



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 5101:4-1-03 Food assistance: definitions.

Effective: August 1, 2026

(A) This rule describes the terms and meanings used to administer the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP). Unless otherwise noted, the definitions in this rule apply throughout division 5101:4 of the Administrative Code. These definitions are not intended to fully explain or to limit the scope of any action in the administration of the program.

(B) Definition:

- (1) "Allotment" means the total value of SNAP benefits an assistance group (AG) is authorized to receive during each month or other time period. The allotment may be issued in the form of a check (cash-out) or electronic benefit transfer (EBT).
- (2) JFS 07200 "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Cash , Medical and/or Child Care Assistance Application" means the document utilized by the state of Ohio as an application for cash, food, and medical assistance. It is also a screening device for determining entitlement to expedited SNAP benefits. It is the beginning step in the application process and is used in conjunction with the interactive interview.
- (3) "Assistance group" means those persons potentially eligible or determined eligible to receive benefits together under one AG name.
- (4) "Assistance group name" means the case name. All AGs will have an AG name. The AG name may but does not have to be the applicant. The person designated as the AG name will be the person to receive all notices and will assume all responsibilities such as reviewing the application form for completeness and validity, signing and dating the application, participating in the interactive interview and accepting the program rights and responsibilities unless the AG has designated an authorized representative to apply on their behalf.
- (5) "Assistance group payee" means a person who is designated to receive the benefits for an AG. The person who is the AG name will be the payee unless the AG has an authorized representative to receive the benefits. There will only be one AG payee per AG and benefits will only be issued to this person.
- (6) "Beneficiary and earnings data exchange (BENDEX)" means the system that is used to verify social security benefit information.
- (7) "Case file or case record" means all program information, verification, application, forms, notices and journal entries used to make an eligibility determination for the AG.



5101:4-1-03

2

- (8) "Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)" means the codification of the rules published in the Federal Register by the United States government.
- (9) "Comprehensive Assessment" means an in-depth evaluation of employability skills coupled with counseling on how and where to search for employment.
- (10) "Date of entry" means the date established by U.S. citizenship and immigration services (USCIS) as the date an alien was admitted into the United States.
- (11) "Department of housing and urban development (HUD)" means a governmental agency that provides housing to low-income households.
- (12) "Drug addiction or alcoholic treatment and rehabilitation program" means any drug addiction or alcoholic treatment and rehabilitation program conducted by a private nonprofit organization or institution, or publicly operated community mental health center, under part B of Title XIX of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x) (1992).
- (13) "Elderly or disabled member" means a member of an AG who:
 - (a) Is sixty years of age or older;
 - (b) Receives supplemental security income (SSI) benefits under Title XVI of the Social Security Act of 1935 or disability or blindness payments under Title I, II, X, XIV, or XVI of the Social Security Act;
 - (c) Is a veteran with a service-connected or nonservice-connected disability rated by the veterans administration as total or paid as total under Title 38 of the United States Code (U.S.C.) (2002);
 - (d) Is considered in need of regular aid and attendance or permanently housebound under such title of the code;
 - (e) Is a surviving spouse of a veteran and considered by the veterans administration to be in need of regular aid and attendance or permanently housebound or a surviving child of a veteran and considered by the veterans administration to be permanently incapable of self-support under Title 38 of the U.S.C.;
 - (f) Is a surviving spouse or surviving child of a veteran and considered by the veterans administration to be entitled to compensation for a service-connected death or pension benefits for a nonservice-connected death under Title 38 of the U.S.C. and has a disability considered permanent under section 221(i) of the Social Security Act. "Entitled" as used in this



5101:4-1-03

3

definition refers to those veterans' surviving spouses and children who are receiving the compensation or pension benefits stated or have been approved for such payments, but are not receiving them;

