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OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
COMMISSION
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Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 5101:4-2-02 Food assistance: categorically eligible assistance groups.

Effective: November 1, 2026

There are assistance groups (AGs) that have eligibility factors waived due to receiving specific public benefits or services. These AGs are considered categorically eligible for the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP). When each AG member receives or is authorized to receive Ohio works first (OWF), supplemental security income (SSI), or a temporary assistance to needy families (TANF) funded service as defined in this rule, or any combination of these benefits, the AG is categorically eligible.

(A) Who is considered an OWF or SSI recipient?

An OWF or SSI recipient is any person:

(1) Who receives an OWF or SSI money payment;

(2) Whose entire grant is being recouped;

(3) Whose grant is in suspended status;

(4) Who is eligible for the benefit but is not receiving it because the monthly grant is below a minimum amount for a check to be issued; or

(5) Whose OWF or SSI has been authorized and the individual has been notified of the decision but payment has yet to be received.

(B) Who is considered an AG receiving a TANF-funded service or benefit?

(1) Ohio careline:

An AG with gross income at or below two hundred per cent of the federal poverty level according to their AG size that is provided a notice and a text message with a link that includes information about Ohio careline services and how to access those services. AGs are provided information on approval notices received at application and recertification.

(2) Prevention, retention, and contingency (PRC) benefits:

(a) An AG in which any member is authorized to receive or is receiving benefits or services under the PRC program is categorically eligible for SNAP. An AG is considered authorized to receive PRC as of the date of approval and/or notification of approval.

(b) An AG that is authorized to receive or is receiving PRC benefits or services is to be categorically eligible for SNAP benefits only for the number of months any member of the AG is authorized to receive or is receiving PRC benefits or services. Certification periods for SNAP benefits are

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to continue to be assigned in accordance with rule 5101:4-5-03 of the Administrative Code.

(c) An ineligible member of the AG authorized to receive or is receiving PRC benefits or services are not to be included in the AG size when determining the benefit amount. The income and resources of the ineligible member is to be determined in accordance with rules 5101:4-6-13 and 5101:4-6-15 of the Administrative Code.

(3) Other TANF-funded services:

(a) TANF funds transferred to Title XX or child care development block grant (CCDBG) for child care services are not considered funded under Title IV-A of the Social Security Act of 1935 as amended (SSA), and are thus not subject to categorical eligibility.

(b) All other TANF funds are considered funded under Title IV-A of the SSA, regardless of which agency administers the funds and may grant categorical eligibility to AGs receiving benefits or services from these agencies.

(C) What eligibility factors are waived for AGs determined categorically eligible?

(1) SNAP one hundred thirty per cent gross income limit;

(2) Net income limit; and

(3) Resource limit.

(D) What are the exceptions to categorical eligibility for OWF, SSI, PRC and Ohio careline AGs?

(1) No person is to be included as a member in an AG that is otherwise categorically eligible when that person is:

(a) An ineligible alien as defined in rule 5101:4-3-07 of the Administrative Code;

(b) An ineligible student as defined in rule 5101:4-6-04 of the Administrative Code;

(c) Institutionalized in a non-exempt facility as defined in rule 5101:4-2-03 of the Administrative Code; or

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(d) Ineligible under the able-bodied adults (ABA) provisions in rule 5101:4-3-13 of the Administrative Code.

(2) Under no circumstances is an AG to be considered categorically eligible when:

(a) Any member of the AG is disqualified for an intentional program violation in accordance with division 5101:6 of the Administrative Code;

(b) Any member of the AG is ineligible because of a failure to comply with requirement of rules 5101:4-3-12 and 5101:4-3-09 of the Administrative Code;

(c) Any member of the AG is ineligible because of violating a condition of probation or parole or fleeing to avoid prosecution, custody or confinement, or for having a conviction of certain crimes and are out of compliance with their sentence as defined in rule 5101:4-2-03 of the Administrative Code; or

(d) The AGs defined in paragraphs (D)(2)(a) to (D)(2)(c) of this rule are subject to all SNAP eligibility requirements and cannot be reinstated in the program on the basis of categorical eligibility.

(E) How is the monthly benefit determined?

Categorically eligible AGs are to have their level of benefits calculated using the method described in rule 5101:4-4-39 of the Administrative Code using the AG's net monthly income.

(F) How is a potentially categorically eligible AG handled?

An AG is considered to have potential categorical eligibility when all members of the AG have applied for benefits that would make the AG categorically eligible.

(1) When all the AG members have applied for benefits that will make the AG categorically eligible and the county agency determines that the AG is ineligible for SNAP benefits because it does not meet the gross or net income tests, or exceeds the resource limits, the county agency is to pend the AG until it is established that all AG members have gained categorical eligibility. When categorical eligibility has not been established by the thirtieth day from the date of application, the county agency is to deny the AG the following day.

(2) When the AG establishes categorical eligibility within the thirty days from the date of application, the agency is to determine the level of benefits from the date of application. When the AG's net income is high enough to result in ineligibility for

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a monthly allotment, the denial notice is to indicate that the net income exceeds the level at which benefits are issued.

(G) What happens when a potentially categorically eligible AG is denied SNAP benefits?

(1) A potentially categorically eligible AG is to be informed on the denial notice that its application can be reopened when it gains categorical eligibility. The AG is to be provided a change reporting form in accordance with rule 5101:4-7-01 of the Administrative Code.

(2) When the application of a potentially categorical eligible AG was denied because of failure to meet the gross or net income test, or being over resources, and the AG later reports that all AG members have become recipients of benefits that make the AG categorically eligible, the county agency is to have the AG update their application. The AG is to provide any needed verification or information on the change since the previous application was completed and have the application signed again by an AG member or authorized representative.

(3) When the application was made via an interactive interview and there are open public assistance benefits with the SNAP benefit being denied, the county agency is to enter the reported changes on the appropriate Ohio benefits integrated eligibility system screens and determine eligibility using the date the AG gained categorical eligibility as the signature date. A new interactive interview or JFS 07200, "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Cash Assistance, Medical and/or Child Care Assistance Application" is not a requirement.

(4) When an AG gains categorical eligibility status, restored benefits are to be paid from the date the AG was authorized to receive OWF, SSI, or TANF-funded services or benefits (e.g. Ohio careline or PRC) or the date of the SNAP application whichever is later. See rule 5101:4-4-23 of the Administrative Code regarding SSI recipients who may be eligible for use of excess medical expenses and the uncapped shelter deduction in determining restored benefits. The county agency is to issue restored benefits within ten days, when necessary, and begin regular issuances. A certification period is to be established as described in rule 5101:4-5-03 of the Administrative Code.

(5) When the AG has not complied with the requirements listed in paragraphs (G)(1) to (G)(4) of this rule, the county agency is to issue a denial notice on the day after the AG was to have complied, and issue a new change report form when necessary.

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(6) When an AG reports a change that results in the AG becoming eligible for SNAP, but the change does not result in categorical eligibility, the AG is to be advised to file a new application before benefits can be approved.

(H) What happens when an AG is approved for benefits while awaiting a determination of categorical eligibility?

When an AG is approved for SNAP benefits within the thirty-day processing time and later gains categorical eligibility, the AG may be eligible for restored benefits in a situation where an SSI recipient incurs excess medical expenses and/or shelter expenses. Restored benefits are to be paid from the beginning of the period for which SSI benefits are paid or the original SNAP application date, whichever is later.