

How Does Immigration Status Affect SNAP Benefit Amounts?

Family Scenario	SNAP Rule	SNAP Benefit
A. Eligible Household of 3 <i>1 parent</i> – U.S. citizen, refugee group or LPR with 5 years <i>2 kids</i> - US citizens or LPRs	Regular SNAP Calc for a 3 pp HH 106 CMR 364.400 thru.600 Note: Eligible legal immigrants have right to “opt-out” of HH, moving them from this calc to middle calc below.	SNAP for HH = \$401 \$ 1,300 gross monthly income - 20% earnings deduction - \$ 160 standard deduction - \$ 535 shelter deduction = \$ 345 net income \$ 504 (max SNAP for 3 ppl) - \$ 103 countable income (1/3 net) = \$ 401 SNAP allotment
B. Eligible Household of 2 <i>Parent</i> is legally present but ineligible LPR due to the 5 year wait, or has work authorization (PRUCOL) but not qualified. <i>2 kids</i> - US citizens or LPRs (no 5 year wait for LPR kids nor sponsor deeming)	Three Step Eligibility Calc for 3 pp HH 106 CMR 364.600 (C), 365.520 (B) This calc gives the maximum possible SNAP benefit for the eligible children by minimizing the ineligible parent’s income.	SNAP for HH = \$352 Step 1: Use calculation above - amount for HH of 3ppl = \$401 Step 2: Then calc for 2 kids - excluding income of ineligible parent. This gives the max SNAP for HH of 2ppl is: \$352 Step 3: HH gets the <u>lesser</u> value of \$352 (vs \$401). The 2 children cannot receive more than the HH would otherwise receive as 3 eligible ppl.
C. Eligible Household of 2, with SNAP ineligible parent Parent undocumented or not willing to give status information <i>2 kids</i> - US citizens or LPRs (no 5 year wait for LPR kids)	Undoc Immigrant or “Sanction” Calc 106 CMR 365.520 (A) This calc must be done for a 2 pp HH - but the income of the ineligible parent is fully counted against the kids’ SNAP allotment.	SNAP for HH = \$249 \$ 1,300 gross monthly income - 20% earnings deduction - \$ 160 standard deduction - \$ 535 shelter deduction = \$ 345 net income \$ 352 (max SNAP for 2 ppl) - \$ 103 countable income (1/3 net) = \$ 249 SNAP allotment

Family information for all three scenarios:

- 3 people—mother and 2 children
- Mother earns \$1,300/mo gross income
- Family pays \$800 in rent, heat not included.

This chart demonstrates how immigration status can affect the SNAP amount a family will receive under the Massachusetts SNAP rules. Treatment of immigrant household member income may vary by state.

In the chart, the income, expenses and number of people in the family *stays the same* in each calculation. The *immigration status of the parent **changes***, causing the SNAP benefit levels to change.

Note: Even though the parent is SNAP ineligible (scenario B) - under the “*mixed HH SNAP rules*”- the children get a higher SNAP benefit due because the parent has legal status. This is not true if the parent were undocumented, or had status but declined to provide information to DTA.

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