

Responsive Policy Project

making public policy public

we are facing a food and hunger crisis

- 18 million children are not getting enough to eat¹
- SNAP enrollment is up 19%²
- food bank demand is up 50%³



American Food Banks Are Being Overwhelmed by Worst Crisis Ever
Hunger is surging in the heart of the breadbasket, showing just how dire the problem has become during the pandemic.

[bloomberg.com](https://www.bloomberg.com)

¹ Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, <https://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/tracking-the-covid-19-recessions-effects-on-food-housing-and>

² *ibid.*

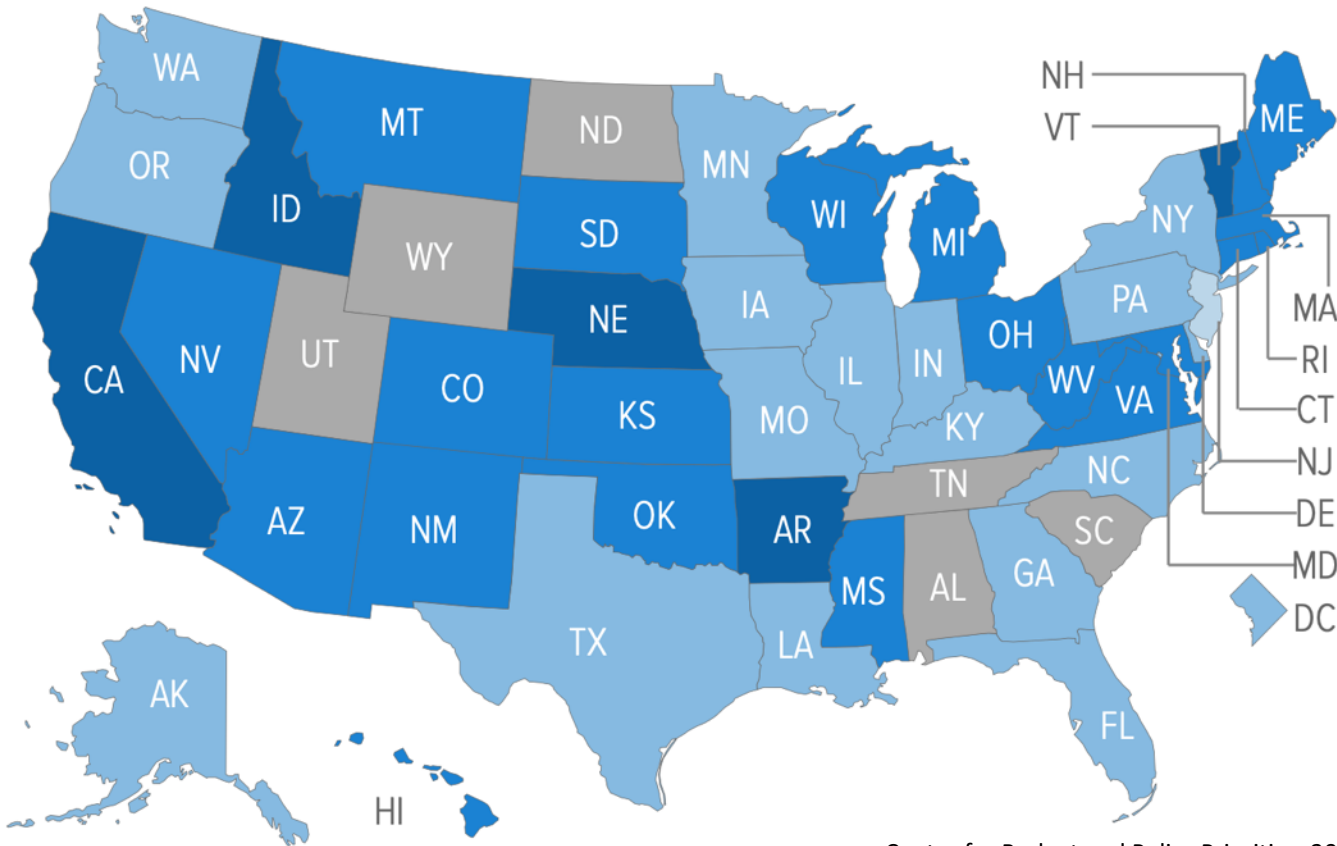
³ Feeding America, <https://www.feedingamerica.org/take-action/coronavirus>

policy is changing rapidly to meet new needs

- Online EBT purchases
- Pandemic-EBT to replace school meals
- Waiver of in-person SNAP application requirements
- Maximum emergency benefits
- Extension of Summer Food Service Program through December

