VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

SNAP Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

SNAP Work Requirement Toolkit

Partner Messaging & Guidance

Helping eligible Virginians maintain access to food assistance | October 2026



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Commissioner's Message

Dear Team Virginia Social Services,

Federal policy changes under H.R. 1 (Public Law 119-21, also called the One Big Beautiful Bill Act) are reshaping who qualifies for nutrition assistance. These changes affect the individuals and families served through Virginia's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and will affect how we and our network of community partners and advocates help them. This toolkit gives you clear, coordinated messaging and resources to explain the new SNAP work requirements under H.R. 1 and, most importantly, to help eligible Virginians maintain the food assistance they rely on.

SNAP helps people put food on the table while they work toward greater stability and independence. Our goal is not simply to explain new rules; it is to ensure that every household that is still eligible understands what to do, stays connected to help, and keeps their benefits. Clear communication is how we get there. When people know what to expect and where to turn, they can prepare and take the appropriate action.

This work is guided by Governor Spanberger's Executive Order 20, Keep Virginia Covered, which directs the Commonwealth to keep every eligible Virginian enrolled and to minimize administrative barriers wherever federal law gives us discretion. The order is clear that the responsibility rests with us, not with the households we serve to provide the information and support people need to meet these new requirements. This toolkit is one way we carry that out.

During periods of change, your ability to provide clear information, assurance and guidance can make all the difference. This toolkit was developed to support you in those conversations. It provides consistent messaging, practical guidance and participant support resources that will help you confidently answer common questions and connect participants with the assistance they need.

Additional information, including SNAP work requirement frequently asked questions, is available at dss.virginia.gov/relief/food-assistance/snap/snap-requirements-faqs. Our staff will continue to update this webpage and Fusion as new materials are developed to help you guide participants through federal changes.

Thank you for your partnership and commitment to nutrition security across Virginia. Together, we can make sure Virginians receive the information, support, and clear next steps they need to move forward with confidence.

Sincerely,

S. Duke Storen

Commissioner, Virginia Department of Social Services

How to use this toolkit

This toolkit has been developed to support anyone who interacts with members of the public facing these eligibility changes. It provides a ready-to-use set of plain-language materials explaining changes to SNAP eligibility under H.R. 1 (Public Law 119-21), helping ensure information is communicated clearly, accurately, and consistently.

What is inside

- **Plain-language explanations** regarding what the work requirement changes are, who they apply to, and what exemptions remain, written for a general audience rather than a policy audience.
- **Key messages** that include core points to lead with, so the same, accurate messaging is consistently communicated.
- **Ready-to-use materials** you can adapt for handouts, newsletters, social media, and conversations with participants.
- **Answers to common questions to support** the inquiries participants are most likely to ask, with clear responses.

Using the materials

- The key messages are approved and ready to use as written, in conversation or in your own materials.
- The ready-to-use materials are built to be adapted. Local details, contacts, and resources are yours to adjust; the policy language should stay as written.
- Information here is oriented toward the action a person needs to take, not just the policy change itself.

A few things to keep in mind

- The policy explanations are reviewed and approved. Please keep that language as written so the message stays consistent statewide.
- These eligibility changes are not decisions made by the Commonwealth. These are federally mandated changes we are required to comply with, and the materials reflect that.
- Eligibility depends on a person's specific situation and documentation. Encourage people to apply or ask rather than assume they are ineligible.
- This toolkit reflects current federal guidance. If guidance changes, updated information will follow.
- Local details, office contacts, hours, and community resources, are meant to be added or adjusted for your audience.



What Are SNAP Work Requirements?

Plain-language explanation of the federal work requirement, the H.R. 1 changes, and the groups that may be affected.

SNAP has long included work requirements that apply to a group the federal government calls "able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs)." For these adults, benefits are limited to three months in any three-year period unless they meet the requirement or qualify for an exemption.

H.R. 1 changed these rules. It expands who must meet the work requirements and removes some exemptions. It does not change SNAP benefit amounts for households that remain eligible.

