

# Frequently Asked Questions



*H.R. 1, the One Big Beautiful Bill (OBBB), passed in July 2025 made many significant changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid.*

*To help Summit County residents better understand some of these changes, we gathered some of the questions from our forums and compiled them on this FAQ list. If you have any other questions or concerns, please reach out to our Job and Family Services team at (844) 640-6446.*

## SNAP & New Work Requirements

### **How do individuals verify compliance with SNAP work requirements?**

SNAP participants must work or participate in an approved work activity for 20 hours per week (80 hours per month).

- If employment is already documented in the system, no further action may be needed.
- Employment verification typically requires pay stubs.
- Current SNAP participants may fulfill the requirement through approved volunteer activities or work programs. Volunteer hours must be documented using the required form (JFS 07410), signed by the person/organization the hours are being completed for, and submitted to Job and Family Services.
- Current SNAP participants may also meet requirements through SNAP Employment & Training (SNAP E&T) or services provided by OhioMeansJobs.

### **What is SNAP E&T (Employment & Training)?**

SNAP E&T is a voluntary program designed to help participants gain employment and move toward self-sufficiency. It can help current SNAP participants meet work requirements.

Participants can enroll by phone, through the self-service portal, or by visiting Job and Family Services. After enrollment, a case manager or contracted provider will schedule an appointment to discuss goals, barriers, education, and employment interests.

The program requires 20 hours per week of participation for able-bodied adults (ABAs), hours for non-ABAs will differ and may include GED preparation, job search assistance, skills assessments, case management, and supportive services such as supplies and wraparound assistance.

### **Can volunteering count toward work requirements?**

Yes, if you are already receiving SNAP benefits. Volunteering can count if the individual is enrolled in SNAP E&T or participating in an approved activity. Unpaid work hours must be documented using the required form (JFS 07410), signed by the person/organization the hours are being completed for, and submitted to Job and Family Services.

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## SNAP and New Work Requirements

### **Are there enough jobs to meet increased work requirements?**

It is unclear whether there will be a surge in part-time job demand. Our primary goal is to ensure individuals are informed so they do not unexpectedly lose benefits due to unrecognized work requirements.

### **How does Ohio's minimum wage affect work requirements?**

The minimum wage has no impact on new work requirements. Work requirements are based on hours worked, not the amount of wages earned. Verified unpaid work can also fulfill work requirements, such as volunteering or community service.

### **What if my SNAP Benefits are reduced because of new employment or increased wages, but my family and I are still struggling to make ends meet?**

Summit County participates in a pilot program called NEXT, also known as Benefit Bridge. This program helps individuals transition from SNAP to employment by addressing the "benefits cliff." Eligible participants can enroll in an 18-month program and earn up to approximately \$7,500 in cash incentives for maintaining employment. The program also includes financial literacy, work supports, and success coaching.

The County outreaches to individuals whose SNAP benefits decrease as a result of new or additional work income to inform them of this opportunity, and community members are encouraged to share this resource with others who may benefit. The program is a good resource for SNAP participants that get employment or increase their employment.

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## SNAP and Eligibility

### How often must SNAP eligibility be reverified?

It depends on your Assistance Group (household composition) status.

- Assistance groups that contain at least one able-bodied adult (ABA) member now must recertify SNAP eligibility every 6 months. **This is a new change.** In Summit County, we anticipate 50% of Assistance Groups will now have to recertify every 6 months, instead of every 12 months.
- Assistance groups (household composition) without an able-bodied adult member must recertify every 12 months. Some elderly populations may recertify every 36 months. This was not affected by the OBBB.

### Are income eligibility limits changing?

No changes are currently anticipated to the federal poverty income guidelines.

### How are Social Security recipients affected?

Individuals receiving Social Security retirement benefits, SSDI/RSDI, or SSI generally fall into age-based, blind, or disabled categories and are typically exempt from work requirements.

### Will certain disabilities qualify for exemptions, including mental health conditions?

The new work requirements for SNAP only affect able-bodied adults (ABAs). Individuals with disabilities are still exempt from work requirements.

*For SNAP through September 30, 2026,* you considered disabled if you meet ONE of the following criteria:

- You receive federal disability or blindness payments under the Social Security Act, including Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security disability or blindness payments. OR
- You receive state disability or blindness payments based on SSI rules. OR
- You receive a disability retirement benefit from a governmental agency because of a permanent disability. OR
- You receive an annuity under the Railroad Retirement Act and are eligible for Medicare or are considered disabled under SSI. OR
- You are a veteran who is totally disabled, permanently homebound, or in need of regular aid and attendance. OR
- You are the surviving spouse or child of a veteran who is receiving VA benefits and is considered permanently disabled.

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## SNAP and How It Is Administered

### **Who decided to remove sugary drinks from the SNAP-approved list?**

States must request a waiver from the federal government. In Ohio, Governor DeWine's office submitted a waiver request in October 2025. This waiver was approved in early 2026. Effective October 1, 2026, SNAP participants will be prohibited from buying beverages that list sugar, corn syrup, high-fructose corn syrup, or similar caloric sweeteners as the primary ingredient, or as the second ingredient if the first ingredient is carbonated water, with SNAP benefits.

