

# Food Benefits for Legally Present Immigrants

## New state SNAP benefits



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Many low-income Massachusetts immigrants are eligible for SNAP food benefits. You may be eligible to get federal SNAP if you meet the “qualified” immigrant rules. Or you may be eligible for state SNAP if you have another legal or pending status.

SNAP benefits are based on income, who you live with and share food with, and costs of living - such as rent and childcare costs. Learn more at [Mass.gov/SNAP](https://www.mass.gov/SNAP).

## Am I eligible for federal SNAP benefits?

You may be eligible for federal SNAP if you have one of these immigration statuses:

- Refugee, asylee, or granted withholding of deportation status
- Victim of trafficking (T- Visa)
- Cubans and Haitians with humanitarian parole, pending asylum or other special statuses
- Immigrants from Iraq or Afghanistan with certain immigration statuses
- Immigrants from Ukraine with humanitarian parole
- Lawful permanent residents (LPR), often called “Green card holders”\*
- Humanitarian parole granted for 365 days or longer\*
- Certain battered immigrants (VAWA petitioners and others)\*

\* Some adult LPRS, parolees and battered immigrants **may need to wait 5 years** in status. But there is **NO** wait for children under age 18, adults receiving a disability-based benefit, or adults with enough countable work history.

## Am I eligible for state SNAP benefits?

On December 4, 2023, the Massachusetts Legislature and Governor Healey passed a law to provide state SNAP benefits for many immigrants not eligible under federal law. See [Mass.gov/StateSNAP](https://www.mass.gov/StateSNAP).

You may be eligible if you:

- Have humanitarian parole or are a battered immigrant but cannot get federal SNAP due to the 5 year waiting period.
- Are here “under color of law.” That means the immigration authorities know you are here and are not planning to deport you. See below.

## Who is “under color of law” for state SNAP?

Examples include immigrants who have pending or approved status such as:

- Temporary Protected Status (TPS)
- U visas (victims of violence)
- pending or approved Deferred Action (including Dreamers)
- Pending asylum application
- Special Immigrant Juveniles (SIJs)
- Parole granted for less than 365 days
- Have a work authorization card or pending application for another status

This is not a complete list. If you are not sure, apply for SNAP! Tell DTA about your immigration status and give them proof of your status.

## What if I already get SNAP for family members?

If you already get federal SNAP for your children or other family members, the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) will add the state SNAP to your EBT card if you are eligible. DTA calls this the “State SNAP Supplement.” You do not need to apply for state SNAP.

Your SNAP amount is based on your income and expenses. In some cases, you may not see a boost in SNAP if you are working or have other income.

## Can SNAP hurt my immigration status?

NO, receiving SNAP or other non-cash benefits does not hurt your immigration status or application for a green card. It is safe to get SNAP. See Mass.gov information on public charge [here](#).

## How can I apply?

There is no wrong door! You can apply:

- Online at [DTAConnect.com](https://DTAConnect.com) (6 languages)
- In person [at a local DTA office](#)
- By phone. Call 877-382-2363 (press 7)
- With a paper application (13 languages). See [Mass.gov/SNAP](https://Mass.gov/SNAP)
- With [a SNAP outreach partner](#) in your community

## What if I am denied or need help?

- Find free Legal Help: [MassLRF.org](https://MassLRF.org)
- If you can't reach DTA by phone: [Bit.ly/DTAtips](https://Bit.ly/DTAtips)
- For DTA information on State SNAP, See [Mass.gov/StateSNAP](https://Mass.gov/StateSNAP).