

Illinois Department of Human Services Program Overview

**Illinois Department of Human Services
Division of Family and Human Services
Bureau of Training and Development
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INTRODUCTION

This presentation is designed to provide you with a brief overview of the benefit programs the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) and Family Community Services (FCS) offers to the public and how to apply for these benefits.

IDHS BENEFIT PROGRAMS

The Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) provides cash payments, food benefits, and medical coverage for people who are eligible. These programs are based on Federal laws, State laws, and court rulings. Below are some of the programs.

Cash	Medical	Food
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF),• TANF Crisis Assistance• Aid to the Aged, Blind or Disabled (AABD Cash),• Refugee and Repatriate Assistance (RRA).• Victims of Trafficking, Torture, and Other Serious Crimes (VTTC) Cash	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family Health Plans,• Affordable Care Act,• Family Planning,• Aid to the Aged, Blind, and Disabled (AABD Medical).• Victims of Trafficking, Torture, and Other Serious Crimes (VTTC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)• State Food.

OVERVIEW OF CASH PROGRAMS

Cash programs assist people with meeting basic needs. The programs help customers pay for food, shelter, utilities, and expenses other than medical. People who apply for cash benefits also automatically apply for the corresponding medical benefits. Each of the cash programs requires an interview to determine eligibility.

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF),
- Aid to the Aged, Blind, or Disabled Cash (AABD Cash),
- Refugee and Repatriate Assistance (RRA).

Note: For Cash programs, no payment is received for the first 30-days including the date of application. Customers are eligible to receive benefits from the 31st day onward.



TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES PROGRAM

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program is for families with children and pregnant women who need temporary cash assistance. Those receiving TANF also receive medical assistance. Most TANF families also receive SNAP benefits to buy food.

Customers can only receive TANF for 60-months (5-years). Adults ages 18 and older and their children can receive Cash benefits for a maximum of 60 months. This includes months that the customer received TANF cash benefits in another state.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES PROGRAM

To qualify for TANF a customer must:

- Be pregnant or have a child under the age of 19 living with them. If the child is 18, he/she must be a full-time High School student. A pregnant woman with no other children (and her spouse, if living together) can still receive assistance,
- Live in Illinois. If the customer is homeless they may still qualify.
- Be a U.S Citizen or meet certain immigration requirements.
 - If the customer's children qualify as citizens or immigrants, but the customer does not, the customer may receive TANF just for their children.
- Develop and sign the Responsibility and Services Plan (RSP). The RSP includes participation in certain programs and other responsibilities intended to lead the customer to self-sufficiency.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES PROGRAM

Work Requirement

- If the customer is a single parent who is able to work and their youngest child is under age 6, they must work or participate in a work activity for at least 20 hours per week.
- If the customer is a single parent who is able to work, and their youngest child is age 6 or older they must work or participate in a work activity for at least 30 hours per week.
- Two-parent families are required to work 35 hours per week.
- If the customer works, they must report their earnings every 6 months. Their cash benefits are reduced only \$1 for every \$4 they earn, and the department helps pay for necessary childcare.

See [TANF Brochure IDHS 586](#) for more information on Work and Training Activities and persons who may be exempt from participation.

AID TO THE AGED, BLIND or DISABLED PROGRAM

Cash benefits under the AABD program are designed to meet the needs of individuals. AABD Cash is sometimes referred to as a “*State Supplemental Payment*” because it supplements other sources of income and payments in order to meet a person’s determined needs.

Note: Typically, those who are approved for AABD Cash are also approved for medical benefits under AABD Medical.

AID TO THE AGED, BLIND or DISABLED PROGRAM

To qualify for AABD Cash a person must:

- Be a U.S Citizen or meet certain immigration requirements.
- Live in Illinois. If the customer is homeless they may still qualify.
- Receive benefits from the Federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or have been denied SSI because of income.
- Are age 65 years or older, blind, or disabled.

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM

Refugees who do not meet the requirements for TANF or AABD Cash can receive help from the Refugee Resettlement Program (RRP). A person can only receive help from this program for a limited period of 12-months from date of entry into the U.S.

The Refugee Resettlement Program is for:

- A person admitted to the U.S. as a “refugee”, “asylee”, or “conditional entrant”.
- A resident non-citizen who was formerly a refugee.
- An Amerasian immigrant from Vietnam, and close family members, admitted through the Orderly Departure Program beginning March 20, 1988.
- A Cuban or Haitian granted parole or issued a valid Form I-94 or other documentation by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), on or after April 21, 1980.

