

FOOD STAMP BENEFITS HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION DESK GUIDE

All persons, even if they are members of different families, who customarily purchase and prepare meals together are to be considered members of the same Food Stamp Benefits household.

RELATIONSHIPS:	SITUATION RESULT
Spouses Living Together	Must always be considered as a single household.
Parents and their Children, 21 Years of Age or Younger, Living Together (Includes Stepchildren) regardless of whether the children have a spouse or children of their own.	Must be considered as a single household.
Children Under 18 (Except Foster Children) Under the Parental Control of an Adult Household Member Who Is Not the Children's Parent or Stepparent.	Must be considered as a single household. <i>(Reminder:</i> A child under 18 living with their spouse or child is not considered under parental control.)

NOTE: There is no age requirement for an individual not under parental control to receive food stamp benefits.

CIRCUMSTANCES CAUSING INELIGIBILITY:	SITUATION RESULT
Resident of Institution	Ineligible unless a resident of a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug/alcohol Treatment facility • Subsidized housing for the elderly • Shelter for the homeless • Certain group living arrangement • Shelter for battered women and children
Ineligible Student	Non-household member. (Income and resources are excluded. The household can claim their prorated share of expenses.)
Work Rules Sanctioned or Intentional Program Violation Disqualified	Excluded household member. (Income and resources are counted in their entirety. The household can claim full expenses.)
An individual who fails to provide or apply for a Social Security Number (SSN), or any individual who if unable to provide a SSN, fails to apply for a SSN	Excluded household member. (Income is prorated; resources are counted in their entirety. Expenses paid by or billed to the excluded person are prorated.) Applying for or providing the SSN immediately brings the excluded individual into compliance.
A household that fails to or refuses to cooperate in the SSN validation process.	The food stamp case is closed.

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Persons residing together who do not meet any of the previous definitions may be separate households if they purchase and prepare food separately from the other persons.

SPECIAL LIVING ARRANGEMENT:

SITUATION RESULT

Boarder (Room and Meals)	Not a part of the household, but may be considered to be a member of a household at the household's request. May never be a separate household. The following can never be considered boarders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents and children, age 21 and younger who live together. • A spouse of a member of the household. • Children under 18 years of age who are under the parental control of an adult member of the household including a sibling.
Roomer (Room, No Meals)	Not considered part of household, but may apply as a separate household.
Shared Living (Pays a Share of Shelter Expenses)	Not considered part of household, but may apply as a separate household.
Elderly Individuals and their Spouses	Separate household status may be granted to those elderly individuals and their spouse who cannot purchase and prepare their own meals because they suffer from certain disabilities , even if they are living and eating with others, if they meet certain conditions.*
Foster Children	It is the household's decision to include or exclude foster children as household members. If included, those foster care payments that cannot be excluded as verified reimbursements are counted as income. If excluded, the foster care payments are not counted as income.

*ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS MUST BE MET:

- The individual must be 60 years of age or older; **and**
- The individual must suffer from a disability considered permanent under the Social Security Act or from a non-disease related, severe, permanent disability and be unable to purchase and prepare meals; **and**
- The gross income of the others with whom the individual resides (excluding the income of the individual and the spouse) cannot exceed 165% of the poverty level.

STUDENTS:

In order to participate in the Food Stamp Program, a student who is at least 18 years old but less than 50 years old and is not disabled must meet one of the following criteria:

- Be receiving Family Assistance or Federally funded Safety Net Assistance Benefits.
- Provide more than half the physical care for a child under 6 or an incapacitated person.
- Be enrolled full time and be a single parent responsible for the care of a child under 12.
- Provide more than half the care of a child under 12 and not have adequate child care to work and go to school.
- Be participating during the school year in a State or Federally financed work study program funded under Title IV-C.
- Be employed for a minimum of 20 hours per week and be paid. If self employed, must be working a minimum of 20 hours and earn an amount equal to the Federal minimum wage x 20 hours.
- Was placed in school through JTPA, FSE&T, JOBS or DOL.