



**LEGAL AID  
CHICAGO**

312-341-1070

# YOU CONTACTED US BECAUSE YOUR SNAP IS GOING DOWN

Since COVID started, SNAP (food assistance) recipients received the maximum monthly benefit for their household, even if they were eligible for less.

This COVID SNAP supplement ended in February 2023. **Everyone's SNAP will go down starting March 2023.**



## Make sure DHS is correctly calculating your SNAP

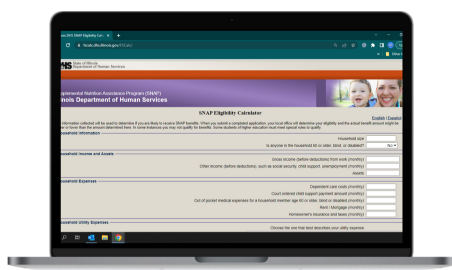
How do I make sure my family gets the most SNAP benefits we can?

- 1** Know how much you are getting.
- 2** Know what how much SNAP your family should receive.
- 3** Ask DHS to fix it if they are giving you less than you are entitled to receive.

### 1. THERE ARE FOUR WAYS TO FIND OUT HOW MUCH SNAP YOU ARE RECEIVING:

- Review your **Notice of Decision** from DHS. If you don't have a recent DHS Notice of Decision with a SNAP budget, find one at Manage My Case. This is the best way to review your benefits because it will tell you what numbers DHS used to calculate your benefit amount.
- **Manage My Case:** Create a personal DHS account at <https://abe.illinois.gov/abe/access/>. The "Benefits Details" section will tell you how much SNAP your family currently receives.
- **Link Online Portal:** See your SNAP balance at <https://www.ebtedge.com/gov/portal/PortalHome.do>.
- **Call** the number on the back of your link card (1-800-678-5465) and enter your 16 digit link card number.

### 2. Use the SNAP Eligibility Calculator at <https://fscalc.dhs.illinois.gov/FSCalc/> to find out how much SNAP you should receive. Enter your information and the calculator will tell you your estimated eligible amount.



The next page will show you:

- how to figure out what numbers to use in the calculator,
- how to tell what numbers DHS is using in your Notice of Decision, and
- what you can do to fix it if DHS has it wrong.



# REVIEW HOW YOUR SNAP BENEFITS ARE CALCULATED

## Is DHS using the correct income amount and type?

SNAP Income Eligibility Determination		Oct 01, 2022
Total Gross Earned Income		\$1040.00
Total Unearned Income	+	\$776.00
Self Employment Income	+	\$0.00

Income DHS thinks you have.

Make sure these are correct. DHS uses your "gross" income - the amount before taxes.

## Is DHS counting all of your shelter expenses?

Computation of Excess Shelter Deduction		Oct 01, 2021
Rent or Mortgage		\$1275.00
Utility Cost/Standard	+	\$529.00
Total Shelter Expenses	=	\$1804.00

What DHS thinks you pay for rent/mortgage

DHS Utility standard

If you pay for heat, for electricity to operate Air Conditioning or Heat, or if you receive LIHEAP (the low-income energy program)

\$626

If you are billed for at least 2 utilities but not AC / Heat

\$412

If you pay for 1 utility that is not phone or AC / Heat

\$66

If you pay for only Telephone

\$81

## Or, if you are homeless, is DHS giving you the Homeless Shelter Allowance?

Excess Shelter Deduction**	-	\$915.00
Homeless Shelter Standard	-	\$0.00
Household Net SNAP Income	=	\$507.00

If you are homeless and spend at least \$1 a month on shelter costs, DHS should give you a flat \$166 deduction here.

## Is DHS counting all the the medical expenses you can claim?

Farm Loss Income	-	\$0.00
Standard Income Deduction	-	\$160.00
Medical Standard/Expenses (Member age 60 or older or Disabled Member)	-	\$295.35

Medical expenses DHS is counting.

You must have a household member who is 60+ or disabled to receive this deduction

## Is DHS counting all of the Dependent Care you pay for?

Dependent Care Deduction	-	\$0.00
Child Support Deduction	-	\$0.00

What you pay for child support, child care, and dependent care for adults with disabilities

3. Compare your estimated eligible amount to what DHS is paying you.

**If your SNAP is too low, contact DHS and ask them to recalculate your benefits.**

There are several ways you can ask DHS to increase your SNAP. You have the right to appeal if they won't increase your benefits.

- **Manage My Case:** Report changes in your circumstances, such as rent and medical expenses. DHS will use your report to determine your SNAP amount.
- **Phone:** Call your local DHS office. The phone number is on any DHS Notice of Decision.
- **Fax:** Send a fax to your local DHS office. The fax number is on any DHS Notice of Decision.
- **In Person:** Go to your local or any DHS office to report a change. The address is on any DHS Notice of Decision.

**If you are missing at least \$100 a month in SNAP benefits, and live in Cook County, Legal Aid Chicago can help advocate for DHS to increase your benefits.**

**Call 312-341-1070 to apply for free legal help**