VDSS participant work requirement flyers: English | Spanish

What H.R. 1 Changed

Rule	Before H.R. 1	After H.R. 1
Age range subject to the requirement	Adults ages 18 to 54	Adults ages 18 to 64
Exemption for a parent or caretaker	Living with a child under 18 who is part of the SNAP household	Living with a child under 14 who is part of the SNAP household
Exemptions removed	Veterans, people experiencing homelessness, and young adults aging out of foster care were exempt	These exemptions no longer apply
New exemptions added	Not applicable	Members of a federally recognized Tribe and certain American Indian, Urban Indian, and California Indian individuals, as defined in the Indian Health Care Improvement Act

Rule	Before H.R. 1	After H.R. 1
Local waivers when jobs are scarce	Local departments could waive the time limit based on job availability	Waivers are limited to areas with high unemployment; the "not enough jobs" basis is repealed

Effective date: In Virginia, the removed exemptions no longer applied as of November 1, 2025. Impacted participants should have received notification of these changes by mail in the fall of 2025.

Who Must Meet the Requirement

Participants may need to meet the work requirement if they are age 18 to 64 and none of the following exemptions apply:

- Age 17 or younger
- Age 65 or older
- Medically certified as mentally or physically unfit for work or have other barriers that make someone unfit for work. The local department of social services (LDSS) determines what other barriers might be applicable for an exemption.
- Pregnant
- Living in a household with a child under age 14 who is part of your SNAP household
- Earning $935.25 a month or more before taxes is an exemption from the work requirement, even if the person works fewer than 20 hours a week.
- Reside in an exempt locality. Only cities/counties with a persistent (12-month average) unemployment rate about 10% are eligible for a waiver.
- Caregiver for a disabled person
- People applying for or getting unemployment benefits in Virginia
- People in a drug or alcohol treatment program
- People who work 30 hours a week or more, for pay
- Person physically or mentally disabled
- A student enrolled at least half-time in college or university who meet special eligibility criteria
- Anyone enrolled at least half-time in any recognized school or training program (including summer school)

In addition, H.R. 1 created a new exemption for members of a federally recognized Tribe and certain American Indian, Urban Indian, and California Indian individuals.

Ways to Meet the Work Requirement

If the work requirement applies, there is usually more than one way for a participant to meet it. The following activities can be combined to reach 80 hours a month:

- **Work.** Paid work counts, including part-time and self-employment. Earning $935.25 per month exempts a participant from the work requirement regardless of the number of hours worked.
- **Volunteer.** Volunteer or community service hours count when verified by a nonprofit or government entity.
- **Train or study.** Approved job training, education, or an employment and training program counts.
- **Combine activities.** Hours from work, volunteering, and training can be added together to reach 80 hours a month.

Key Terms

Plain-language definitions of terms used in this toolkit.

SNAP work requirement

A rule that certain adults must work, take part in an approved work or training activity, or meet an exemption to keep getting SNAP.

General work requirements

Basic rules that apply to most adults on SNAP, such as registering for work, accepting a suitable job if offered, and not quitting a job without good reason.

Time limit

A rule that allows certain adults only three months of SNAP in a three-year period unless they meet the work requirement or an exemption. This is the rule H.R. 1 changed most.

Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD)

The federal term for an adult who is subject to the SNAP time limit. Generally, this refers to an adult who is able to work and does not have a young child or other dependent in the home.

Exemption

A reason a person does not have to meet the work requirement, such as being under 18 or age 65 and older, being pregnant, having a child under 14 in the home, caring for a sick/incapacitated person, being a half-time student, participating in a drug or alcohol treatment program, or being unable to work for medical reasons.

Employment and Training (E&T)

SNAP programs and services that help participants build skills, find work, and meet the work requirement, often at no cost.

Waiver

Permission for a local area to pause the time limit. Under H.R. 1, waivers are limited to areas with high unemployment.

Benefit Programs Specialist

The staff member at a participant's local department of social services who manages their SNAP case and can answer questions about requirements and exemptions.

Recertification

The regular review of a participant's case to confirm if they still qualify for SNAP. Requirements and any exemptions are checked at recertification, which typically occurs every 12 months.



What Most Households Need to Know

Core messages to help LDSS staff and partners explain who is affected, what households should expect and how to stay connected to benefits.

Most people who get SNAP will keep their benefits. The SNAP work requirements apply only to some adults. Most participants are not subject to these requirements. Many who have a requirement already meet it through employment or by qualifying for an exemption.

