

Common Food Stamp Myths Concerning Elderly Households

These misconceptions might be keeping your elderly customers from applying for food stamp benefits.

Please help us educate your customers about the nutritious benefits of the Food Stamp Program.

1

The Food Stamp Program is a welfare program.

The Food Stamp Program is not a welfare program. It is a nutrition assistance program designed to help low-income individuals and families buy and consume nutritious foods.

2

Elderly people only receive \$10 a month in food stamp benefits.

Our fiscal year 2000 statistics showed:

- elderly people who lived alone received an average of \$44 a month; and,
- elderly people not living alone received an average benefit of \$116 a month.

3

Elderly people cannot own or be buying a home. If they own or are buying a home, the government will take it.

Individuals can own or buy a home and still get food stamps. The home and its lot are not counted as a resource in the Food Stamp Program. The Food Stamp Program does not require a person to sign away their home.

4

Elderly people must go to the food stamp office for an interview.

If an elderly person is not able to go to the food stamp office, he or she may request a telephone interview. The person may also ask a relative, pastor, neighbor, etc., to attend the interview as an authorized representative. Applicants for and recipients of SSI may also apply for food stamp benefits at the Social Security Office.

5

Elderly households must be re-certified for food stamp benefits every three months.

If all adult household members are elderly or disabled, the State agency may assign this household a 24-month certification period.