### **How is staffing impacted by the additional administrative workload?**

Our teams are doing the best they can under challenging circumstances. We are currently short several case managers and have not been able to backfill those positions.

Additionally, the One Big Beautiful Bill (OBBB) significantly reduced the federal government's cost-share for administering SNAP. In Ohio, this is an increase of \$51 million. It is unclear whether those funds will be replaced at the state level, or if counties will have to pay this increased cost.

These staffing and funding challenges may affect wait times and timeliness, but our staff remains committed to assisting residents by phone and in person. We appreciate the community's patience and support as we navigate these changes.

### **What is the SNAP error rate, and what happens if it exceeds 6%?**

At this time, the State's primary focus is reducing the error rate below 6%. Currently, Ohio's SNAP error rate is approximately 7%.

If the error rate remains above 6%, the State could face significant financial penalties. Based on 2024 data, Ohio could owe approximately \$320 million for one year, and there is no dedicated funding source identified to cover that amount.

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## SNAP and Non-Citizen Eligibility

### **Can refugees still receive SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) assistance?**

No. Refugees and asylees without a green card are no longer eligible for SNAP.

Only refugees and asylum seekers who have been adjusted to Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) status can receive SNAP benefits. Lawful Permanent Residents, also known as Green Card Holders, who came to the U.S. as refugees and asylum seekers are not subject to the 5-year waiting period that some LPRs are subject to.

### **What is the waiting period for Lawful Permanent Residents (Green Card Holders)?**

Lawful Permanent Residents, also known as Green Card Holders, are subject to a five-year waiting period from the date their status is granted.

Some Green Card Holders may qualify without a 5-year wait if they are:

- US military-connected
- Admitted as Amerasian immigrants
- American Indians born abroad
- Certain Hmong/Highland Laotian tribal members
- Under age 18
- Have 40 qualifying work quarters
- Blind or disabled
- Lawfully residing in the US & age 65+ on 8/22/1996
- Iraqi & Afghan Special Immigrants (SIV)
- Victims of severe trafficking
- Refugees
- Individuals granted asylum
- Certain Afghan Nationals granted parole from July 31, 2021 - September 30, 2023
- Certain Ukrainian Nationals granted parole from February 24, 2022 - September 30, 2025
- Deportation withheld

### **Do all non-citizens without a Green Card need to wait 5 years to be eligible for SNAP?**

No. Certain immigrant groups may be eligible for SNAP, if all other eligibility rules are met.

- US Non-Citizen Nationals
- Cuban-Haitian Entrants (CHE)
- COFA Citizens (Citizens of the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, or Palau)

Eligible immediately with no waiting period

**We strongly recommend reaching out to Summit County JFS at (844) 640-6446 if you have questions about your eligibility as a noncitizen.**

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## Job & Family Services Best Practices

### **There has been an increase in stolen EBT funds. Why aren't benefits being replaced?**

EBT card skimming is a state and federal issue. The federal government no longer reimburses stolen SNAP benefits, and this authority was removed in 2025.

Currently, we are only permitted to replace the physical EBT card, not the stolen benefits. Individuals are directed to external community resources for assistance with lost funds.

### **What can I do to prevent my SNAP benefits from being stolen?**

To reduce risk, cardholders are strongly encouraged to keep their cards locked at all times when not in use and to select the "lock everywhere" option. The County offers flyers and online resources explaining how to lock EBT cards. You can find more information here: <https://tinyurl.com/LockEverywhereSCDJFS>

### **How should gig or 1099 workers document work activity?**

Tax returns may be used when available. Otherwise, individuals must provide documentation that substantiates income and hours worked. Self-employed individuals are encouraged to maintain detailed work logs.

### **How else is the County sharing these SNAP changes with the community?**

We are working to host additional forums throughout the County and share information through social media. At this time, there is no single, centralized statewide source for SNAP changes, and state-level resources remain limited.

Most information will be communicated directly to affected individuals through mailings and automated phone calls, as well as through media coverage and other standard communication channels.

Summit County remains proactive in ensuring residents understand what is changing and how it may affect them. SummitDJFS.org is a good source of information for our community.

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## Medicaid

### **If someone loses SNAP benefits, can they keep their Medicaid coverage?**

It depends on the individual's circumstances and the reason SNAP benefits were discontinued. SNAP and Medicaid are separate programs, though some work requirements may overlap. Losing SNAP does not automatically result in loss of Medicaid.

### **Are the work requirements for SNAP and Medicaid the same?**

No. They affect different population groups and go into effect at different times. New SNAP work requirements go into effect March 2026. New Medicaid work requirement begin January 2027.

However, if you are meeting work requirements for SNAP, it is likely you are meeting work requirements for Medicaid.

We are currently awaiting guidance from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to understand what reporting requirements & timelines will look like.

We will update this information.