

# Do the New Federal Food Assistance Changes Affect You?

## Changes in federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program eligibility based on immigration status

### If you are:

A U.S. Citizen and U.S. National	A Lawful Permanent Resident (Green Card Holder)	A COFA* Migrant	A Cuban Hatian Entrant
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- You are still eligible for federal SNAP benefits.

### If you are:

A refugee, asylee or immigrant with humanitarian protections

- You will be eligible for state-funded food benefits instead of federal SNAP benefits.
- In May 2026, DSHS will shift you automatically to state-funded benefits.
- Your benefit amount will remain the same.
- You won't have to reapply because of this change.

## Changes in federal SNAP work requirements

People who receive food assistance and who are able to work and do not meet an exemption must meet work requirements under federal law. If they do not, they are only eligible for food benefits for three months in a 36-month time period.

### If you are:

Younger than age 18 or older than age 65	An American Indian or Alaska Native	Pregnant	Disabled	Have a child in your home who is younger than age 14
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- You do not have to meet the new work requirements.
- Your food benefits will continue as usual.

### If you are:

A Veteran	A person experiencing homelessness	A youth under age 24 who aged out of foster care	Age 18 to 64 without a dependent under age 14	Not Disabled or Pregnant
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- You will need to meet work requirements to remain eligible for your food benefits.
- At your next eligibility review, you will receive a screening and verbal and written notice of those work requirements.
- You won't lose your food benefits before your eligibility review and screening.

## Changes for households who are receiving Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program

The recent federal law change removes the state's ability to use receiving LIHEAP to give households the highest utility deduction for households without an elderly (age 60+) or disabled member. This means:

- Your benefits might go down.
- This change might impact your benefits in May 2026 and beyond.

### What can you do if you think these changes apply to you?

- ✓ Complete your eligibility review on time.
- ✓ At that time, ensure that your information is correct.
- ✓ Ask questions: You can call the DSHS Contact Center at 877-501-2233 or visit your local [Community Services Office](#).

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### Need help finding more resources:

- You can find local food banks and other resources by calling 211 or visiting [wa211.org](http://wa211.org) to learn more.
- This [DSHS reduced-cost services guide](#) has many more local services and resources that might be helpful to your household.



#### **IMPORTANT:**

If one person in a food assistance household becomes ineligible, others in the household may continue receiving food benefits.

\*Compact of Free Association, or COFA, migrants are people from the Freely Associated States — Micronesia, Marshall Islands and Palau — who have special permission to live, work and study in the U.S. under the Compact of Free Association.