

SNAP Foods:

Policies and procedures

What is SNAP?

The Georgia General Assembly and the state Department of Human Resources contracted with the Georgia Food Banks to provide food assistance for TANF eligible clients and their children.

This program, the **State Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**, is funded with federal **TANF** money designed to serve low income families with children. Georgia is one of fifteen states to have a state food commodities program.

The funding for SNAP is used to purchase high demand groceries

by the eight Second Harvest Food Banks in Georgia.

This source of funding means that Food Banks and partner agencies will be assisting DHR determine the number of low-income, TANF eligible families that need food assistance.

Food Banks purchase SNAP inventory throughout the fiscal year. Partner agencies may access the food through their food bank's normal distribution procedures.



The State Nutrition Assistance Program began in October 2000

Partner agencies must verify families' eligibility for SNAP foods. Information to make the proper determination is offered in this newsletter. If you have any questions, please contact the Agency Services staff at your local Food Bank.

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Special points of interest:

- ◆ *SNAP foods are available through your local Georgia Food Bank.*
- ◆ *The program supports Georgia families with children.*
- ◆ *Agencies must continue excellent distribution & usage reporting..*

Which Agencies are Eligible?

The funding for SNAP is from a very specific federal program designed to serve low income families with children. The state is entrusting us to spend this money correctly.

Obviously, this means partner agencies which do not serve children will

be unable to use SNAP foods. Additionally, agencies which occasionally serve children will not be able to receive SNAP foods on a regular basis. However, the following types of partner agencies should feel free to use SNAP:

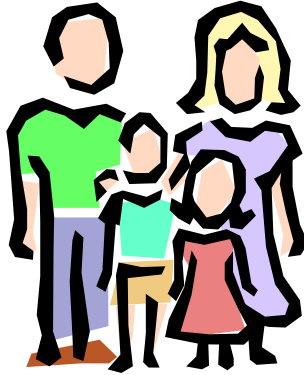
- ◆ Food pantries
- ◆ Child care centers
- ◆ After-school programs
- ◆ Family shelters
- ◆ Group homes for children



Which clients are eligible?

Families with children.
Families with children.
Families with children.

Here is a listing of indicators you can use to determine whether or not a family is eligible to receive SNAP foods. A family that can show evidence of at least one of these items can receive SNAP foods.



Serve families with children

TANF clients:

- TANF EBT card

- TANF eligibility letter from DFCS
- Food Stamp EBT Card
- TANF Support Services
- TANF EBT card

At-risk families

- Eligibility for USDA commodities
- Public Housing resident
- Section 8 tenant
- WIC card – current
- Medicaid card
- Peachcare for Kids card

- Free/reduced price school meals
- Full time hourly wages of \$8 or less
- Low income family w/ newborn infant
- No employment, applying for TANF/Food Stamps

TANF Transitional Services, such as:

- Child care voucher
- Transportation help
- Job skills classes
- Work uniforms
- Food Stamp EBT card

Questions? Check with your food bank or local DFCS office.

Defining “TANF clients”

A few years ago, Congress established a new welfare program. Called the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, it can provide eligible families with modest cash assistance for no more than 48 months.

The primary goal of TANF is to offer low-income parents with incentives to become self-reliant. Clients can be assisted with job placement,

Not having to worry about feeding one’s children, allows a TANF parent to focus on performing well at the job or at school.

work readiness training, referred to technical training programs or to community-based volunteer service. Most TANF client families also re-

ceive Food Stamps and Medicaid.

TANF clients will have correspondence from their county DFCS (Division of Family and Children Services) office indicating their participation. Parents will have what are referred to as EBT cards, as well. EBT cards resemble bank ATM cards.

Defining “Transitional TANF clients”

Georgia offers TANF clients 48 months of cash assistance. The goal for the parent and his/her caseworker is to secure paid employment before the end of the 48 month period.

Occasionally, a TANF parent who has reached the end of the 48 month period, may be given what are referred to as “transitional support services.”

These services vary from person to person. For example, let’s say that Ms. Jones, a mother of two, has reached the end of her 48 months of TANF eligibility. She will be starting a new job during the 49th month. Her DFCS caseworker determines that Ms. Jones is eligible



SNAP is one way to support hard-working, low income families.

for six months of transitional services and will arrange to provide Ms. Jones with MARTA tokens to get to and from her new job and to pay for after-school services for Ms. Jones youngest child.