- (g) Receives federally or state-administered supplemental benefits under section 1616(a) of the Social Security Act provided that the eligibility to receive the benefits is based upon the disability or blindness criteria used under Title XVI of the Social Security Act;
- (h) Receives disability retirement benefits from a governmental agency because of disability considered permanent under section 221(i) of the Social Security Act;
- (i) Received an annuity payment under section (2)(a)(1)(iv) of the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 and is determined to be eligible to receive medicare by the railroad retirement board; or section (2)(a)(1)(v) of the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 and is determined to be disabled based upon the criteria used under Title XVI of the Social Security Act;
- (j) Is a recipient of interim assistance benefits pending the receipt of supplemental security income; or
- (k) Receives federally or state administered supplemental benefits under section 212(a) of P.L. No. 93.66, 42 U.S.C. 1382, (12/2013).
- (14) "Eligibility determination/benefit calculation (ED/BC)" means the automated process of determining eligibility and the level of benefits by the Ohio benefits integrated eligibility system which is based on data entered into the system.
- (15) "Eligibility worker" means an employee of the county agency responsible for determining eligibility for SNAP.
- (16) "Eligible foods" means:
 - (a) Any food or food product intended for human consumption except alcoholic beverages, tobacco, hot foods, hot food products prepared for immediate consumption;
 - (b) Seeds and plants to grow foods for the personal consumption of eligible AGs;
 - (c) Meals prepared and delivered by an authorized meal delivery service;



5101:4-1-03

4

- (d) Meals served by a communal dining facility for the elderly and their spouses, disabled recipients who receive social security or supplemental security income (SSI) and their spouses, and to homeless AGs;
 - (e) Meals prepared and served by an authorized drug addict or alcoholic treatment and rehabilitation center to narcotic addicts or alcoholics and their children who live with them;
 - (f) Meals prepared and served by a group living arrangement facility to residents who are blind or disabled as defined in paragraphs (B) (14)(b) to (B) (14)(k) of this rule;
 - (g) Meals prepared and served by a shelter for battered individuals and children to its eligible residents;
 - (h) Meals prepared and served by an authorized public or private nonprofit establishment (e.g., soup kitchen, temporary shelter), as determined by the county agency, which provides meals on a regular basis to homeless persons; and
 - (i) Container deposit fee necessary to purchase any food or food product contained in a returnable bottle, can or other container, regardless of whether the fee is included in the shelf price posted for the food or food product, as long as the amount does not exceed the state's container deposit fee.
- (17) "Food and nutrition service (FNS)" means the federal agency of the United States department of agriculture (USDA) responsible for the overall administration of the SNAP program.
- (18) "Guardian" means, an individual that is granted authority by a probate court pursuant to Chapter 2111. of the Revised Code, or a court of competent jurisdiction in another state, to exercise parental rights over a child under the age of eighteen to the extent provided in the court's order and subject to residual parental rights of the child's parents.
- (19) "Guardianship payments" means a payment made to a person who becomes a legal guardian of a child under the age of eighteen that can include:
- (a) Kinship care payments which enables children and families to remain connected to their family of origin; or



5101:4-1-03

5

- (b) Subsidized guardianship payments for foster care which enables children who cannot be adopted, and do not live with relatives, to have a greater degree of permanency.
- (20) "Group home" means a public or private nonprofit residential setting that provides its residents with a majority of their meals (over fifty per cent of their meals daily), has no more than sixteen residents, and is certified by a public agency of the state of Ohio under section 1616(e) of the Social Security Act, or under standards determined by the secretary of the United States department of agriculture to be comparable to standards implemented by appropriate state agencies under section 1616(e) of the Social Security Act. In accordance with rule 5101:4-6-26 of the Administrative Code to be eligible, for SNAP benefits, a resident of the group home is to be blind or disabled as defined in paragraphs (B)(13)(b) to (B)(13)(k) of this rule.
- (21) "Group living arrangement" means the same as a group home.
- (22) "Homeless individual" means an individual who lacks a fixed and regular nighttime residence, including, but not limited to, an individual who will imminently lose their nighttime residence; or an individual whose primary nighttime residence is:
 - (a) A supervised shelter designed to provide temporary accommodations (such as a welfare hotel or congregate shelter);
 - (b) A halfway house or similar institution that provides temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized;
 - (c) A nighttime residence which is a temporary accommodation for no more than ninety days from the date the temporary accommodation began in the residence of another individual; or
 - (d) A place not designated for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (a hallway, a bus station, a lobby or similar places).
- (23) "Homeless meal provider" means an authorized public or private establishment (e.g., soup kitchen, temporary shelter), which provides meals on a regular basis for homeless persons, as determined by the county agency.
- (24) "Household" means a personal place of residence where persons live together at the same common address. The persons may but do not have to be related. Group homes and commercial establishments such as hotels or boarding houses are not included in this definition of household.