If a change in the work requirements policy affects a household, we will contact them. Virginia Department of Social Services will send notices explaining which work requirements apply to participants and the actions that must be taken. Please encourage participants to read every notice and respond by the date(s) listed.

We are here to help participants navigate this change. Participants who need to meet a work requirement are encouraged to connect with us through our website and social media platforms for help finding work, training, and volunteer opportunities.

IMPORTANT: Consistent communication is one of the most effective ways to help participants maintain their benefits. Through our digital platforms and outreach, VDSS encourages participants to keep their contact information current and read every notice they receive. You are encouraged to continue reinforcing these messages during every customer interaction and through your communication channels to help eligible households stay connected to their benefits. Since digital communications can be more effective and affordable than the U.S. Postal Service, please gather this information and record it in the case file of every applicant and participant with whom you interact.



Frequently Asked Questions

Common participant questions and concise answers that reinforce notices, exemptions, and available support and appeal rights.

1. What is the new SNAP work requirement, and does it apply to me?

The SNAP work requirement means able-bodied adults ages 18 to 64 must work, take part in a work activity, or meet an exemption to keep getting SNAP. People who do not meet the requirement or an exemption can receive only three months of SNAP in a three-year period. To prepare for this change, read any mail from the Virginia Department of Social Services. If you are age 18 to 64 and don't qualify for an exemption, you may need to meet the requirement. You will be contacted if any changes affect your benefits.

To learn more, you can also download the SNAP work requirement flyers in English and Spanish.

2. Will I lose my SNAP benefits because of H.R. 1?

Most households will not. If a change affects you, your local department of social services will contact you and explain what to do. Benefit amounts do not change for households that stay eligible.

3. What counts toward the requirement?

You need to earn $935.25 or more per month or have at least 80 hours a month of paid work, verified volunteering, approved training or education. Any combination of approved activities counts toward the 80 hour a month requirement.

4. Who is exempt from the SNAP work requirement?

You are exempt if any of the following apply to you:

- Age 17 or younger
- Age 65 or older
- Medically certified as mentally or physically unfit for work or have other barriers that you unfit for work. Your local department of social services determines what other barriers might be applicable for an exemption.
- Pregnant
- Living in a household with a child under age 14 who is part of your SNAP household
- Reside in an exempt locality. The exemption may be based on having an unemployment rate of the locality being greater than 10%
- Caregiver for a disabled person

- People applying for or getting unemployment benefits in Virginia
- People in a drug or alcohol treatment program
- People who work 30 hours a week or more, for pay
- Person physically or mentally disabled
- A student enrolled at least half-time in college or university who meet special eligibility criteria
- Anyone enrolled at least half-time in any recognized school or training program (including summer school)

In addition, H.R. 1 created a new exemption for members of a federally recognized Tribe and certain American Indian, Urban Indian, and California Indian individuals.

5. What if I cannot find enough work/hours or think I qualify for an exemption?

Virginia can help you find work. Ask your local office about employment and training help, including job search, training programs, and support like transportation. Community service or volunteering also counts towards the required hours. To find volunteer opportunities near you, visit Hub.ServeVirginia.org.

If you think you meet a work exemption, contact your local department of social services and report the change to your Benefit Programs Specialist.

6. What can I do if I disagree with a decision about my SNAP benefits?

You can appeal any decision on your SNAP benefits. Complete the Benefits and Services Appeal Form or call or write your own letter. For more on how to appeal, visit the VDSS How to Appeal page.

7. What should I do right now?

Keep your contact information current, open every letter, respond by any date listed, and reach out with questions. These four steps protect your benefits.

More answers are online at dss.virginia.gov/relief/food-assistance/snap/snap-requirements-faqs.

8. If I earn $935.25 in a single day, can I still meet the work requirement even though that means I've worked fewer than 80 hours during the month?

Yes. If the $935.25 is qualifying earned income, you may meet the work requirement even if you work fewer than 80 hours during the month.

9. What do I need to provide to verify my volunteer hours?

Typically, providing a statement from the organization or agency with a few details about your work activities will assist the local agencies in verifying if the work requirements are met. During your interview, the Benefit Program Specialist can explain more specifics.

10. How can I verify that I care for a person with a disability?

Generally, a statement from you as the caregiver that provides information about the person you care for and the care and assistance you provide may be accepted.