Extends certification periods, adjust reporting requirement ▼

- approved through May 31
- approved through June 30
- approved through August 31
- approved through September 30
- No



Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, 2020

but...

implementation
is uneven
across states

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Stark racial disparities emerge as families struggle to get enough food
The pandemic has left Black and Hispanic households much worse off
than white families.

[politico.com](https://www.politico.com)

pressing
challenges
remain

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**new
challenges
have arisen**

Covid-19 has increased online SNAP purchases twentyfold
Two retailers have a virtual lock on an explosion in online food stamps
sales: Amazon and Walmart.

thecounter.org

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↑ **r/foodstamps** · Posted by u/slice_of_pi **SNAP Eligibility Expert - OR** 1 month ago 🟢

22
↓
Has my state been approved for _____?

Hi all,

I've been seeing this question quite a bit. The answer is on the Food & Nutritional Services' COVID waiver page, which is [here](#).

🗨️ 5 Comments ➦ Share 📌 Save 🚫 Hide 🚩 Report

89% Upvoted

↑ Usukidoll 3 points · 29 days ago

↓ I would also like to add this link which had charts and graphs of each state being approved for these extensions: [Graphs and Charts regarding Flexibility in SNAP due to Covid19](#)

↑ **slice_of_pi** **SNAP Eligibility Expert - OR** 🗨️ 2 points · 29 days ago

↓ Oh, nice!

↑ DottieMaeEvans 1 point · 1 month ago

↓ Thank you for sharing this link. I'll let my family member know of the good news. 😊

↑ Seathtrail 1 point · 1 month ago

↓ Thank you. This info causes us to have a lot less stress.

reliable
information is
hard to find

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what

a food policy wiki that is

- **intuitive, user-friendly:** presents information not as it appears on the books, but how it is experienced by people each day
- **authoritative:** links to the policy documents themselves with verified annotations
- **dynamic:** enables annotations from experts, end users, and advocates; allows users to compare policies across different states and localities



Covid-19: Food Assistance

The **food safety net** has changed dramatically since the start of the Covid-19 Pandemic to meet increasing demand and adapt to logistical challenges. However, what changes have been made and how they have been made vary by state, county, and city. RPP is also tracking ongoing advocacy efforts to improve these programs to better meet people's needs.

Key Issues

- ▼ **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps)**
 - ▶ Am I eligible?
 - ▶ Can I apply online?
 - ▶ How much will I get?
 - ▶ Can I use SNAP online?
 - ▶ Can I use SNAP over the phone?
 - ▶ SNAP versus P-EBT (Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer)
 - ▶ Programs that increase the value of SNAP for healthy foods
- ▶ **Programs for Children**

FAQ

Frequently asked questions about food assistance during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

+ Type your question...

By State

Food assistance programs vary by state, county, and city. Start with your state to see what is available and how it compares.

+ Type state...

Dive In

Covid-19 Food Assistance homepage mock-up

for example, student SNAP eligibility: from this

legislation

CONGRESS.GOV Advanced Searches | Browse

Legislation Examples: hr5, sres9, "health care" MORE OPTIONS ▾

Home > Legislation > 116th Congress > H.R.6756

H.R.6756 - End Pandemic Hunger for College Students Act of 2020

116th Congress (2019-2020) | [Get alerts](#)

BILL Hide Overview ✕

op-ed

THE HILL

Keeping low-income college students from going hungry

BY MELISSA LASKA AND SHEILA FLEISCHACKER, OPINION CONTRIBUTORS — 08/11/20 04:30 PM EDT
THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY CONTRIBUTORS ARE THEIR OWN AND NOT THE VIEW OF THE HILL

391 SHARES

Just In...

