

FAQ: Helping Agencies and SNAP Interviews

Does DTA have to interview every applicant?

Yes. Federal SNAP rules require all SNAP applicants to have an interview with a state SNAP worker. Community organizations cannot do this interview for the client, and a conversation with a helping agency cannot replace the DTA interview. The interview is usually done by phone. If an applicant applies in person at a local DTA office, they can choose to wait to meet with a DTA worker and have an in-person interview.

What happens during the interview?

During the interview, a DTA worker will:

- Screen for expedited (emergency) SNAP that can be issued within 7 days.
- Confirm the information on the SNAP application and information DTA gets through government data bases.
- Review documents sent in and explain what proofs are still needed.
- Start the process to issue an EBT card and explain how to use the EBT card.
- For applicants subject to the 3-month time limit, review the exemptions and work rules.
- Explain the certification period, reporting requirements, and when the Interim Report and Recertification is due.
- Answer any questions and offer to help if the applicant needs help getting proofs (including contacting a third party for information).
- Explain the applicant's rights and responsibilities and penalties for committing fraud or violating program rules.

How can helping organizations assist in the interview process?

- Remind SNAP applicants they can call the DTA Assistance Line (or, for seniors, Senior Assistance Office) at any time for an interview after DTA has received the application.
- Remind SNAP applicants to look out for notices about the interview (including checking DTA Connect)
- Call the DTA Assistance Line *with the SNAP applicant* for an interview – either a 3-way call or by speaker phone so the applicant can hear all the information. A helping agency can help with the interview as long as the SNAP applicant is present in person or by phone and gives oral or written consent.

NOTE: If the SNAP applicant assigns a trusted family member, friend, or agency to be an “authorized representative,” then that person can do the interview. That person is also responsible for the accuracy of the client information given to DTA. To assign an Authorized Representative, the applicant needs to sign DTA’s “Request to Choose Someone to Be My Authorized Representative” Form.