



Rhode Island Department of Human Services

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

Homeless Individuals and Families

A person is homeless if they “lack a fixed and regular nighttime residence”. This includes individuals or families who are temporarily staying in a shelter, motel or someone else’s home for less than 90 days.

Getting SNAP benefits does not require a permanent address.

Applicants must provide a mailing address and identify a city of residence. SNAP applicants without a reliable place to get mail may choose a “digital noticing” option where they will get an email telling them to check their customer portal account for new DHS correspondence. Applicants may also ask the post office for a general delivery address or family members or friends for permission to use their mailing address. Some community agencies also allow clients to use their mailing address.

To apply for SNAP, proof of identity is required.

Identity may be proven with a driver’s license, birth certificate, or other form of ID. If you do not have any form of identification, someone who knows the applicant can go to DHS to identify you. DHS calls this form of identification “collateral contact”. However, applicants do not usually need to show a Social Security card to qualify for SNAP, they just need to provide their Social Security Number.

Getting an EBT card replacement without a permanent address.

If a SNAP recipient needs to replace an EBT card due to loss or damage, the replacement card will be mailed. If no address is available, a homeless household may pick up their card at an identified safe location. Safe locations can be found at www.dhs.ri.gov. Replacement cards EBT cards are not available from DHS offices since they are closed to the public during COVID-19.

Individuals and families experiencing homelessness may use the Restaurant Meals Program.

People experiencing homelessness may be notified by DHS that they are eligible to use their EBT card at select restaurants. For a list of all eligible and participating restaurants in Rhode Island, go to www.dhs.ri.com

Updating contact information when experiencing homelessness.

If a person moves frequently, does not have a permanent residence or regularly changes their phone number, the Customer Portal (<https://healthyrhode.ri.gov>) is a great way to keep their contact information up to date and to see communication from DHS so they don’t experience a disruption in benefits. All notices can be read on “Notices” tab and under “My Profile” a participant can update their phone number, email address, mailing address as often as necessary. They can also enroll in digital noticing by clicking “go green” so they receive an email when there is new DHS communication to view.

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Questions?

Visit our website: www.dhs.ri.gov

Call: 1-855-MY-RIDHS (1-855-697-4347) Monday – Friday, except holidays, from 8:30AM-3:00PM

Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Customer Service: 1-888-979-9939

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