Facts for Older Adults and Parents

Focused guidance for adults ages 55 to 64 and parents or caretakers whose youngest child is age 14 or older or who care for someone who is sick or incapacitated.

Two groups are most affected by the H.R. 1 changes: adults ages 55 to 64, who are subject to the work requirement for the first time, and parents or caretakers whose youngest child is 14 or older.

If a participant is age 55 to 64

Before H.R. 1, the work requirement stopped at age 54. It now continues through age 64. Participants in this range may be subject to the requirement for the first time.

- **Participants are exempt at 65.** At age 65 the work requirement no longer applies.
- **Many older adults still qualify for an exemption.** Participants who cannot work due to a physical or mental health condition, or already work 80 hours a month, may be exempt.
- **Health conditions count.** If a condition limits a participant's ability to work, they should inform their Benefit Programs Specialist so it can be considered.
- **Help is available.** Virginia offers free employment and training, including part-time options and help finding volunteer opportunities that can meet the hours requirement.

Participants who are a parent or caretaker

Before H.R. 1, living with a child under 18 were generally exempt from the SNAP work requirement. . Today, that exemption applies only when a child under 14 lives in the home and is a part of the SNAP household. As a result, some parents and caretakers whose youngest child is 14 to 17 may now be subject to the requirement.

- **A child under 14 still exempts participants.** If any child under 14 lives in a participant's home, the work requirement does not apply to them.
- **Caring for a sick/incapacitated person still exempts you.**
- **Other exemptions may still apply.** If a participant believes another exemption may apply to them, they should speak to their local department of social services. They will make the final determination.
- **You can combine activities.** Work, approved volunteering, and approved training can be added together to reach 80 hours a month, which can fit around a family schedule.

- **Ask about support.** Employment and training help can include support like transportation and child care referrals. Participants should ask their local office what is available.

Social Media Posts

These posts are intended for **SNAP participants who may be affected by recent work requirement changes**. Community partners and local departments can share them with their audiences to explain the changes, highlight available resources and connect people with help. Local departments may customize the posts with their own contact information.

Post #1

Post graphics: Work Requirements Single Image.png

SNAP work requirements have changed. Most households will not lose benefits, but it's important to open every notice from the Virginia Department of Social Services. These notices may explain which work requirements apply to you and what actions you need to take. Be sure to respond by the deadline to help avoid delays. Find your local department at www.dss.virginia.gov/localagency.

Post #2

Post graphics: Don't delay, verify today.png

Have you moved or changed your phone number or email address? Make sure your contact information is up to date at commonhelp.virginia.gov or by calling your local office so you don't miss important SNAP updates, notices or requests from the Virginia Department of Social Services. Find your local department at www.dss.virginia.gov/localagency.

Post #3

Post graphics: Work Requirements Single Image.png

If you are required to meet a SNAP work requirement, contact your local department of social services for assistance and access free employment and training services through Virginia Works, which provides support to help you prepare for, obtain, and maintain employment. Learn more at virginiaworks.gov/im-a-job-seeker.

Post #4

Post graphics: Work Requirements **Carousel** Graphics - 1, 2, 3, 4

Important update for Virginia SNAP participants: work requirement rules have changed.

If you're 64 or younger or have a dependent child who is at least 14 years old, you must meet SNAP work requirements unless you qualify for an exemption. Previous exemptions for military veterans,

people experiencing homelessness and young adults transitioning out of foster care are no longer in effect.

Not sure what these changes mean for you? Your local department of social services can help walk you through it. Find your local department at www.dss.virginia.gov/localagency.

Post #5

Post graphics: Employment Assistance Resources **graphics -** 1, 2, 3, 4

New work requirement changes may affect your SNAP and Medicaid eligibility, but you don't have to navigate these updates alone.

If you're newly required to participate in work or community engagement activities, support is available. Explore these free, trusted statewide resources that can help you find job opportunities, develop new skills and take your next steps with confidence.

- Virginia Works connects job seekers with statewide employment opportunities, workforce centers, training programs and workforce development services to support long term career stability. Visit virginiaworks.gov to get started.
- Virginia Jobs serves as the Commonwealth's official job board, listing thousands of public and private employment opportunities across Virginia. Learn more at jobs.virginia.gov.
- The Serve Virginia Volunteer Hub makes it easy to find volunteer opportunities, sign up to serve, and record verified volunteer hours all in one place. Visit hub.servevirginia.org to get started.