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM

Only a U.S. Citizen and their family referred by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) can receive help from the Repatriate Program. This person or family is referred after being sent back to the U.S. from another country because they lacked money, were physically or mentally ill, or were threatened by war or other crisis.

VICTIMS of TRAFFICKING, TORTURE and OTHER SERIOUS CRIMES (VTTC) CASH

Cash Assistance benefits for foreign-born Victims of Trafficking, Torture and Other Serious Crimes (VTTC) program start with the date of application for eligible customers without dependents and have a certification period of 12 months.

Eligible customers that have dependents follow TANF policy. Eligibility for TANF begins the 30th day after the date of application and have a certification period of 12 months.

OVERVIEW OF MEDICAL PROGRAMS

Illinois Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) medical programs cover a wide variety of applicants based on certain criteria.

Persons on most medical programs receive a medical card. The medical card list each eligible person. When someone needs medical service the medical card is provided to the doctor, hospital, drug store, clinic, etc.

Medical eligibility begins from the first day in the month of application. If eligible, benefits may be approved up to three months prior to the date of application, if requested by the applicant. Eligibility must be verified.

The following is a brief explanation of the different medical programs.



MEDICAL PROGRAMS

Family Assist

Medical benefits for families whose income is at or below the TANF Cash Payment Level. Once the family's income rises above the Family Assist income limit, the family unit may be eligible for up to a year of Medical Extension medical coverage.

FamilyCare Assist

Medical benefits for the parent or caretaker relative (and their spouse) of dependent children under age 18, with countable income greater than the Family Assist limit, but equal to or less than 138% of the *FPL.

All Kids Assist

Program for children under age 19 who need comprehensive, affordable, health insurance, regardless of immigration status or health condition. Income is above the Family Assist income limit, but equal to or less than 318% of the *FPL.

Children are guaranteed financial eligibility for 12 continuous months of medical coverage, dating from the last eligibility determination.

*Federal Poverty Level = FPL

MEDICAL PROGRAMS

Moms and Babies

Medical benefits for pregnant women and infants under 12 months of age who are born to eligible women whose income is above the Family Assist limit, but equal to or less than 213% of the FPL.

This program covers both inpatient and outpatient healthcare for women while they are pregnant and 12-months post-partum coverage when an individual has been eligible at least 1 month of their pregnancy.

Family Health Spenddown

Medical benefits for children with income above the All Kids Assist limit and pregnant women with income above the Moms and Babies limit. A benefit unit must incur medical expenses that equal or exceed the monthly spenddown amount before medical coverage is provided for a month.

The spenddown amount is the difference between a benefit unit's countable income and the Family Health Spenddown standard.

MEDICAL PROGRAMS

Medicaid Presumptive Eligibility

Offers immediate, temporary coverage for outpatient health care for pregnant women. If eligible, MPE covers the customer for pregnancy care starting on the date of application until the Moms & Babies application is approved.

MPE eligibility is determined by an MPE provider. The MPE income limit is 213% of the FPL.

ACA Adult

A person ages 19 through 64 who does not qualify for FHP's or Former Foster Care, and who has countable income equal to or less than 138% of the FPL may qualify for this program.

A person who is blind or has a disability and does not have Medicare may qualify for the ACA Adult program whether living in the community or in a long-term care facility.

MEDICAL PROGRAMS

Family Planning

This program covers family planning and related services to prevent or plan pregnancy, provide preconception and fertility awareness, education and provide evidence-based medical, diagnostic and treatment services.

(FP)

The FP income limit is 213% of the FPL. **Note:** Income is only counted at an individual level for each person applying.

AABD Medical

A person who is aged (at least 65 years old) or blind or has a disability may qualify for AABD Medical whether living in the community or in a long-term care facility. A person with countable income and/or resources limit that are equal to or less than the AABD Medical income and/or resources limit may qualify for AABD Medical benefits without a Spenddown obligation.

AABD Medical income limit is 100% of the FPL.

MEDICAL PROGRAMS

AABD Medical Spenddown

Spenddown cases are approved when a benefit unit has countable income that is above the income standard or for AABD Medical has countable resources that are over the resource limits. The extra countable income and extra countable resources are the Spenddown amount.

Spenddown cases receive coverage for part or all of the month when the customer shows that allowable medical bills and paid receipts equal the month's Spenddown amount. HFS does NOT pay medical expenses used to meet Spenddown.

