

HOW TO APPLY FOR AND USE YOUR FOOD STAMP BENEFITS

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How to Apply For Food Stamps

To make an application for food stamps, complete the Application For Food Stamps (form DFA 285 A-1), sign the form and give it to the receptionist. The date of your application is the date we receive it in the food stamp office. Be sure to turn it in before you leave the office today. Tell the receptionist if you need help in filling out the forms. Food Stamp rules say we must give you food stamps within 30 days from the date you apply if you are eligible.

If You Cannot Wait 30 Days

You may qualify for “Expedited Service” if:

- A. The cost of your housing and utilities is more than this month’s income (before deductions) combined with the amount of your liquid resources (cash, savings at home or in a bank, stocks bonds, etc.):
- B. Your cash, savings at home or in a bank, stocks, bonds, etc. are worth no more than \$100 and this month’s income is less than \$150. (This may include your cash assistance grant.)

If you are a seasonal farm worker, we have special rules. Let the worker processing your application know if you are a seasonal farm worker.

You can request emergency food stamps (Expedited Service) by completing questions 4, 6, 7, 9 & 10 on the Application For Food Stamps form DFA 285 A-1.

Before We Can Give You Food Stamps

- We must see something that proves your identity, such as:
- Your driver’s license or DMV ID
- A work or school ID
- Voter Registration Card

- Birth Certificate
If you do not have any identity papers, you can give us the name of someone who can verify your identity over the telephone, such as your employer or landlord.

Provide Proof That You Are Eligible

You will also need to show us your proof of:

- Income or that it has stopped
- Social Security Number
- Allowable expenses (rent, utilities, child care)
- Non-citizen status if you are not a U.S. citizen
However, if you have trouble bringing them in, tell your worker. If you qualify for expedited service, we can give you your first allotment of food stamps while waiting for these papers.

For more information you may call:

Sacramento (916) 874-2256

Galt (209) 745-3484

N. Sacramento (916) 648-0894

For hearing and speech impaired, dial (916) 874-2599 or 711 (California Relay Service) then one of the above phone numbers.

To Receive Your Food Stamp Benefits

If you meet all the requirements for EXPEDITED SERVICE you will get an Electronic Benefits Transfer Card within three days after you turn in your food stamp application.

Using Your Card

Use your card just like a debit bankcard at any grocery store that will accept EBT. You may use it for any amount up to your remaining balance.

Who Will Take My Card?

Most large grocery stores and many smaller stores, some Certified Farmers' Markets will accept your EBT card.



You will be given full details on how and where to use your card when your application for food stamp is approved.

How Much Will I Get?

If you are eligible, the amount of food stamp benefits you receive each month will be based on how much income you have, how many persons are in your home and how many special income deductions you are entitled to.

When you are approved for benefits, you will receive a letter (Notice of Action) telling you how much in food stamps you will get each month and how long; usually food stamps are approved for six months to a year.

Any time your benefit amount is changed, you will receive another notice telling you what the change is. If the change reduces or stops your food stamps, in most cases, you must receive a letter ten days before your food stamps are reduced or terminated. The notice of action letters you receive explain all of these rights for you and show you how to request a State Hearing; your benefits may be continued unchanged until after the hearing.

BE SURE TO READ ALL NOTICE OF ACTION LETTERS YOU RECEIVE.

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