



Rhode Island Department of Human Services

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP) FACTS

Immigration Status

Immigrants who have come to the United States as refugee or asylee may be eligible for SNAP benefits. *

Applicants still must meet income eligibility guidelines.

Receiving SNAP benefits does not affect an application for citizenship.

An immigrant will not be deported, denied entry to the U.S. or denied permanent status or a green card because their family receives SNAP. The U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services does not consider an immigrant who receives SNAP to be a “public charge”.

Immigrants with Legal Permanent Resident status may be eligible for SNAP benefits. *

Children under age 18 who have Legal Permanent Resident (LPR) status may be eligible for SNAP benefits.

Adults age 18 or older with LPR status may be eligible for SNAP benefits only after having LPR status for five years. That date can be found on their green card.

Adults with LPR status who have not had that status for 5 years may also be eligible for benefits if they have served in the US armed forces or have 40 quarters of work history registered with the US Social Security Administration.

Immigrants may need to provide income information for their sponsor.

Immigrants who were sponsored to come to the United States by an individual sponsor who signed an Affidavit of Support may be subject to *sponsor deeming*. The Affidavit of Support stated that the sponsor would provide a certain level of financial support to that immigrant they sponsored. Immigrants who have LPR status and are age 18 or older will need to provide income information of their sponsor with their SNAP application and a portion of that sponsor’s income will be included when determining eligibility. LPRs must provide their sponsor’s income until the immigrant becomes a citizen, has 40 quarters of work history with SSA, or until the sponsor dies. There are a few exceptions to sponsor deeming and an immigrant may claim “indigence” reporting that their sponsor does not give them any financial support.

Children of immigrants may be eligible even if their parent does not qualify.

Children who are Legal Permanent Residents or US citizens may receive SNAP benefits even if their parents do not meet immigrant eligibility guidelines.

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SNAP Immigration Status



In this situation, adult household members who do not qualify for SNAP will only have to prove income and household expenses. Proof of identity and immigration status for the ineligible adult household members is not necessary.

Undocumented individuals are not eligible for SNAP benefits.

Undocumented immigrants are NOT eligible for SNAP, but other members of their household (including children who are US citizens) may be eligible. A person who is undocumented may apply for other members of their household and indicate on the application that they are not asking for benefits for themselves. They will not be asked to provide proof of their immigration status and RI DHS does not share information about them with USCIS or ICE.

Immigrants with temporary status are not eligible for SNAP benefits.

Immigrants on student or work visas or those with temporary protected status are ineligible for SNAP benefits.

** Immigrants with the below statuses may also be eligible to receive SNAP benefits under certain circumstances.*

- Certain American Indians board abroad
- Hmong or Highland Laotian tribal members during the Vietnam era
- Deportation withheld
- Cuban/Haitian Entrants
- Victims of Severe Trafficking
- Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrants (SIV)
- Amerasian immigrants
- Elderly Non-citizens: elderly individuals born on or before August 22, 1931 and lawfully residing in the United States on August 22, 1996
- Children under eighteen (18): Qualified non-citizen children under 18 years of age
- Individuals receiving benefits or assistance for blindness or disability
- Military Connection: Individuals who are lawfully residing in a State and are on active duty (other than for training) in the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard (but not full-time National Guard) or who are honorably discharged veterans who have not been discharged due to non-citizen status
- Parolees: Individuals paroled into the United States under § 212(d) (5) of the INA for at least one (1) year
- Conditional Entrants: Individuals granted conditional entry under §203(a)(7) of the INA as in effect before April 1, 1980
- Battered Non-Citizens: Under certain circumstances, a battered non-citizen spouse or child, non-citizen parent of a battered child or a non-citizen child of a battered parent with a petition pending under §§ 204(a)(1)(A) or (B) or 244(a)(3) of the INA.

Questions?

Visit our website: www.dhs.ri.gov

Call: 1-855-MY-RIDHS (1-855-697-4347) Monday – Friday, except holidays, from 8:30AM-3:00PM

Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Customer Service: 1-888-979-9939

Last Updated: 2.2024



SNAP Immigration Status



Immigration Status	Eligible? *	Subject to 5-Year Rule	Subject to Sponsor Deeming
Immigrants who are eligible			
Naturalized US Citizens	Yes	No	No
Immigrants who have had Legal Permanent Resident (LPR) status for 5 or more years	Yes	No	Possibly
Refugees, Asylees, Cuban/Haitian Entrants, Trafficking Victims	Yes	No	No
Lawful permanent residents with 40 quarters of work	Yes	No	No
Lawful permanent residents who've served in the US military	Yes	No	No
Lawful permanent residents under the age of 18	Yes	No	No
Immigrants who are eligible with certain restrictions			
Adult immigrants whose sponsor signed an affidavit of support but have not achieved 40 quarters of work	Yes	Yes	Yes
Qualified immigrants who are disabled and receiving disability benefits	Yes	No	Yes
Ineligible Immigrants			
Qualified immigrant adults who have been in the US for fewer than 5 years	No		
Non-qualified immigrants lawfully residing in the US (ie. Student visa, temporary protected status)	No		
Undocumented immigrants	No		

Definitions

Legal Permanent Residents (LPRs) – green card holders, LPR status timelines use the date on the immigrant’s green card.

Sponsor – a US citizen who signs an affidavit of support indicating he or she would like to bring an immigrant to the US and will provide some financial support for that immigrant.

Sponsor Deeming – the portion of a sponsor’s income considered part of the immigrant’s income.

**In this field, “no” means that the applicant’s immigration status doesn’t allow them to be eligible for SNAP. “Yes” means that the immigration status does not prevent them from being eligible, but the applicant must still meet other eligibility criteria in order to receive benefits.*

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