

## If my household is eligible, how much will we get?

For October 1, 2003, through September 30, 2004, the table below shows the most you could get if you have no income. As your income goes up, the amount of food stamps you will get goes down.

People in Household	Maximum Monthly Allotment*
1	\$ 141
2	259
3	371
4	471
5	560
6	672
7	743

*\*Amounts are higher in Alaska and Hawaii.*

To see if you may be eligible, go to our web site [www.foodstamps-step1.usda.gov](http://www.foodstamps-step1.usda.gov). Answer the questions. If it looks like you are eligible, the computer will tell you an estimated benefit amount.

## Are food stamps cash?

No. Food stamp benefits come on a plastic card that you use like a bank card to buy food. Some States still use paper coupons. Most stores take food stamp benefits.

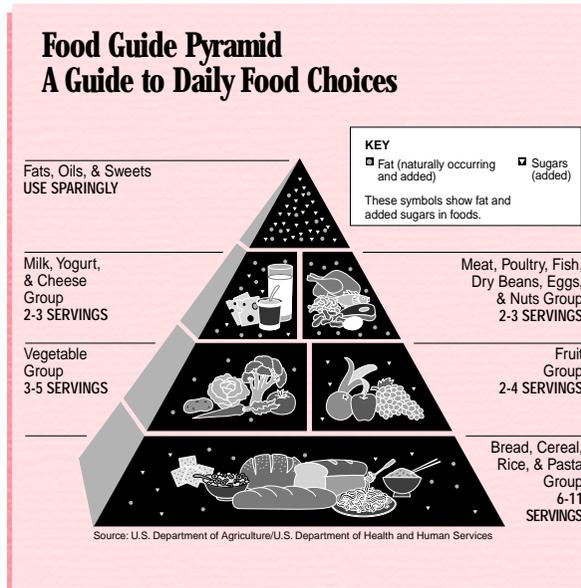
## What if I have more questions?

You should call your local food stamp office. Our toll-free number, 1-800-221-5689, can direct you to your State's toll-free number.

For more information about Food and Nutrition Service programs, please visit our web site at [www.fns.usda.gov](http://www.fns.usda.gov).

## Choose foods to promote a healthy future at every stage of life.

- Food stamps expand your ability to eat a variety of foods.
- Let the Pyramid guide your food choices.



- Aim for a healthy weight.
- Be physically active each day – at least 30 minutes for adults and 60 minutes for children.
- Choose a variety of grains (especially whole grains), fruits, and vegetables daily.

**USDA** United States Department of Agriculture  
Food and Nutrition Service  
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*USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

**Food  
Stamps  
Make  
America  
Stronger.**



### What is the Food Stamp Program?

The program helps people with little or no income to buy food for a healthy diet.

### How do I get food stamps?

You can find food stamps under the government section of your phone book. Look under "human services department."

Call the food stamp office to set up a meeting. Ask what papers you need to bring. This might include your pay stubs, rent or mortgage payments, utility bills, child- or elder-care bills, and child-support orders (the court order and canceled checks).

At the food stamp office you will answer questions and sign papers. You may send a relative or friend to talk with the worker for you. Or you may be able to talk with a worker on the phone.

### Will I have to get a social security number?

You must have, or will have to get, a social security number for each household member, if you want that member to get benefits. Not all members of a household have to take part in the program. A person who does not want to receive food stamps does not have to give a social security number, but must give his or her financial information.

### Can legal noncitizens get food stamps?

You might be able to get food stamps. Talk with a food stamp worker about this. Even if you can't get food stamps, family members born in this country can. Getting food stamps won't hurt you if you want to become a citizen.

### Can I get help if I'm not working?

If you're able to work, you must look for work, take a job offer, or go to training.

### How many assets can we have?

Households with a member age 60 or older may have up to \$3,000 in countable assets. Other households may have up to \$2,000.

We don't count the assets of people who are receiving State cash assistance (TANF) or Federal supplemental security income (SSI). We don't count your home and up to \$4,650 of the fair market value of one car. We don't count a vehicle that you need to carry a physically disabled household member.

### How much income can we have?

We count most types of income. *Gross* income means income before any deductions. *Net income means gross income after deductions.* SSI and TANF households are already eligible. Households without an elderly or disabled member must meet both a gross and net income test. Households with an elderly or disabled member only have to meet a net income test.

For October 1, 2003, through September 30, 2004, the monthly income limits follow:

People in Household	Gross Monthly Income*	Net Monthly Income*
1	\$ 973	\$ 749
2	1,313	1010
3	1,654	1,272
4	1,994	1,534
5	2,334	1,795
6	2,674	2,057
7	3,014	2,319

### What are the allowable deductions?

- 20 percent of earned income;
- a standard deduction of \$134;\*
- medical expenses over \$35 a month for elderly or disabled members;
- certain dependent-care costs when needed for training, education, or work, but not more than \$200 for each child under age 2 and not more than \$175 for each other dependent;
- legally owed child support; and
- a percentage of shelter costs.

*\*Some larger households will get a higher deduction. Amounts are higher in Alaska and Hawaii. People who receive SSI in California are not eligible.*