These resources and organizations can help you explore job opportunities, meet work requirements and stay connected to community resources during this transition. Browse more resources at www.dss.virginia.gov/relief/eligibilitychangeresources.

Post #6

Post graphics: Did You Know Volunteering Social Post.png

Did you know? Volunteering can help you meet SNAP work requirements.

It's also a chance to give back, build skills and connect with your community.

Ready to get started? Visit Hub.ServeVirginia.org to find volunteer opportunities near you.

Participant Messaging & Guidance

Audience-ready messages for newsletters, text messages and websites.



Messaging Samples for LDSS to Participants

Audience: current and former SNAP participants and applicants.

Newsletter Blurb

Message #1 — SNAP Work Requirement Changes Are in Effect - Most Households Will Keep Their Benefits

SNAP work requirements have changed under a federal law (H.R. 1), and most households will keep their benefits. The changes affect some adults, but not everyone. If a change affects you, we will mail you a notice explaining what to do. Please keep your contact information up to date, open every letter, and respond by any date listed. All other SNAP rules, like income limits, still apply. Visit the SNAP webpage to learn more or contact our office at [insert local contact info] to get connected with resources.

Link: SNAP work requirement FAQs

Message #2 — If You Need to Meet a Work Requirement, We Can Help

If the federal work requirement applies to you, you can meet it with at least 80 hours a month of combined work, approved volunteering, or approved education or training. Our staff can connect you to free help with job search, workforce centers, and training. Contact our office at [insert local contact info], visit Virginia Works or explore the Serve Virginia Volunteer Hub at ServeVirginia.org/hub to get connected with workforce resources.

If you are pregnant, have a child under 14, or cannot work due to a health condition, you may still be exempt from SNAP work requirements.

Link: Virginia Works

- SNAP work requirements changed, but most households will keep their benefits. Watch your mail and open every notice: [[newsletter SHORT_URL]]
- Need to meet a SNAP work requirement? Free help with work and training is available: [[newsletter SHORT_URL]]

Text Messages

- Virginia SNAP: Work requirements changed. Most people will keep their benefits. Open every notice from your local dept. of social services right away.

- Virginia SNAP: Keep your address and phone current so our notices reach you. Update at commonhelp.virginia.gov
- Virginia SNAP: Need to meet a work requirement? Free help with work, training, and volunteering is available. Ask our office.

Website Text

A federal law (H.R. 1) signed on July 4, 2025 changed some rules around SNAP work requirements. Most households will keep their benefits, but if a change affects you, our office will contact you with what to do. To stay up to date on any changes, make sure your contact information and mailing address are correct, open every letter, and respond by any date listed. Our office is here to help. Learn more about these changes at dss.virginia.gov/relief/food-assistance/snap/snap-requirements-faqs.

Community Partner Messaging & Guidance

Reassurance-first messages for food banks, clinics, schools, faith communities and other organizations serving SNAP households.



Messaging Samples for Community Partners

Audience: Community Action Agencies, Area Agencies on Aging, food banks, pantries, clinics, schools, faith communities, LDSS partners, and other organizations serving SNAP households. Partners are often the first to hear from a worried household; steady, accurate information keeps people connected to their benefits.

How to Use These Messages

- Share the participant flyers (English and Spanish) and the Keep Your Benefits Checklist at intake, in waiting areas, and at community events.
- Use the messaging samples below for newsletters, texts, websites, and social media. Keep the reassurance-first framing.
- Refer participants who need to meet the requirement to their local department of social services for employment and training help
- Direct households that lose benefits to a local food bank while they navigate next steps.

Newsletter Blurb

Message #1 — SNAP Work Requirements Are Changing for Some Adults

A new federal law (H.R. 1) recently expanded SNAP work requirements and removed some exemptions. Most households keep their benefits; however the changes affect some adults between the ages of 18 and 64. Help Virginians keep their benefits by encouraging families to open every letter, respond by any due date, and keep their contact information up to date at their local department of social services. Households that need to meet the requirement can get free help with work, training, and volunteering by contacting their local department (www.dss.virginia.gov/localagency).

