



FREQUENTLY Asked Questions

**New to SNAP? Looking for more specifics on the challenge?
You've come to the right place.**

▶ **What is a SNAP Challenge?**

A SNAP Challenge is an opportunity to spotlight the issue of food insecurity in your community through empathy. **The Challenge itself is pretty straightforward:** for a small amount of time (in our case three (3) days), participants commit to not spending more on food than the average SNAP benefit of **\$5.16 per day**.

▶ **What other SNAP Challenge rules are there?**

Glad you asked! Here's how we are running our event:

- All food purchased and eaten during the Challenge must be included in the total spending.
- During the Challenge, only eat food that you purchase for the project. (this does not include spices and condiments)
- Avoid accepting free food from friends, family, or at work, including at receptions, briefings, or other events where food is served (with the exception of food eaten at public places where anyone could eat, e.g., a temporary housing, free community meals, etc.).

▶ **Is it difficult to complete this Challenge?**

The Challenge will feel different to everyone based on their current spending levels and meal planning skills, but we're here to help! [**TAP HERE for our budget tips, recipe suggestions, and conversation starters that help you make a successful plan.**](#)

▶ **What happens if I spend more than the SNAP minimum or can't do the Challenge for one of the days?**

The point of the Challenge is to help others see the food security issues that people experience. All we want you to do is to **try the Challenge and talk about how it affected you**. The closer you get to following the Challenge guidelines, the more realistic your experience will be. [**TAP HERE, and click on Social Post Examples for tips on how to share on social.**](#)

▶ **How did SNAP get started?**

The first government-funded food stamp initiative was deployed in 1939 and became a permanent program in 1964 with the Food Stamp Act. The program evolved to establish income parameters and expanded across the nation to support millions of Americans in need of emergency food assistance. In an effort to fight stigma, architects of the 2008 Food, Conservation, and Energy Act attached a name change: the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).



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▶ **How does someone qualify for SNAP benefits?**

SNAP is a means-tested program, meaning that the State of Minnesota determines eligibility based on income and other qualifications. To receive SNAP benefits, your Minnesota neighbors experience a two-step process:

1. Fill out a state application online. This application asks questions about income, household, expenses, assets, and general personal information. After the application is processed, it is passed on to the county where the applicant lives.

2. Screening. The Human Services department in the county will verify the submitted information and determine eligibility – in most cases, within 30 days of the screening. When approved, folks receive a debit-style card where they can spend funds on approved items.

▶ **How many people in MN use SNAP?**

In state fiscal year 2023, more than 449,000 Minnesotans received SNAP assistance every month.

▶ **Who uses SNAP?**

- More than 64% of SNAP participants are in families with children
- More than 33% are in families with members who are older adults or are disabled
- More than 54% of participants are in working families

▶ **What programs are part of the emergency food system?**

There are many programs that help individuals and families receive the food they need, but the emergency food system contains the following:

- Local food shelves
- SNAP
- WIC (The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants & Children)
- Discounted groceries through programs like Fare For All
- Meals on Wheels
- Senior food boxes
- Summer programs that support minors:
 - Summer Meals for Kids
 - Summer EBT

▶ **How much money do families receive?**

The benefit level varies for each family, as income, assets, household size, expenses are factored in. In fiscal year 2023 – after pandemic-era benefits expired – the estimated average monthly benefit for each household member was \$157.