



SNAP Eligibility Guidelines for College Students



Low-income college students may be eligible for nutrition assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The first step in determining eligibility is to meet the income guidelines for your household size. See the back of this flyer for information on income eligibility. **In addition, college students are subject to the following requirements.**

If you are between the ages of 18-49 and enrolled as at least a half-time student in an ***institution of higher education****, you must meet at least ONE of the criteria below in addition to income eligibility.

- Work 20 hours on average each week -OR -
- Have been issued a Work Study Award letter -OR-
- Are responsible for the care of a child under age 6 -OR-
- Have a child between ages 6-12 and do not have adequate child care -OR-
- Have a disability that limits your ability to work (verified by a letter from a medical provider) -OR-
- Have \$0 expected family contribution on the FAFSA (verified by the Financial Aid Office). (this is a temporary exemption during COVID-19 health emergency)*

****Institution of higher education means any institution that normally requires a high school diploma or GED for enrollment. It does not apply to most job training programs.***

If any of the criteria above apply to you, you may be eligible for SNAP benefits. (Exception: students who have a meal plan through their school that covers greater than 50% of their meals cannot receive SNAP benefits.)

If you are a student over the age of 49 or you are enrolled in school less than part-time, you do not have to meet the above guidelines. You will still have to meet SNAP income guidelines.

In order to determine eligibility, the following criteria apply to income and expenses:

- Grants and loans, which cover tuition costs, are not counted as income.
 - However, financial aid received through the Veterans Administration or private scholarships **does** count as income.
- If you live separately from your parent or legal guardian, you will **not** have to report their income.
 - However, if you are under the age of 22 and still live with your parents/guardians, you must apply with your parents.
- If you live with roommates but do not share food costs, you can apply as a separate household.
- You must still meet these criteria, even on breaks from school.
- Students may defer federal student loan payments while receiving SNAP benefits without incurring interest charges.

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Generally, there are two steps to eligibility: a gross income test and a net income test.

Step 1: The Gross Income Test

Household size	1	2	3	4
Monthly Gross Income	\$1,987	\$2,686	\$3,386	\$4,087
Weekly	\$458.57	\$619.89	\$781.44	\$943.23

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A household may be eligible for SNAP if its combined **monthly gross income** is below the amount in the chart. The monthly gross income includes income from all sources (earned and unearned) *before* deductions such as taxes or health insurance. If the household's income is below the gross income guideline, it may be eligible for benefits by meeting the net income test, Step 2.

Households with monthly incomes more than the gross income guideline are typically not eligible for SNAP unless anyone in the household is age 60 or older or disabled.

Step 2: The Net Income Test

A household is likely eligible for SNAP if it meets the net income test. The **net income** is determined by the Department of Human Services where they subtract certain deductions from the household's monthly gross income, primarily housing, heating, and child care costs.

Households with 1 or 2 members may be eligible without meeting the net income test.

Step 3: If you appear to be eligible, you should apply!

Apply, online, at <https://dhs.ri.gov/apply-now>.

Students who have questions or need additional assistance can visit the Hunger Center in Chafee Hall, room 217, call 401-874-5660, or email info@eatbettertoday.com to schedule an appointment.

For additional information about SNAP, call:

URI SNAP Outreach Project: 1-866-306-0270

www.eatbettertoday.com

The SNAP Outreach Project is a program of the URI Feinstein Center for a Hunger Free America. The University of Rhode Island is an equal opportunity employer committed to the principles of affirmative action. College student facts/ URI College Student flyer September 2021.

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