CTA: Share the Facts | **Link:** SNAP work requirement FAQs

Message #2 — Help Households Keep Their Benefits

A new federal law has changed some SNAP work requirement rules. Remind the families you serve of four simple steps: keep contact information current, open every letter, respond promptly, and reach out to their local department of social services with questions. Point anyone who needs to meet the work requirement to their local department for free employment and training help. Reassure worried households that most people keep their benefits and that Virginia will contact anyone affected.

CTA: Share Resources for Navigating Eligibility Changes | **Link:** dss.virginia.gov/snapchanges

Newsletter SMS

- SNAP work requirements changed for some adults. Encourage families to read and respond to their local office notices on time: [[newsletter SHORT_URL]]
- New SNAP work requirements are here, but most SNAP households will keep their benefits. Share the facts and free help with work, community service, and training: [[newsletter SHORT_URL]]

Text Messages

- Partner tip: SNAP work requirements changed for some adults. Encourage clients to open every letter from their local office and respond on time. www.dss.virginia.gov/relief/food-assistance/snap/snap-requirements-faqs/
- Serving families who need to meet a SNAP work requirement? Virginia offers free help with work, training, and volunteering through local offices. Find your local office at dss.virginia.gov/localagency.

Website Text

A federal law (H.R. 1) expanded SNAP work requirements for some adults and removed several exemptions. Most households keep their benefits. Virginia Department of Social Services notified affected participants by mail. Partners can help families understand notices, respond by deadlines, keep contact information current, and connect to free employment and training help. Households that lose benefits can be referred to local food banks and pantries. Share the toolkit and resources at dss.virginia.gov/snapchanges.

Advocate Messaging & Guidance

Detailed messages for legal aid, workforce and community advocates helping participants meet requirements, claim exemptions and understand appeal rights.



Messaging Samples for Advocates

Audience: legal aid, workforce and community advocates, and family members helping loved ones. The mechanics matter here more than in participant-facing pieces.

How to Use These Messages

- Share the participant flyers (English and Spanish) and the Keep Your Benefits Checklist with the people you serve.
- Use the messaging samples below for newsletters, texts, websites, and social media. Keep the reassurance-first framing.
- Refer clients who need to meet the requirement to employment and training help through their local department of social services.
- Direct households that lose benefits to a local food bank while they sort out next steps, and ensure clients understand their appeal rights.

Newsletter Blurb

Message #1 — What Changed Under H.R. 1

Under H.R. 1, the age range subject to the SNAP work requirement rose from 18 to 54 up to 18 to 64, the parent or caretaker exemption now applies to a child under 14 rather than under 18, and the veteran, homeless, and former foster youth exemptions were removed. New exemptions were added for members of a federally recognized Tribe and certain American Indian, Urban Indian, and California Indian individuals. Local waivers are now limited to areas with high unemployment. The 80-hour standard and the three-months-in-36 time limit did not change.

CTA: Review the Changes | **Link:** dss.virginia.gov/snapchanges

Message #2 — Help Clients Meet the Requirement or Claim an Exemption

Screen clients for exemptions: pregnancy, inability to work due to a health condition, care for a person with a disability, a child under 14 in the home, and Tribal status. Help clients document and report exemptions to their Benefit Programs Specialist. Clients who meet the requirement need 80 hours a month of work, volunteering, or training, and Virginia offers free employment and training help. Every notice includes appeal rights; clients who disagree with a decision can appeal.

CTA: Find Resources | **Link:** dss.virginia.gov/snapchanges

Newsletter SMS

- SNAP work requirements expanded to adults age 18 to 64, with some exemptions removed. Help the people you serve understand the changes: [[newsletter SHORT_URL]]

- Every SNAP notice includes appeal rights. Help clients respond on time and appeal decisions they disagree with: [[newsletter SHORT_URL]]

Text Messages

- Advocates: SNAP work requirements now impact adults up to age 64. Screen clients for exemptions and help them update their local office.
- Clients who need work hours can get free employment and training help through their local office. Encourage them to reach out today.

Website Text

Federal law (H.R. 1) expanded SNAP work requirements for able-bodied adults and removed several exemptions. The age range subject to the requirement rose to 18 through 64, and the parent exemption now applies only when a child under 14 lives in the home. Advocates can help by screening for remaining exemptions, helping clients document and report them, connecting clients to free employment, volunteering, and training help, and ensuring clients understand their appeal rights. Every notice explains how to appeal a decision. Find the full toolkit and referral resources at dss.virginia.gov/snapchanges.

