this dotted line is to be completed by the caseworker at IDHS

 State of Illinois - Department of Human Services
SNAP WORK RULES - REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION


49604C33-0212-4349-0271-350480301140

You may be considered exempt by working* an average of 30 hours or earning wages at least equal to \$217.50 per week, before taxes and other deductions, (federal minimum wage \$7.25 multiplied by 30 hours).

You may be considered meeting the work requirement by working* an average of 20 hours per week or more.

*This includes paid work, unpaid work (volunteer or community service), and/or work in exchange for goods or services for the required number of hours.

Report your work through Manage My Case, by completing a Change Report form, or by contacting your local FCRC listed above.

Customer Signature: Date:

Once the form is completed you can:

- Submit this form electronically by selecting Manage My SNAP work requirement button from your Manage My Case (MMC) dashboard at abe.illinois.gov; or
- Return it by mail or in-person to your Family Community Resource Center; or
- Mail it to the Central Scanning Processing Unit (CSU P.O. Box 19138, Springfield, IL 62794)

This section to be completed by the Family Community Resource Center

Instructions: If verification is needed, allow the exemption while the verification request is pending. Complete this section when verification is returned to the FCRC.

Your request for an exemption has been reviewed and we have decided to:

☐ Approve your request for an exemption. ☐ Deny your request for an exemption.

Reason for denial:

Policy reference: PM 03-25-01

FCRC Staff Printed Name: FCRC Staff Signature:

Date:

REQUESTING EXEMPTIONS/PROVIDING WORK REQUIREMENT VERIFICATION



- Call the Department of Human Services Hotline and verbally attest***
 - 1-800-843-6154
 - **EXEMPTION REQUEST ONLY
- Fax to Department of Human Services Central Scanning Unit
 - 1-844-736-3563
- Submit via MMC
- Take to the office in person
 - [IDHS Office Locator](#)

Neighbors can call the IDHS hotline to request a status update on their exemption request

For neighbors not exempt from work requirements:

They can still apply/receive SNAP but are subject to the 3-month rule

They can submit proof that they meet the requirements in the same way that they submit exemptions (for the exception of attestation)

NEIGHBOR FAQ

- Questions You May Hear
and How to Answer

HOW OFTEN DO I NEED TO REPORT WORK REQUIREMENTS/EXEMPTIONS?



Always report:

- An exemption - If neighbors qualify for an exemption – report this by submitting a request for an exemption **IMMEDIATELY**
- Household income goes above the income limit for the household size

If neighbors are non-exempt and currently participating in unpaid/paid work for 80 hours a month, report when:

- Work hours fall below 80 a month (why did this happen – do you have good cause?)

If neighbors are non-exempt and NOT currently participating in work or qualifying work activities for 80 hours a month, report when:

- Neighbors get a new job, join a training program, and/or complete community service activities
- Neighbors' work hours go above 80 hours a month

WHAT DOES "GOOD CAUSE" MEAN?



- Sometimes things happen that prevent a person from following the work rules like getting sick, lack of transportation to get to work, or last-minute schedule change.
 - Good Cause can be claimed for either work rule (general work provisions and ABAWD work requirements).
 - Re: Meeting the work requirement, if the nonexempt person with established paid/unpaid work has cause for not meeting it, no action is taken to stop benefits.
- Before accruing a "countable month", it must be determined if an individual had a "good cause" reason for not complying. Good cause **includes situations beyond the individual's control**, such as but not limited to:
 - The individual's illness or illness of another SNAP household member that requires that individual's presence;
 - Lack of transportation;
 - Household emergency;

HOW DO I PROVE VOLUNTEER OR SNAP TRAINING HOURS?



- Volunteer hours can be performed for any institution or individual
 - Orgs and institutions do not need to be 501c3
- There is no definition for what constitutes as a qualifying volunteer activity
- Volunteers can procure a letter from the individual or org they are volunteering for OR
 - Does not need to be notarized
 - Can be interchanged with the SNAP Activities Report Form (IL444-2610)
- Volunteers can search for opportunities on [Serve Illinois](#)
- For those participating in SNAP E&T Training, Earnfare, WIOA Programs, or Community Workfare:
 - Submit the Regular Earnfare Attendance Record Form (IL444-20606D) OR
 - Any record of attendance for the above programs

WHAT IF I AM NOT EXEMPT/NOT MEETING WORK REQUIREMENTS?



- Neighbors will only be allowed 3 months of SNAP in a fixed 36-month period*
- If the neighbor becomes compliant with the work requirement rule, then they can apply for SNAP again
 - They can become compliant by working or volunteering 80 hours/earning \$935 per month or by becoming exempt
- If the neighbor does not become compliant or exempt then they will have to wait until the 36 months are up to receive SNAP, and when they receive it, it will only be for 3 months.
- If the neighbor has children over 14, the children can still receive SNAP even if the neighbor subject to work requirement uses all of their three countable months.
 - Benefits will be prorated
- Neighbors can receive emergency food access at any our of 820+ pantries in Cook County

**The 36-month period in Illinois is a fixed 3-year period that begins 01/01/2024 and ends 12/31/2026.*

WHEN SHOULD NEIGHBORS FOLLOW-UP WITH IDHS



- For SNAP or Combined SNAP and Medicaid Applications
 - After the 14th day if they have not received an interview
 - Right away if they have an issue with their interview or documentation, but no later than the 30th day
 - Right away if they were denied
 - By the 30th day if they have not received a decision
- If a neighbor has questions about their application direct them to abe.illinois.gov or by calling IDHS at 1-800-843-5416 or their local office

QUESTIONS



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Autumn Clark

Manager of Public Benefits Partnerships

benefits@gcfd.org

773-247-3663

OR

Roni Lee

Benefits Enrollment Specialist

Vlee@gcfd.org



SNAP training feedback survey