5101:4-1-03

6

- (25) "Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS)" means a system of information acquisition and exchange for purposes of income and eligibility verification which meets the requirements of section 1137 of the Social Security Act.
- (26) "Interactive interview" means the interview between the eligibility worker and the applicant or authorized representative to discuss eligibility information to determine benefits. The interview may be conducted face-to-face, by telephone or a home visit.
- (27) "Internal revenue service (IRS)" means the federal agency responsible for the administration of governmental income from taxes, including collection of taxes and enforcement of tax laws.
- (28) "Kinship support payments" means the payment that is received by caretakers for children in accordance with rule 5180:3-13-18.2 of the Administrative Code.
- (29) "Management evaluation (ME) review," means an analysis conducted to determine if a county agency is administering and operating the SNAP program in accordance with program requirements.
- (30) "Minimum benefit" means the lowest full monthly amount of SNAP that an eligible one or two person AG may receive. By law, this amount is eight per cent of the maximum allotment for an AG containing one member, rounded to the nearest dollar.
- (31) "Non-assistance" means an AG that participates in the SNAP program but at least one of its members does not receive public assistance.
- (32) "Ohio Benefits Case Worksheet-Cash & SNAP Interview (JFS 01846)" means the document which is utilized by the state of Ohio to gather data for the cash, food, and medical assistance programs for home visits and telephone interviews when the Ohio benefits integrated eligibility system is unavailable. The applicant is to acknowledge the information on the form by signing and dating the form.
- (33) "Ohio benefits integrated eligibility system" means centralized statewide automated eligibility system that supports all eighty-eight county agencies in determining and issuing program benefits.
- (34) "Ohio works first (OWF)" means a temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) time limited cash assistance program for eligible low-income families aimed to promote self-sufficiency and employment funded under Title IV-A of



5101:4-1-03

7

the Social Security Act. This program was formerly referred to as the "TANF program" and the "ADC program."

- (35) "Ohio works first (OWF) recipient" means any person who receives an OWF payment, in accordance with rule 5101:1-23-01 of the Administrative Code.
- (36) "Overpayment" means the amount by which benefits issued to an AG exceed the amount the AG was eligible to receive.
- (37) "Public assistance (PA)" means any of the following programs authorized by the Social Security Act: old-age assistance; TANF funded under Title IV-A of the Social Security Act; aid to the blind; aid to the permanently and totally disabled; and aid to the aged, blind, or disabled.
- (38) "Quality control (QC) review" means a review of a statistically valid sample of active and negative cases to determine the extent to which households are receiving the SNAP allotments to which they are entitled, and to determine the extent to which decisions to deny, suspend or terminate cases are correct.
- (39) "Retail food store" means an establishment or recognized department of an establishment, or a house-to-house trade route, that either offers the sale of qualifying staple food items on a continuous basis or has more than fifty per cent of its total gross retail sales in staple food items for home preparation and consumption as determined by FNS. This includes public or private communal dining facilities and meal delivery services; private nonprofit drug addict or alcoholic treatment and rehabilitation programs; publicly operated community mental health centers for drug addicts and/or alcoholics; public or private nonprofit group living arrangements; public or private nonprofit shelters for battered persons and children; public or private establishments approved by an appropriate state or local agency that feeds homeless persons; any private nonprofit cooperative food purchasing venture, including those whose members pay for food prior to receipt of the food; and a farmer's market.
- (40) "Shelter for battered person and children" means a public or private nonprofit residential facility that serves battered individuals and their children. When such a facility serves other individuals, a portion of the facility is to be set aside on a long-term basis to serve only battered individuals and their children.
- (41) "SNAP program" means a program designed to promote general welfare and to safeguard the health and well-being of the nation's population by raising the levels of nutrition among low-income households.



