



CHANGES TO SNAP ELIGIBILITY BASED ON IMMIGRATION STATUS

PLEASE READ

Dear SNAP Recipient,

Last year Congress passed a new law that made changes to which non-citizens may receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. The Department of Human Services (DHS) is required to implement these federal changes. Your SNAP case may be affected by the new rules.

What Changed?

Under the new law, an individual must live in the U.S. and have one of the following citizenship or immigration status to qualify for SNAP:

- U.S. Citizen or National
- Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR)*
- Cuban and Haitian entrant (CHE)
- Compacts of Free Association (COFA) citizen (Micronesia, the Marshall Island, or Palau)

How does the change affect your SNAP benefits?

If you cannot show proof that you or a member of your SNAP household are in one of these groups when your case is processed, including at the time of initial application, recertification/renewal, or any other time that an eligibility determination is made on your case, your application may be denied, your case may close, or your benefits may go down. You are not required to report a change in immigration status unless DHS asks for verification, but if your status changed to one of the above, please let us know.

Only the individuals who do not have the required immigration status will be denied. Everyone with the required status can still receive benefits, if otherwise eligible for SNAP.

Please Note: Under the new rules, refugees, parolees, or individuals granted asylum, including children under 18, cannot get SNAP unless they are a lawful permanent resident (LPR).

*Some LPRs who qualify must wait **5 years** before they can get SNAP benefits, unless they meet an exemption to the 5-year waiting period. Some exemptions to the LPR 5-year bar include being under 18, disabled or blind, have 40 qualifying work quarters, have a military connection, and/or entered country as a refugee, asylee, Amerasian, a victim of severe trafficking, or an Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrant (SIV). For the full list of exemptions to the LPR 5-year waiting period, please visit www.DHS.ri.gov or www.staycovered.ri.gov.

When will these changes start?

The new non-citizen eligibility rules will be implemented as early as March 1st. If you have documentation that supports your immigration status in one of the above eligible categories, be sure to provide it to DHS as soon as possible.

What can you do?

Households are encouraged to update their case if they fall into one of the listed eligible immigration statuses. However, customers are not required to report changes in immigration status unless DHS asks for verification as part of an eligibility review. If available, submit verification supporting your status in one of the above eligible groups to DHS as soon as possible to prevent any interruption to your benefits.

The DHS Customer Portal and Mobile App are the fastest ways to submit verification documents to DHS. You can log in to your account by visiting <https://healthyrhode.ri.gov>.

Documentation may also be submitted at a DHS scanning center or drop box, in person at a DHS office, or by mail. For a full list of locations, please visit <https://dhs.ri.gov/about-us/dhs-offices>.

Documents can also be mailed to
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
P.O. BOX 8709
CRANSTON, RI 02920-8787

If you have a pending immigration application, petition, or request with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), you can track the status online at <https://egov.uscis.gov/> You will need your 13-digit receipt number (found on Form I-797 or I-797C).

For Questions/Concerns:

If you have questions or are looking for more information about this change, please visit staycovered.ri.gov/SNAP-Updates.