

## Frequently Asked Questions for the Emergency Allotment of SNAP Benefits

Answers to many commonly asked questions about the Supplemental Emergency Allotment (EA) of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits.

### What are supplemental EA SNAP benefits?

In March 2020, the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) was passed in response to effects of the public health emergency caused by COVID-19. The law authorized issuance of emergency allotment supplemental benefits to households receiving SNAP. Based on the law, beginning in March 2020, states were given permission to issue supplemental EA SNAP benefits to households not receiving the maximum benefit for the household's size. The amount of the supplement was the difference between the benefit the household normally would receive and the maximum for the household's size. States were given permission to issue the supplements as long as the federal public health emergency caused by the pandemic remains in effect. New York has issued the supplemental benefits every month since March 2020 and will continue issuing monthly EA SNAP benefits as long as the national public health emergency remains in effect.

Beginning in April 2021, the United States Department of Agriculture changed the supplementation policy and authorized the payment of a supplement of at least \$95 to all households receiving SNAP benefits.

### Who qualifies for the supplemental EA SNAP benefits?

Beginning April 2021, all households receiving SNAP benefits will receive at least \$95 per month in supplemental EA SNAP benefits. This includes households already receiving the maximum SNAP benefit amount for their household size, and households that are eligible for a monthly supplement of less than \$95.

### What is the maximum SNAP benefit amount for my family's size?

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) re-evaluated the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) in 2021. As a result, beginning October 1, 2021, the maximum monthly SNAP benefit amounts (by household size) were increased to:

**Maximum Monthly SNAP Benefits**

| SNAP Household Size    | Maximum Monthly Benefit Amount |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1                      | \$250                          |
| 2                      | \$459                          |
| 3                      | \$658                          |
| 4                      | \$835                          |
| 5                      | \$992                          |
| 6                      | \$1190                         |
| 7                      | \$1316                         |
| 8                      | \$1504                         |
| Each additional person | +\$188                         |

### What if my household already got the maximum benefit for my household's size?

If you are already eligible for the maximum SNAP benefit amount for your household's size or are eligible for a supplemental EA SNAP benefit of less than \$95, you will receive a monthly supplemental EA SNAP benefit of \$95.

### How much will I receive in supplemental EA SNAP benefits?

While the federal public health emergency remains in effect, SNAP households are eligible to receive EA supplemental SNAP benefits in the amount that will bring them up to the maximum SNAP monthly benefit level for their household size or a supplement of \$95—whichever amount is greater.

For example, the maximum allowable monthly amount of SNAP benefits for a household of 4 people is \$835. If that household receives \$400 a month in normal SNAP benefits, they will receive a supplemental EA SNAP benefit of \$435. If the same household was already receiving the maximum monthly SNAP benefit amount of \$835, their supplemental EA SNAP benefit would be \$95—bringing their total monthly SNAP benefit to \$930.

**Do I need to apply for supplemental EA SNAP benefits?**

No, you do not need to apply for supplemental EA SNAP benefits. Households automatically receive their supplemental EA SNAP benefits on their EBT card.

If you are **not** currently enrolled in SNAP, the quickest way to apply for SNAP benefits is online at: [www.myBenefits.ny.gov](http://www.myBenefits.ny.gov) or <https://access.nyc.gov/> (if you live in New York City).

**How will I know when my supplemental EA SNAP benefits are available?**

You can find information about how to check your available SNAP balance on your EBT card at: <https://otda.ny.gov/workingfamilies/ebt/>.

**What can I purchase with my supplemental EA SNAP s benefits?**

The supplemental EA benefits are SNAP benefits. Like regular SNAP benefits, the supplemental benefits can be used to purchase food at authorized retail food stores. A detailed list of food items that may be purchased with SNAP benefits can be found at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/eligible-food-items/>.

**Do I have to use my emergency SNAP supplemental benefits right away?**

No. Unused SNAP benefits, including supplements, remain available and accessible on your EBT card for at least 274 days from the date they are issued.