5101:4-1-03

8

- (42) "Social security administration (SSA)" means the federal agency responsible for the administration of benefits for retirement, survivors', or disability benefits.
- (43) "Spouse" means:
- (a) Those defined as married to each other under applicable state law and those required to be recognized as married pursuant to the United States supreme court decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 576 U.S., 135 S. Ct. 2584 (2015); or
 - (b) Those who are living together and are holding themselves out to the community as husband and wife by representing themselves as such to relatives, friends, neighbors, or tradespeople. Since October 10, 1991 Ohio has not recognized common law marriages so only couples established as a common law marriage prior to October 10, 1991 fall under this definition.
- (44) "State agency" means the Ohio department of job and family services (ODJFS), including the local offices, that have the responsibility for the administration of the federally aided public assistance programs within the state.
- (45) "State data exchange (SDX)" means the system used to verify supplemental security income (SSI) benefits.
- (46) "Substantial lottery or gambling winnings" means a cash prize won in a single game before taxes or other withholdings are taken that is equal to or greater than the maximum allowable financial resource limit for elderly or disabled households as outlined in rule 5101:4-4-01 of the Administrative Code. In Ohio this may include but is not limited to payouts from casinos, racinos, slot machines, poker, and keno and other forms of gambling. All AGs are subject to report lottery or gambling winnings equal to or greater than the limit defined in rule 5101:4-4-01 of the Administrative Code. Resource limits are reviewed and adjusted annually; a food assistance transmittal letter is issued notifying the county agencies of the updated amounts. Division 3770:1 of the Administrative Code describes the types of lottery permitted in Ohio. Section 2915.01 of the Revised Code defines gambling as permitted in Ohio. This is not limited to substantial lottery or gambling winnings won only in Ohio.
- (47) JFS 07200 "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Cash, Medical and/or Child Care Assistance Application" means the document utilized by the state of Ohio as an application for cash, food, and medical assistance. It is also a screening device for determining entitlement to expedited SNAP benefits. It



5101:4-1-03

9

is the beginning step in the application process and is used in conjunction with the interactive interview.

- (48) "Supplemental security income (SSI)" means cash payments made under the authority of Title XVI of the Social Security Act, to the aged, blind, and disabled; or section 1616(a) of the Social Security Act.
- (49) "Supplemental security income (SSI) recipient" means a person who receives SSI payments, whose entire SSI grant is being recouped, whose SSI case is in suspended status, or whose SSI has been authorized but payment has yet to be received.
- (50) "Systematic alien verification for entitlements (SAVE)" means the U.S. citizenship and immigration services (USCIS) whereby county agencies may verify the validity of documents provided by aliens applying for SNAP benefits by obtaining information from a central data file.
- (51) "Temporary assistance for needy families (TANF)" means a program funded under Title IV-A of the Social Security Act. This is the title used in federal legislation and regulations. Ohio has adopted the title "Ohio works first (OWF)" for its Title IV-A cash assistance program and the "prevention, retention, and contingency program (PRC)" for its benefits and services program.
- (52) "Thrifty food plan" means one of four food plans developed by the United States department of agriculture(USDA) that estimates the cost of a healthy diet across various price points. The thrifty food plan is the lowest cost of the four. It represents a nutritious, practical, cost-effective diet prepared at home for a "reference" family, which is defined in federal law as an adult male and female, ages twenty to fifty, and two children, ages six to eight and nine to eleven. It is the basis for determining maximum SNAP allotments for all AG sizes.
- (53) "U.S. citizenship and immigration service (USCIS)" (formerly known as the immigration and naturalization service) is an agency under the department of homeland security.
- (54) "United States department of agriculture (USDA)" means the federal agency responsible for overseeing the SNAP program.
- (55) "Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)" means the legislation providing funding for job training, adult education, education for youths, employment for dislocated workers, and vocational rehabilitation. This legislation was formerly administered by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.