

MASSACHUSETTS
Department of
Higher Education

Hello! You are receiving this email from the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education because you are a college student who is a Massachusetts resident and who filled out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Dear <<Full Name>>:

I'm writing to let you know that, as a Massachusetts college student, you may be eligible for up to \$250 each month in food benefits. We encourage you to apply for SNAP, the U.S. food assistance program that can help you pay for groceries.

The pandemic has hit many students hard, but SNAP can help you pay for food so that you can afford to stay in college. It's OK to need extra help; everyone in Massachusetts benefits from your commitment to earning your degree!

The federal government has expanded college students' access to SNAP (formerly called Food Stamps). Right now, because of the pandemic, everyone who qualifies for SNAP gets the maximum amount for their household size (see chart below).

Eligible students can use SNAP benefits to buy food through an EBT card (like a debit card). SNAP can be used to buy food at supermarkets, local groceries, corner stores, farmers markets and [online](#) from Amazon, Walmart and ALDI (through Instacart).



There is no “shame” in using SNAP. It's how I fed my family when I was a graduate student in college years ago. Without it, I would have had to drop out of school and would never have earned my degree.

You may qualify for SNAP if you:

- Receive a MASSGrant or Pell Grant,
- Are eligible for work study (even if you do not have a work study job), **OR**
- Have an “Estimated Family Contribution” of \$0 (determined through the FAFSA process)

IMPORTANT NOTE: There are additional SNAP rules and income eligibility criteria you must meet to qualify. For example, you may need to apply for SNAP with *other people you live with* including:

- Your parents, if you are under 22 years old
- Your children who are under age 22, if you are parent
- Your spouse, if you are married

- Anyone else you *live with* and you *share most* (2/3 or more) of your meals with

If you are a member of a household already receiving SNAP, **please submit this letter to DTA so you may be added to your household's case.** If you misplace this letter, you can also send DTA any document from your college that has your name on it, along with your EFC or if you get MassGrant, Pell Grant or work study.

Below are the current SNAP eligibility income limits and monthly benefit amounts:

| Household Size | Monthly Gross Income Limit | Monthly Maximum SNAP Benefit Amount* |
|----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | \$2147 | \$250 |
| 2 | \$2903 | \$459 |
| 3 | \$3660 | \$658 |
| 4 | \$4417 | \$835 |
| 5 | \$5173 | \$992 |

Note: Temporarily, all households that qualify for SNAP receive the maximum amounts for their household size—as long as there is a federal and state public health emergency due to COVID-19.

Here's how to apply for SNAP:

1. Apply online at www.DTAConnect.com. It takes less than 20 minutes to apply for SNAP! You can also apply by filling out a [paper application](#), or by calling the DTA Assistance Line at (877) 382-2363.
2. Send DTA this letter after you submit your SNAP application.
 - If you apply online, you may create a DTA Connect account and upload documents at the end of the application.
 - If you do not upload with the application, you can create an account on DTAConnect.com or download the DTAConnect mobile app to send documents.
 - *Note: Most people can access their account within 30 minutes of submitting an online application. If you can't log in, try again on the next business day.*
 - You can also [mail or fax](#) it to DTA.
3. Submit other required proof (verifications) if DTA asks for them.

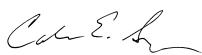
To learn more about SNAP, visit Mass.gov/SNAP. Throughout this process, please be on the lookout for letters in the mail from DTA.

You can also go online to DTAConnect.com or download the free [DTA Connect mobile app](#). Through DTA Connect, you can check your case status, read letters from DTA, update your contact info, and submit any documents to DTA.

Want more information on how SNAP works and other food resources? Contact Project Bread at www.gettingsnap.org or (800) 645-8333.

College is expensive. I urge you to see if you can qualify for SNAP. You don't have to choose between paying for your education and food.

Sincerely,



Carlos E. Santiago

Massachusetts Commissioner of Higher Education