Medicare Savings Program

A person enrolled in Medicare Part A (hospital insurance), or Parts A and B (supplementary medical insurance) may qualify for help with Medicare premiums, co-insurance, and deductibles. The amount of help available depends on the level of household income and resources.

OVERVIEW OF SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) helps low-income people and families buy the food they need for good health.

Benefits are provided on the Illinois Link Card -an electronic card that is accepted at most grocery stores and some farmers markets.



SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Who Can Receive SNAP?

- Most households with low income can receive SNAP benefits. The most important factors which determine the amount of and eligibility for SNAP benefits are:
 - Income and expenses.
 - The number of persons who:
 - Live together,
 - Buy and prepare meals together.

Note: Use the [SNAP Eligibility Calculator](#) to determine if your customer is potentially eligible for SNAP.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Income

A household might be eligible to receive SNAP benefits if their monthly gross income does NOT exceed the gross income limits.

See [SNAP Program Income and Benefits Amounts DHS 124](#) for income limits.

Note: The income limits vary every year.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

How Much SNAP Does Someone Receive Each Month?

The monthly SNAP Benefits amount depends on the number of people in the “SNAP Unit” and the monthly income available to meet the needs after the caseworker subtracts the allowable deductions (such as rent and utilities) from gross income.

See the chart in [SNAP Program Income and Benefits Amounts DHS 124](#) to see the highest monthly benefit by household size.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Who is considered a Student of Higher Education?

[PM 03-04-03](#)

A student enrolled **half-time or more** in a school of higher education does not qualify for SNAP benefits unless they meet one of the special student eligibility requirements.

- A student enrolled in a school of higher education **less than half-time** does not have to meet the special student eligibility requirements.
- Accept the school's definition of what is half-time attendance.
- Accept the student's statement that they are enrolled in school half-time or more. The student's class schedule may be used to verify hours of enrollment, **if questionable.**

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Who is considered a Student of Higher Education?

[PM 03-04-03-a](#)

A student of higher education is a person enrolled in:

- A business, technical, or vocational school that normally requires a high school diploma or the equivalent for enrollment in the course of study; **or**
- Regular courses, including internet, mail, self-study, or correspondence courses, at an accredited college or university that offers degree programs.

A course is considered a regular course if it would count toward a degree or certificate. The student does not have to be in a degree or certificate program.

A college or university student is not a student of higher education if they are only enrolled in a special program, such as English as a second language, Adult Basic Education Literacy, GED, or community education courses.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Who is considered a Student of Higher Education?

A person's student status begins on the first day of the school term, and continues through normal periods of class attendance, vacations, and recesses until the student:

- Graduates; **or**
- Drops out of school; **or**
- Is expelled or suspended; **or**
- Does not intend to register for the next term, excluding summer school.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Scenarios below:

Scenario # 1: Agnes attends beauty school at ABC Beauty Academy. ABC Beauty Academy normally requires a high school diploma for admittance to their program. Agnes is considered to be a student of higher education.

Scenario # 2: Thomas is enrolled in a vocational certificate course at a community college. The college offers associate degree programs. Thomas is considered to be a student of higher education.

Scenario # 3: Mary is enrolled in a GED class at a community college that offers degree programs. Mary is not a student of higher education.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

What are some of the eligibility requirements?

[PM 03-04-03-b](#)

To be eligible to participate in SNAP, a student who is enrolled at least half-time in an institution of higher education must meet at least one of the following requirements.

Below are some of the requirements. Please refer to PM 03-04-03-b for additional requirements

- Be under age 18 or age 50 or over.
- Be physically or mentally unfit.
- Be working in a paid job an average of 20 hours per week or, if self-employed, working an average of 20 hours per week or receiving earnings at least equal to the Federal minimum wage multiplied by 20 hours.
- At the time of application, be approved to participate in a State or Federally funded work study program during the regular school term and the student must anticipate actually working during that time. *Please refer to [PM 03-04-03-b](#) for additional requirements.*

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

What are some of the eligibility requirements?

- Be responsible for the care of a dependent household member under age 6 (*only one adult may claim this exemption*). When there is more than one adult in the home, the student must provide the majority of the childcare to meet this requirement.
- Be responsible for the care of a dependent household member ages 6 through 11 and does not have adequate childcare available to enable the student to attend class and work an average of 20 hours per week or take part in a work study program.
- Be a single parent enrolled in a school of higher education and responsible for the care of a dependent child under the age of 12, regardless of the availability of adequate childcare.
- Receiving TANF under Title IV of the Social Security Act.
- Be enrolled as a result of participation in the Job Opportunities and Basic Skill program under Title IV of the Social Security Act or its successor program. *Please refer to [PM 03-04-03-b](#) for additional requirements*
- Self-initiates placement or is assigned to or placed in an institution of higher education through or in compliance with the requirements of one of the programs listed in [PM 03-04-03-b](#).

