

Emergency Food Benefit Supplements Frequently Asked Questions Updated May 2021

DSHS is issuing additional food benefits via EBT card to most households who receive Basic Food. This started with March and April 2020 benefits and will continue on a month-to-month basis.

Why is this happening?

Congress approved extra benefits to give people the ability to buy more food. This will reduce the number of times people need to go shopping for groceries. It will also limit the number of people at stores and lower the chance for COVID-19 contact.

When will I get the extra benefits?

The issuance dates for this program may vary depending on federal approval and if the first of the month is on a Sunday. This means the earliest you may receive benefits is on the 2nd of the month.

I just applied for food assistance this month. Will I get extra benefits?

If you are eligible for a food assistance benefit greater than \$0, you will get the maximum benefit amount for your household size, or, if your benefit is less than \$95 from the maximum amount, you will get your benefit plus \$95.

What are the maximum benefit amounts?

Eligible Household Members	Maximum Benefit
1	\$234
2	430
3	616

4	782
5	929
6	1114
7	1232
8	1408
9	1584
10	1760
Each Additional	+ 176

I am eligible for Basic Food, but I don't get any benefits. Will I get extra benefits?

No. Households that are eligible for \$0 are not eligible for extra

I get WASHCAP/Transitional Food Assistance/Food Assistance for Legal Immigrants benefits. Will I get extra benefits?

Yes. The extra benefit applies to all food assistance programs.

How much extra benefit will I get?

You will get the difference between your regular benefit and the maximum amount for your household size or \$95 if your regular benefit is within \$95 of the maximum amount for your household size For example:

Example 1:

You and your partner both work and get a total of \$200 of food benefits on May 10. The maximum allotment for a two-person household is \$430. $\$430 - \200 is \$230. You will get an additional \$230 in extra benefits. You will get your normal \$200 with an additional \$230 for a total of \$430 on your regular date, May 10.

Example 2:

You receive Social Security and get a total of \$210 on May 17. The maximum allotment for a one-person household is \$234. $\$234 - \210 is \$24. Since \$24 is less than \$95, you'll get an additional \$95 in extra benefits. You'll get your normal \$210 with an additional \$95 for a total of \$305 on your regular date, May 17.

Example 3:

You and your 2 children have no income and get a total of \$616 of food benefits on May 13. The maximum allotment for a three-person household is \$616. Since you already receive the maximum benefits for your household size, you'll get an additional \$95 in extra benefits. You'll get your normal \$616 with an additional \$95 for a total of \$711 on your regular date, May 13.

Will I have to pay back these benefits?

These are extra benefits meant for your use. There is no reason you'd have to pay them back.

Will I lose these extra benefits if I don't use them right away?

No. You are allowed 365 days from the date of your last debit activity to use the extra and regular benefits.

Will these extra benefits affect my immigration status? No.

Will DSHS issue extra benefits every month?

We will review if we can give you extra benefits for your household size on a month-to-month basis, depending on federal approval.

Will DSHS send me a letter when I get the extra benefit? Will DSHS send me a letter if I am no longer eligible for the extra benefit?

No. We are not sending letters when we issue or stop the extra benefits. If you want to know when your benefits are in your account, you can call the number on your EBT card to check your balance or use your Client Benefit Account on www.washingtonconnection.org.

Should I call the Customer Service Contact Center?

Due to our higher than normal call volumes, we are asking you don't call the call center about the extra benefits. Check for the latest information on our social media accounts on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/dshs.wa) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/dshs_wa) or at www.dshs.wa.gov.