High school student suspended for attending classes on remote learning day
BLOG BRIEFING ROOM — 45 AGO

Abrams touches on new

dense,
technical
policy brief

9 State Options to Increase College Student Access to Public Benefits

children.⁵ As a household's income increases, its SNAP benefit amount slowly decreases, providing a gradual transition that better supports work.⁶ Similarly, because of the way SNAP deductions are applied, when the benefit amount is calculated, earnings are treated favorably to support wage growth and improve financial stability.

SNAP promotes educational attainment by providing a modest assurance that people are able to first meet their most basic human need for food. Studies have shown that without access to food and proper nutrition, people can suffer from exacerbated stress, anxiety, and depression;⁷ sleep disturbances and fatigue; and impaired cognitive functioning.⁸ Access to SNAP relieves stress, improves vitality, and allows students to focus their energy on improving their educational and employment outcomes. The SNAP program has been shown to support work,⁹ stimulate economic growth,¹⁰ improve academic outcomes for children,¹¹ and improve health outcomes for recipients.¹²

Unfortunately, an estimated 57 percent of potentially eligible college students do not participate in the program.¹³ Research has identified significant student confusion and misunderstandings about student SNAP eligibility due to complex student eligibility rules. While many students may qualify for SNAP, schools or state SNAP agencies typically need to make a deliberate effort to focus on benefit access to ensure they make eligible students aware of the program and support them in the enrollment process.

Many states have implemented policies and practices that embrace state flexibility under federal law in the areas of the student criteria (listed above) or elsewhere in the SNAP program. The following is a sample of options and promising practices.

State Option	Implementing?	Interested?
Student Rules and Participation in Training and Work Programs	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> Yes

self-help
via
reddit

r/foodstamps · Posted by u/ESmith810137 15 days ago

Oklahoma college student

Question

Hello! I got on foodstamps because I was working 30 hours a week this summer and will be working 20 hours a week this semester. We are waiting on schedules so i haven't been making 20 hours the past week. When I send in my pay stubs on the 5th month will they cut my food stamps because I wasn't able to make 20 hours every single week?

2 Comments Share Save Hide Report 100% Upvoted

SORT BY BEST ▾

xSinityx SNAP Eligibility Expert - LA 2 points · 15 days ago

I believe it is 20 hours a week at minimum wage or earning the same. That is how Louisiana has, OK may be different.



Eligibility: College Students

The federal government has **strict eligibility guidelines** for college students. While many states have **requested** that USDA relax these eligibility guidelines because of COVID-19, USDA has **denied** their requests (as of September, 2020). States must follow the federal eligibility guidelines, but some states have policies in place to provide greater flexibility and make it easier for students to become eligible.

SNAP is underutilized by eligible students; the Government Accountability Office (GAO) **estimates** that less than 50% of eligible college students receive SNAP. SNAP can help to reduce student stress and improve student academic performance. Students enrolled in SNAP can also use a simplified **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**.

Eligibility: College Students, by state

Policies that make it easier for students to apply for SNAP vary by state:

+ Type state...

Articles & reports, trending

- [Are You Eligible for Food Stamps Now? Maybe, but it's Complex, New York Times \(July 17, 2020\)](#)

Gov't action, trending

- [H.R.6565 - Emergency Ensuring Access to SNAP \(EATS\) Act of 2020 \(federal\)](#)
- [H.R.6756 - End Pandemic Hunger for College Students Act of 2020 \(federal\)](#)
- [S.2143 - College Student Hunger Act of 2019 \(federal\)](#)
- [USDA Policy Memo: April 10, 2020 - Denial of Certain Requests to Adjust SNAP Regulations, USDA \(federal\)](#)
- [S.B.173 - CalFresh: Postsecondary student eligibility: workstudy \(California\)](#)

to this



from this

Answer varies by state
and is hard to find (even
social service agencies
get it wrong)

Answer given here is
wrong.



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↓
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OK: College Student Eligibility (updated August 20, 2020)

Like all states, Oklahoma must follow the federal guidelines for college student eligibility. However, Oklahoma has made some changes to help students meet the eligibility guidelines. Oklahoma was one of the states that formally submitted a request to the USDA asking work requirements be suspended for students. That request was denied.