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

What if you receive Meals on Campus?

[PM 03-04-03-b](#)

Residents of institutions are not eligible for SNAP participation. Dormitories are considered institutions when they provide students the majority of their meals.

When a student can demonstrate that the dormitory does not provide him or her a majority of their meals, the student may participate in SNAP when otherwise eligible.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

What if you receive Meals on Campus?

Students who receive the majority of their meals (50% or more of three meals daily) through either a mandatory or optional meal plan are considered residents of an institution and are ineligible for SNAP, regardless of meeting a student exemption.

This includes students living on or off campus who buy a meal ticket from the institution. It does not matter if the purchase of the meal ticket is required or by choice.

Students who meet one of the student exemptions and do not receive the majority of their meals from a meal plan are not residents of an institution and may be eligible for SNAP, if they meet all other eligibility requirements.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

What if you receive Meals on Campus?

Scenario #1: Jackie is enrolled full-time at Marion University. She lives on campus in a dorm and has a meal plan for breakfast and lunch every weekday. This is equivalent to 10 meals per week. She is not considered resident of an institution because 10 meals per week is less than the majority of 21 total weekly meals.

If Jackie meets student eligibility and all other eligibility requirement she qualifies to receive SNAP benefits.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

What if you receive Meals on Campus?

Scenario #2: Kirk is enrolled full time at Oakland University and lives on campus in a dorm. Kirk is required to purchase a meal plan that includes 21 meals per week. Kirk does not like the food offered and applies for SNAP stating that although he pays for the meal plan, he doesn't eat the food. Kirk has more than 50% of his meals paid for, even though he chooses not to use his meal plan, and therefore is not eligible to receive SNAP benefits. Kirk is considered a resident of institution that provides meals as part of its normal service.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

What if you have Dormitory Costs?

[PM 03-04-03-b](#) Dormitory Costs (without meals)

Dormitory cost paid by eligible students of higher education may be permitted as an allowable shelter expense for SNAP **if** the dormitory costs are solely for shelter and does not include meal fees as part of the cost.

- **The expense may be allowed as a shelter cost when determining SNAP Expedited Service.**
- Students typically pay dormitory costs up-front in a one-time payment for the semester or quarter. If paid as a one-time payment, the charges may be considered continual charges and can be prorated accordingly.
- Verification is not needed unless it is questionable that the student pays for their own dormitory costs and if a fee for meals is included in the costs.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

What if Shelter Expenses are shared with others?

[PM 13-01-08-a](#)

If shelter expenses are shared with another family/members, IDHS will only allow the amount the unit is responsible for paying.

STATE FUNDED FOOD ASSISTANCE

State Funded Food Assistance benefits for foreign-born Victims of Trafficking, Torture, or Other Serious Crimes (VTTC) start with the date of application.

They are eligible if they have applied or are preparing to file an application for T Visa, U Visa or Asylum status. These customers must also meet other non-financial and financial eligibility.

GENERAL ITEMS TO PROVIDE WHEN APPLYING FOR BENEFITS



WHAT TO REPORT AT TIME OF APPLICATION

- Customers must report all income and resources they are asked about on the application and provide documentation.
- To speed up the application process, customers should provide verification of income for the last 30 days, i.e. paystubs or other proof of income.
- Income is any money received in exchange for work performed or from the sale of goods or services, (i.e. earned income, or as a benefit, unearned income) see next slide for examples.
- A resource is any real or personal property, such as bank accounts, life insurance, property the customer owns, etc. (see next slide for examples).

Note: Many required verifications can be obtained through automated clearances, such as identity, Illinois residency, Incarceration, Social Security Benefits etc.

WHAT TO REPORT AT TIME OF APPLICATION

Earned Income	Unearned Income	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Salary,• Wages,• Tips,• Self-Employment,• Income in Kind,• Rental Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Government Benefits<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Social Security (SSA),- Unemployment Benefits,- Railroad Benefits,• Private Pensions,• Child Support Payments,• Alimony Received,• Rental Income,• Contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Checking/Savings Account• Stocks, Bonds, Mutual Funds,• Life Insurance,• Property,• Vehicle,• Burial Funds

VERIFICATIONS

- Additional information to complete processing the application for benefits may be needed. Policy guidelines assist with determining what information needs to be verified for eligibility.
- The caseworker will use electronic sources to determine if certain information is required.
- When additional information is needed, the customer may receive a *Verification Checklist* in the mail asking to provide additional documents. Typically, the customer is given 10 days to respond to this request. If the customer fails to respond, their request for benefits may be denied.

