

# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

## Power Outage/Food Loss: Replacement SNAP Benefits



If your food was lost due to flooding, a fire, or lack of electricity to run your fridge or freezer, you may be able to get replacement SNAP benefits. You can ask for up to one month of replacement SNAP if you lost food that you bought with SNAP because:

- You lost power for 4 hours or more,
- Your utilities were shut off (for any reason),
- Your freezer or refrigerator stopped working, or
- There was damage from a fire, flood, or storm.

## How do I apply for replacement SNAP?

1. Tell DTA within 10 days of the food loss. You can do this in person, by phone, fax, or mail. The DTA Assistance Line has an automated option to report. Call 877-382-2363 and follow the prompts for reporting misfortune. Or, send DTA a note reporting the loss through **DTA Connect!**
2. Within 10 days of when you report the loss, you also need to get basic information and a signature to DTA. You can do this over the phone with a verbal signature, or by sending DTA's "Request for Replacement SNAP Benefits" form or a handwritten note with the same information. To make the process faster and easier, get DTA this information at the same time you do the report!

## What happens next?

DTA will confirm the issue through news reports, contacting a third party (such as the utility company or fire department), or (rarely) visiting your home. If you are eligible, DTA will replace up to one month of SNAP. DTA should issue replacement SNAP within 10 days of getting the report of the food loss, or within 2 days of getting the completed form (whichever is later).

## Other ways SNAP can help if there is an emergency

- If you have little or no income or cash in the bank and are not already getting SNAP, you may be eligible to get emergency SNAP benefits within 7 days. Visit [Mass.gov/SNAP](https://www.mass.gov/SNAP)
- If a natural disaster affects many people, the federal government can approve Disaster SNAP (DSNAP) for households not on SNAP. DSNAP is a disaster program with higher income rules.

## What are my rights if I am denied replacement SNAP?

- Call the DTA Assistance Line at **1-877-382-2363** to talk with a SNAP worker. If you disagree with what the SNAP worker says, you can also ask to speak to a Supervisor or the Office Director.
- Call the DTA Ombudsman's office at **617-348-5354** and ask them to review the case.
- Request a hearing if you disagree with DTA's decision. You can have the hearing by phone or in person.
- Contact your local Legal Services office for help or more information: [MassLegalHelp.org](https://www.masslegalservices.org)