



Know Your Rights



SNAP Food Assistance And Adult Foster Care

Adult Foster Care (AFC) — sometimes also called Adult Family Care— is a program for frail elders and adults with disabilities who cannot live alone. MassHealth pays qualified AFC caregivers to provide in-home care to elderly and disabled MassHealth recipients who would otherwise be institutionalized.

Low-income persons who provide in-home care to disabled adults through the Adult Foster Care (AFC) program may be entitled to higher SNAP benefits.

I am an Adult Foster Care caregiver. Can I get SNAP?

If you are low income and have a hard time buying food, you may be eligible for SNAP.

In general, you need to be in a SNAP case with people you live with if you buy and make most of your food together. If you are an AFC caregiver, you have the choice to include *or* **exclude** Adult Foster Care members in your SNAP household. This is true even if you share meals with the AFC member.

If you do not include the AFC member in your SNAP household, the AFC income does not count in your households' SNAP calculation —*but* if excluded, the AFC member cannot in turn get their own SNAP benefits.

NOTE: If you are married to the AFC member or they are your child and are under 22, due to SNAP rules you **cannot** exclude them.

Why is excluding an AFC member from my SNAP important?

If the foster adult is excluded from the SNAP household, none of the foster care payments for, or income of, the elder or disabled individual count for SNAP eligibility purposes. By excluding the adult foster care payments and any personal income received by the fostered adult (such as Social Security), the care-giving household often qualifies for higher monthly SNAP.

How do I remove a foster care adult from my SNAP case?

If you are already getting SNAP that includes a foster adult (AFC member), you can ask DTA to remove the AFC member and all the foster care income from the SNAP calculation. You can do this at any time! Send DTA proof of the adult foster care and ask for the adult to be removed from your case.

You can send DTA documents with a smartphone through **DTA Connect**, DTA's mobile app.

I do not get SNAP. How do I apply for SNAP benefits?

You can file an application for SNAP through the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA):

- Apply online: [Mass.gov/snap](https://www.mass.gov/snap)
- Fax a paper application to DTA at: 617 887 8765
- Mail a paper application to: DTA Document Processing Center, PO Box 4406, Taunton, MA 02780
- Go In person to a local DTA Office

Be sure to tell DTA if you wish to exclude the AFC member in the SNAP application.

After you apply, call the DTA Assistance Line for an interview at **1-877-382-2363**. Then send DTA the proofs they ask for. DTA has 30 days to approve or deny your application, unless you qualify for emergency SNAP. If you are approved, SNAP benefits are put on an EBT card (like a debit card).

What are my rights if I am denied SNAP?

- Download the **DTA Connect** mobile app to send DTA proofs, look at your case information, and see DTA notices.
- Call the DTA Assistance Line at **1-877-382-2363** to talk with a SNAP worker and about why you were denied. 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. There is an appeal form on the back of the DTA denial notice. Fill this out and fax or mail it back to DTA You can have the hearing by phone or in person.
- Contact your local Legal Services office for more information: www.masslegalhelp.org

You can find the rules about foster care payments and SNAP benefits in the Code of Federal Regulations: 7 CFR 273.1(b)(4), 273.9(c)(15), and the Code of Massachusetts Regulations: 106 CMR 361.240(F)