Oklahoma Administrative Code (Last Updated: August 20, 2020)

- TITLE 340. Department of Human Services
 - Chapter 50. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
 - Subchapter 5. Non-Financial Eligibility Criteria
 - Part 5. STUDENTS, STRIKERS, RESIDENT FARM LABORERS, MIGRANT HOUSEHOLDS, SPONSORED ALIENS, AND SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

SECTION 340:50-5-45. Students ▶

(c) Eligibility restrictions for students. Persons between the ages of 18 and 50 who are physically and mentally fit and are enrolled at least half-time in an institution of higher education may participate in the SNAP only if:

(1) employed for an average of 20 hours per week or 80 hours per month and paid for that employment. Earning wages equal to the federal minimum wage times 20 is not a substitute for this restriction;

(2) self-employed for an average of 20 hours per week or 80 hours per month and receives weekly earnings at least equal to the federal minimum wage times 20;

(3) participating in a state or federally financed work study program during the regular school year.

(A) To qualify under this provision, the students must be approved for work study at the time of application for food benefits.

(i) The work study must be approved for the school term and the students must anticipate actually working during the school term.

(ii) The exemption begins with the month the school term begins or

essential info

users

policy makers

experts

advocates

comparisons

Discussion, by date

OK Request to Suspend Work Requirement for Students (denied)

to this:

- extracts essential info
- answer is authoritative (annotates actual regulation) and explanatory (gives context to dry, confusing language)

average of 20 hours/week or 80 hours/month:

Oklahoma permits flexibility for the weekly work requirement, recognizing that student schedules vary from week to week. Students must be able to demonstrate that they work an average of 80 hours per month.

-original: @OKstudent1 (3/12/19, 2:30pm)

-verified: @RPPSNAP (3/12/19, 5:00pm)



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OK Request to Suspend Work Requirement for Students (denied)

to this:

- provides informal space for 'policy end users' to record their experiences, challenges, questions, etc.

state or federally financed work study program:

Because of COVID, my university is mostly remote and cut my FWS and now I'm not eligible. Are all colleges cutting FWS? Can the state step in and finance it if state-funded programs count?

-@OKstudent2 (9/8/20, 8:30am)



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- essential info
- users
- policy makers
- experts
- advocates
- comparisons

Discussion, by date

OK Request to Suspend Work Requirement for Students (denied)

to this:

- allows you to see how other states are innovating and imagine how things could be better

approved for work study at the time of application:

California (California: SNAP Student Eligibility) recently passed a law ([S.B. 173](#)) that requires all colleges and universities to distribute a standardized form to students and help them fill it out. Makes approval easy.

-@OKstudent3 (9/9/20, 10:30am)

who

Responsive Policy Project is a startup nonprofit that lifts the curtain on public policy, making it easy to find, understand, and engage with opaque policy documents.

RPP aims to **radically transform** policy by changing who participates and how.

it's no mistake that policy is hard to understand; this keeps policy in the hands of those with power

+ accessible



+ people engaging



+ “better” policy



+ healthy democracy

rather than pretending that people will engage in intentionally opaque processes, RPP meets people where they are

RPP is building a dynamic platform that brings policy to life



collapse many
layers of policy
into one space

team

Our team mixes tech and policy, with a seasoned engineer, pioneering civic tech UX designer, and expert public interest attorneys.

Founder Emma Clippinger is a policy attorney and former non-profit founder and leader. RPP is starting with food assistance to leverage Emma's extensive experience in this field.

how

proof of concept

COVID-19 food assistance

- key federal policies, 5-7 states
- solicited annotations
- focus groups + iteration

\$75k

pilot

2-3 policy areas (TBD), in-depth

- partnerships with organizers, advocates, experts
- contributions and authentication
- focus groups + iteration

\$500k

launch

7-10 policy areas

- in-house experts
- social media engagement
- ongoing iteration

\$\$\$

+ crowdfunding

Responsive Policy Project

www.responsivepolicy.org

check out [this video](#) to learn more

info@responsivepolicy.org