APPLYING FOR BENEFITS

A completed application is required to receive Cash, Medical, or SNAP benefits. An application must contain a name, address, and signature to begin the application process.

FREQUENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Questions	Answers
1. If college students are behind on their rent, is there assistance for back payments?	Yes. Please see IDHS: Housing (state.il.us) for more information on housing assistance.
2. Are students with mental health diagnosis considered a disability in this program?	Yes.
3. For students in professional programs such as medical school, law school etc. they do not typically qualify for work study as they are considered 'Graduate Students', could this type of educational program be considered "on-the-job training" to qualify them for SNAP benefits?	Unfortunately, their classroom and clinical hours are not considered as on-the-job training.
4. If a student receives SNAP and works on a grant that does not deduct taxes, will this impact their ability to continue receiving SNAP?	The student working an average of 20 hours per week can be eligible regardless of whether taxes are deducted from their wages.
5. How does SNAP Student of Higher Education apply to international students who are either married or not? Does their mental health diagnosis serve as a qualifier for receiving support?	International students as well as non-international student must meet Citizenship/Immigration and residency eligibility. Please see PM 03-01-00: Citizen/USCIS Status for more information.

FREQUENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Questions	Answers
6. If enrolled in an internship, does the internship have to be a paid internship?	No it does not.
7. When students are applying for SNAP and they have a joint lease, what information does the student need to include?	When completing the application, the individual would list the people they are living with but not requesting benefits under a section that asks this question. They would indicate what their portion they are responsible for. No verification of rent or lease is required.
8. Are there options for international student?	International student would have to meet residency and Citizenship/Immigration requirements. Please see PM 03-01-00: Citizen/USCIS Status for more information.
9. If students are completing a full-time internship for their program, can they apply for SNAP?	Yes. Regulations convey SNAP eligibility to students participating in on-the-job training program.

FREQUENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Questions	Answers
10. There are different rules for SNAP of student of Higher Education, are there different rules for other programs.	Medical programs such as AABD Medical, Family Health Plans ACA Adult, Family Planning and All Kids do not have a requirement for students of higher education. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) does have a requirement. Please see PM 21-02-08: Associate/Bachelor Degree Program for more information.
11. Can a student who resides in a dorm, put their dorm as their residence?	Yes, and they may claim dormitory costs if the costs is solely for shelter and does not include meals.
12. Can you provide the number for the hotline?	1-800-843-5154 TTY 1-866-324-5553
13. Can you provide the IDHS website	IDHS: Illinois Department of Human Services

APPLYING FOR BENEFITS

How Can A Customers Apply for Benefits?

- Application for Benefits Eligibility (ABE) – www.abe.illinois.gov
 - ABE is available via internet 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. An application submitted via ABE requires an electronic signature.
- If the customer is currently receiving benefits, they may use Manage My Case (MMC) to submit renewals, report changes and monitor status.
- Customers can also mail-in or drop off a paper application [Form IL444-2378B: Application for Cash, SNAP, and Medical](#) assistance at the Family Community Resource Center (FCRC). To download the application please go to [IDHS: Cash, SNAP & Medical Assistance \(state.il.us\)](#).
- The ABE Call Center will take applications over the phone for **SNAP and Medical only**. To apply over the phone, call the IDHS hotline:
 - 1-(800) 843-6154
 - 1-(866) 324-5553 TTY/Nextalk

SUMMARY

You have learned of the various IDHS benefit programs offered to customers who need cash assistance, medical assistance, and food.

There are different ways a customer may apply for benefits. They can apply electronically via ABE, over phone by calling our call center and in person.

Remind customer to assist with a speedy determination, provide verification of income for the last 30 days such as paystubs or other proof of income.

RESOURCES

- [SNAP Brochure](#)
- [Medical Programs Brochure](#)
- [TANF Brochure](#)
- [AABD Cash Brochure](#)
- Application Request for Cash Assistance- Medical Assistance- SNAP Application Form IL444-2378B go to [IDHS: Cash, SNAP & Medical Assistance \(state.il.us\)](#)
- Application for Benefits Eligibility (ABE) – [www.abe.illinois.gov](#)
- [SNAP Eligibility Calculator](#)