



Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

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Carlos E. Santiago
Commissioner
Chris Gabrieli
Board Chairman

Dear {Student's Name}

It's been a rough year, but we are reaching out with some potentially good news that could, if you are eligible, help you pay for food and stay in college.

In response to the COVID-19 public health crisis, the federal government has expanded college students' access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP benefits (formerly called Food Stamps). The federal government has also boosted the amount of SNAP. For someone who purchases and prepares their food alone, the SNAP benefit is \$234 per month! 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. I never would have earned my degree.

You are receiving this email and may qualify for SNAP because 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
• If you are parent, your children who are under age 22
• Your spouse
• Anyone else you live with and you share most (2/3 or more) of your meals with them.

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, your EFC or if you get MassGrant, Pell Grant or work study.

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

Table with 3 columns: Household Size, Monthly Gross Income Limit, Monthly Maximum SNAP Benefit Amount\*. Rows for household sizes 1 and 2.

3	\$3660	\$616
4	\$4417	\$782
5	\$5173	\$929

Note: Temporarily, all households who 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.

### Here's how to apply for SNAP:

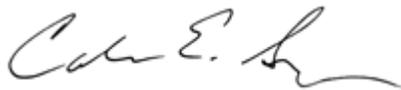
1. Apply online at [www.DTAConnect.com](http://www.DTAConnect.com). It takes less than 20 minutes to apply for SNAP! You can also apply by filling out a [paper application](#), or by calling the DTA Assistance Line at 1-877-382-2363.
2. Send DTA this letter after you submit your SNAP application.
  - 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 proofs (verifications) if DTA asks for them.

**To learn more about SNAP, visit [Mass.gov/SNAP](http://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](http://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](http://www.gettingsnap.org) or [\(800\) 645-8333](tel:8006458333).

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