WHAT IS WASHINGTON BASIC FOOD?

Good question, Washington Basic Food is also referred to as Food Stamps, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT). If eligible, you’ll be provided with a card (similar to a debit card) that is loaded with funds every month which you can spend at participating locations, like Safeways and local farmer’s markets.

You can check to see how much you may qualify for with the Benefits Estimator.

HOW TO APPLY

Applying for Washington Basic Food can be confusing and overwhelming. We hope that this guide can provide you support, and you have people to talk to at the Pantry for support if you need it.

When applying for Washington Basic Food, you’ll need to provide information about your income, assets, utilities, childcare costs, housing costs, and your citizenship status. You will be required to provide your Social Security Number, date of birth, and name in order to complete the application. Therefore, be sure to have all this information with you when you start your application. Here is how you can apply for the program.

- Washington State has a program for folks that do not meet the eligibility requirements for WBF due to citizenship status, called Food Assistance Program (FAP), which provides 75% of the aid that WBF does, and is still well worth it.
- Continue on for application instructions, as it is the same process for both the FAP and WBF programs
- Your household income must meet income limits set for the program i.e. $1,354/mo for a single member household, $1,832/mo for a two person household, full table here
- Amidst the pandemic, the income limits have broadened, so you are still encouraged to apply if you have a higher income than the original limits
- Your household income will be monthly earned and unearned income. Unearned income includes cash benefits you receive through SSI, disability, child support etc.
- Student applicants have reported that their work study status has deemed them eligible for SNAP
- Generally, your checking and savings accounts should be under $2,250, however if you are in school and/or are receiving loans it muddles the situation a bit, and you are still encouraged to apply if your account balance is above $2,250
- If a household is responsible for a person aged above 60 or disabled, permitted resources can be up to $3,500.

Sourced from https://www.benefitsapplication.com/apply/WA/Food%20Stamps
The program will also consider your expenses in order to determine your eligibility for the program. Expenses such as rent and payments for child care will affect your eligibility for the Basic Food program.

**APPLYING ONLINE**

You can apply online for Washington Basic Food/SNAP through the [Washington Connection website](#). If you want to fill the application in a language other than English, you will find links at the bottom.

- You’ll need to create an account in order to resume your application if you are planning to fill it in more than one session.
- Your data entered on each page will be saved for 90 days.
- If you don’t have an account, you can click Save and Finish Later anytime and follow instructions to create an account.
- You will be able to come back to your application at any time during 90 days once you’ve created your account.
- The required proof of income, identification, etc. will be required in the form of photos or PDFs, or you can opt to mail physical copies in.
- Unless directed otherwise after submitting the online application call 1-877-501-2233, the Department of Social and Health Services customer line for a follow up interview, the same number for a by phone interview, but submitting the online application will speed up the process.

**APPLY BY PHONE**

Due to the pandemic, in-person applications are not possible. You can apply over the phone by having your information ready and calling 1-877-501-2233 Monday-Friday, 8am to 5pm.

You’ll need to have the same information as you would applying online, you will just be asked to mail physical copies in, please do not mail in original documents. Also note that during this covid crisis, there will be increased call wait-times. If you need an interpreter they will provide one at no cost.

**TIPS FOR SUCCESS**

- If you are able to, apply online and upload your proof of identification and income virtually, calling and having to mail in your documents makes the process take a bit longer.
- It never hurts to apply if you feel in need of aid.
- The Washington Connection website that you apply for WBF through can also connect you to other sources of aid or services.
- Find your proof of income (pay stubs, student loan receipts, etc.), and your expenses (tuition, rent, utility, and internet receipts) and make copies or photos ahead of time to reduce frustration during the application process.
- If you are approved for SNAP, your school aged children will be automatically enrolled for the free school lunch program.

**CONTACT US**

If you have any questions about applying for WA Basic Food (SNAP), please email:

pantrysupport@uw.edu