

Take Action Now or you may lose your SNAP benefits in May!

The federal government passed a new law that means some people in Illinois must work or volunteer 80 hours per month to keep Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (also called "SNAP" or "LINK") benefits for more than 3 months. **MOST people can be exempt from this rule.** If IDHS decides you are "exempt", then the work requirements will not apply to you.

1. Update your information

Report any changes to the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), especially if:

- You are now pregnant, or
- Your personal income increased from less than \$935/month to more than \$935/month (before taxes or other deductions), or
- You are now homeless, or
- You applied for unemployment benefits, or
- A child under 14 years old joined your household.



You can manage your case online at abe.illinois.gov or use this QR code.

2. Review work requirements:

Find out if IDHS thinks the work requirements applies to you.

- In January, IDHS sent letters to people it thinks are subject to the work requirements. If anyone is listed as "mandatory", IDHS thinks the work requirement applies to them.
- Check your online account on abe.illinois.gov. If IDHS thinks that someone is subject to the work requirement, you will have a "Manage My Work Requirements" button. Click on it to see who IDHS thinks the work requirement applies to.
- Call the IDHS Help Line (1-800-843-6154) or visit your local IDHS to ask about your status.

3. Ask IDHS to find you "exempt" from the work requirements.

Do you fit into any of the "exempt" categories on the back of this page? If so, make sure IDHS knows as soon as possible.



You can use this QR code to learn more about how to request an exemption.

We're Here to Help. In-person IDHS benefits assistance available

Tuesdays & Thursdays from 9:30am—3:30pm at:

- North Area Chicago Center (845 W. Wilson 2nd floor)
- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Center (4314 S Cottage Grove)
- South Chicago Center (8650 S. Commercial Ave)
- Englewood Chicago Center (1140 W. 79th St.)
- Trina Davila Center (4300 W. North Ave.)

Monday & Friday from 9:30am-3:30pm at:

- Garfield Park Chicago Center (10 S. Kedzie Ave.)

Wednesday from 12:00pm-3:00 pm

- Harold Washington Library (400 S. State St., 7th Floor, CPL Cares Desk)

This service is made possible with support from the City of Chicago.



or call Legal Aid Chicago at (312) 341-1070

Legal Aid Chicago is a nonprofit law firm that provides free representation in civil legal matters for clients who lack the resources to hire an attorney on their own. We seek justice for people living in poverty.

www.legalaidchicago.org


SNAP Time-Limited Work Requirements

Frequently Asked Questions

Who does this work requirement apply to?

People getting SNAP who are 18-64 years old who are not “exempt”.

Who can be “exempt”?

- Working and earning at least \$935/ month
- Physically or mentally unable to work 
- Chronically Homeless
Homeless at least 6 months or at least twice in the last year, and has a diagnosable physical or mental health condition
- Pregnant
- Enrolled in college at least half-time - *though other requirements apply*
- Lives with someone aged 13 or younger
- Are an Alaskan Native, American Indian, American Urban Indian, or Californian Indian.
- Caring for a child under 6 years old or an incapacitated person - *doesn't have to live with you*
- Applying for or receiving unemployment insurance *includes if you were denied and are appealing the decision*
- Regularly participating in a substance abuse treatment program (other than AA or NA)
- Participating and complying with a TANF work and training
- Working as an AmeriCorps vista member at least 30 hours per week, or getting a stipends of over \$935/month

What if I'm working part-time – way less than 80 hours/month – but I'm making over \$935/month?

- **You are exempt from the work requirements**, so long as IDHS knows about income.
- If you are in a similar situation and have additional questions, please feel free to contact Legal Aid Chicago.

What does “physically or mentally unable to work” mean?

This means you have a physical, mental, or health condition or combination of conditions that make it hard for you to get or keep work. This could include, but is not limited to:

- You get some sort of disability benefit, like SSI or short-term disability benefits, or
- You are applying for some or of disability benefits or you are appealing after your application was denied, or
- You are unable to work because you are getting homeless services, even if you are not chronically homeless, or
- You are getting help from a domestic violence agency.

How do I make sure I have an exemption?

You can request an exemption:

- Online on Manage My Case
- Submitting a Self-Attestation Form
- Asking at your local IDHS office
- Calling the IDHS Call Center: 1-800-843-6154

IDHS should take your word for it unless they have a reason to question you. If IDHS needs more proof, your IDHS worker will tell you what proof they need.

What if I'm 18-64 years old and not exempt?

- Submit proof that you did at least 80 hours of volunteering, paid, and/or unpaid work in one month.
- If you stop meeting the work requirement, tell IDHS why. You might have “good cause” or you might qualify for an exemption.
- If IDHS thinks you are not meeting the requirements, then it will send you a letter saying that your SNAP will stop. You have a legal right to appeal this decision if you think it's wrong.

If you get letter from IDHS threatening to stop your SNAP, you can contact Legal Aid Chicago to ask for free legal representation to fight that decision.

Legal Aid Chicago

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