

Frequently Asked Questions for the Emergency Allotment of SNAP Benefits

Answers to many frequently asked questions about the supplemental Emergency Allotment (EA) of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

What are supplemental EA SNAP benefits?

Since March 2020, Congress temporarily increased SNAP benefits because of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Supplemental EA SNAP benefits were issued to households in addition to their normal monthly SNAP benefit amount. As a result, households received more SNAP benefits each month than they would have normally been eligible for based on their income and expenses. You can learn more about supplemental EA benefits, amounts, and issuance in this New York State EA SNAP [FAQ document](#).

Why are supplemental EA SNAP benefits ending?

Congress passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 in December 2022 that ended the supplemental EA benefits. **February 2023** is the last month that supplemental EA benefits will be issued, and your SNAP benefits will return to the normal amount in **March 2023**. The New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) and your local social services district do **not** have control over this change.

How will SNAP recipients be made aware of this decrease in benefits?

All SNAP households will be mailed a letter in February that explains the end of the supplemental EA benefits. This letter is also available through your local department of social services in multiple languages.

In addition, SNAP households with mobile phone numbers on file will receive a series of three text messages from OTDA. The messages will be sent from the phone number: 1-877-902-0684. Text messages remind households that SNAP EA benefits are ending and directs them to this EA FAQ webpage. Text messages will be sent in late January, February, and early March.

OTDA will never ask SNAP recipients for their EBT card number or PIN. Never give your card number or PIN to anyone who texts, emails or calls you asking for this information as it is likely a scam.

In addition, an [outreach flyer](#) and [social media graphic](#) are available to assist with education and outreach efforts.

Can I request a Fair Hearing because I am no longer receiving the EA supplement?

Emergency Allotment benefits have been eliminated under federal law, and this decision cannot be changed by a fair hearing if you request one. You may request a hearing if you believe your regular SNAP budget was improperly calculated based on your household's circumstances.

What do I need to do?

Beginning in March 2023, you will continue to get your normal monthly SNAP benefit for as long as you are eligible.

To ensure you are receiving an accurate SNAP benefit, households that recently experienced loss of income or an increase in expenses, such as housing costs, childcare fees, child support payments or have allowable medical expenses over \$35 (for those age 60 or older, or disabled), since your last recertification, can report changes to their local district office which **may** result in an increase in the household's normal monthly SNAP benefit. To report a change, call your [local social services district](#) or submit a change report online through [myBenefits](#) or [ACCESS HRA](#).

When you need to recertify, you will receive a notice with instructions on how to do so.

Any unused SNAP benefits roll over month to month. SNAP benefits will not be removed from your card if you use your benefits any time within 274 days. You can check your household's SNAP benefit balance by visiting www.connectebt.com or by calling **1-888-328-6399**.

Protect your benefits by changing your personal identification number (PIN) often, and never give your EBT card number or PIN to anyone. To learn more about protecting your benefits from theft, visit the OTDA EBT [Scam Alert webpage](#) and watch the *Act Fast* public service announcement [video](#).

How can I get additional help with food or other household expenses?

If you need more help with food, visit www.feedingnys.org/need-food to locate food pantries in your area.

Pregnant or breastfeeding individuals and children under age 5 receiving SNAP may automatically qualify for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Visit health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/wic/ and click on the Wanda icon to learn more and connect with a WIC agency near you.

Coupons to purchase more fruits and vegetables with your SNAP benefits are available throughout the state. Learn more and see if your local farmers market or food store participate by visiting [FreshConnect](#), [Double Up Food Bucks](#) and [NYC Health Bucks](#).

The [Affordable Connectivity Program](#) provides discounts toward residential internet costs.

Heating assistance is available through the [Home Energy Assistance Program](#).