Ms. Jones is receiving Transitional TANF services during those 6 months.

Defining “At-Risk Families”

One of the principal goals of the TANF program is to reduce the number of families receiving public assistance. States are permitted to design programs which provide valuable supports to needy families and help keep them off the welfare programs.

SNAP is one such support service. Providing low-income families with necessary



groceries may be enough of a financial boost to prevent a family from needing TANF cash assistance. Families in this type of circumstance are defined as being, “at risk.”

These families might include those who are eligible for USDA commodities, reside in public or section 8 housing, are receiving WIC vouchers, food stamps, Peachcare for Kids health insurance, Medicaid, free or reduced

price school meals, earn less than \$8 an hour, have a newly born infant, have applied for TANF but not received benefits as yet, or are residing at a shelter for battered women and their children.

Any one of these circumstances makes a family eligible for SNAP foods.

Agencies should make a note regarding which eligibility criteria were used for each family receiving SNAP groceries.

What foods are available?

Below is a partial list of foods which have been purchased to date. Please use this list for information only and NOT as a shopping guide. The Food Bank cannot guarantee having any specific product in stock.

- Tuna
- Peanut butter

- Frozen chicken quarters
- Frozen fish
- Frozen lasagna
- Canned peaches
- Canned fruit salad
- Fresh milk
- Fresh eggs

Your product suggestions are very helpful. Please let us know which products you do—and don’t need

Please comment on the feedback form in Eharvest

- 100% fruit juice
- Turkey
- Canned pinto beans
- Beef hot dogs

What about Record Keeping?

We have redesigned the Monthly Service Reports (MSR). There is a separate form for reporting SNAP food usage! This form asks agencies to indicate the number of families receiving SNAP as groceries and/or the number of prepared meals using SNAP food. It asks for information regarding the type of eligibility for food pantry families, as well.

Member agencies are responsible to make sure that the Food Bank has your Monthly Service Report and your SNAP Usage Form by the 9th day of each month. For example, January’s

report is due February 9th. If the report has not been submitted the Agency account will automatically deactivate in Eharvest. The account will become active once the monthly report been submitted.

If your agency is more than one month behind you must call the ACFB to input the past reports and risk being ineligible to receive SNAP foods for a period of time.



Monthly Service Reports are due on the 9th day of each month.

Please call a member of the Agency Services staff if you have questions about these reports.

SNAP Foods!

Please read this entire newsletter to find out important information about this new program.

Questions?
Call
678-553-6000



SNAP Foods are a partnership between the Atlanta Community Food Bank, the Georgia Food Bank Association and the Georgia Dept. of Human Resources.



A New Way to Get Food to Low-Income Families in Georgia.

The mission of the Food Bank is to empower, educate and engage our community in the fight against hunger. We see the State Nutrition Assistance Program and funding through the Department of Human Resources as a vital part of our mission. We will be engaging all our partners – new and old. We have been and will continue to educate state decision makers and partner agencies about the central role of food security to the success of transitioning from welfare to gainful employment. We will empower ourselves to continue to find new avenues toward community food security. Most importantly, of course, is the empowerment of families facing difficult times to accomplish—with confidence—the tasks that mark a life well-lived.

Partnership with DHR/DFCS

Georgia's Department of Human Resources administers a variety of programs designed to assist residents of the state: foster care, protective services of seniors and children, food stamps, TANF, child support collections, mental health services and programs for the mentally retarded among others.

DHR's role as the state site for the TANF program has received a great deal of public notice over the past few years. New federal and state regulations about participa-

tion in public benefit programs have dramatically changed the manner in which the Division of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) must operate.



Support services to include SNAP.

One of these changes is to focus on employment and education of TANF clients in an effort to reduce their reliance on the program in the future. An exciting aspect of this new direction is the provision of a broad range of support services to TANF clients and those in transition.

Support services can be offered to persons applying for TANF, current TANF clients, former clients who are in need of help to maintain employment and the children in such households. These services can include child care subsidies, work uniforms and shoes, textbooks, MARTA cards or other transportation costs, tools required for a job, job skills readiness classes and – with the advent of SNAP – provision of additional food resources.

We look forward finding community solutions to the community problems of poverty and food insecurity.