Employment, training, food access, volunteer, legal and other resources that can help participants stay connected to assistance.



Participant Resources

Share these directly with participants. Employment, training, and support resources are listed first because they are how Virginia helps people meet the requirement and keep their benefits.

Employment, Training & Support

- **Virginia Works.** virginiaworks.gov. Job listings, career tools, workforce centers, and training to support long-term employment.
- **Virginia Workforce Connection.** vawc.virginia.gov. Build a profile, get job matches, and create a resume.
- **Virginia Employment Commission.** vec.virginia.gov. Unemployment services.
- **Virginia Jobs.** jobs.virginia.gov. The Commonwealth's Executive Branch official job board.

Food Access

- **CommonHelp.** commonhelp.virginia.gov. Apply for or manage your SNAP benefits and update your information.
- **Federation of Virginia Food Banks.** vafoodbanks.org/find-food. Find your regional food bank, pantry, or meal program.
- **2-1-1 Virginia.** Call 2-1-1 or visit 211virginia.org to find food pantries and meal programs near you.
- **School meal programs.** Meals for children through the Virginia Department of Education and USDA.
- **Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).** vdh.virginia.gov/wic. Nutrition support for pregnant women, new mothers, and children under 5.
- **Child and Adult care Food Program (CACFP).**https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/child-and-adult-care-food-program/. Provides nutritious meals and snacks to young children, older adults, people with chronic disabilities and youth in afterschool programs or emergency shelters.

Virginia Department of Social Services

- **Resources for Navigating Eligibility Changes.** dss.virginia.gov/relief/eligibilitychangeresources
- **SNAP work requirement FAQs.** dss.virginia.gov/relief/food-assistance/snap/snap-requirements-faqs
- **VDSS Food Assistance.** dss.virginia.gov/relief/food-assistance. If you or your family face food insecurity, food banks, pantries, and community organizations can help.
- **Find your local department of social services.** dss.virginia.gov/localagency
- **SNAP Work Requirements flyer.** English | Spanish

Volunteer Assistance Services

- **Serve Virginia Volunteer Hub.** servevirginia.org. Find volunteer opportunities, sign up to serve, and record verified hours. Opportunities are added every day, with new regions joining the Hub in Fall 2026.
- Virginia Community Action Partnership. A statewide network of Community Action Agencies offering emergency assistance, housing support, and child care assistance.
- AmeriCorps Virginia. Supported by Serve Virginia, AmeriCorps programs in Virginia offer meaningful national service opportunities for people who want to strengthen communities across the state through service like mentoring youth, supporting seniors, or protecting the environment.
- American Red Cross (Virginia Region). Emergency assistance and disaster relief, support for military families, and health and safety training.

Immigration & Legal Services

- **Immigration Advocates Network.** immigrationadvocates.org. A directory of free and low-cost immigration legal services.
- **Virginia Legal Aid.** https://www.virginialawhelp.org/. Legal services for low-income residents, immigrants, and refugees.

For households with citizenship or immigration status questions, see the SNAP Noncitizen Eligibility Changes Toolkit.

Federal Guidance (USDA Food and Nutrition Administration)

- **ABAWD Exceptions Implementation Memorandum (October 3, 2025).** SNAP Provisions of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act of 2025
- **Information Memorandum (September 4, 2025).** SNAP Provisions of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act of 2025

Other Resources

- Need additional benefits such as medical assistance, energy assistance, child care assistance or cash assistance? Apply online at commonhelp.virginia.gov, call 833-522-5582 or visit your local department of social services and fill out an application for benefits.
- **How to Appeal.** dss.virginia.gov/compliance/benefits-and-service-appeals. The VDSS appeals process and the Benefits and Services Appeal Form.
- USDA Non-Discrimination Statement.

Related Programs

- Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) — Information on Medicaid Federal Work Requirements: Federal Work Requirements

Keep Your Benefits Checklist

SNAP Work Requirements | A one-page guide you can share

Most people who get SNAP will keep their benefits. Use this checklist to stay on track.

Do these four things

- ☐ Keep your address, phone, and email current.
    - Contact information can be updated on CommonHelp or with your local department of social services.
- ☐ Open every notice from your local office and read it right away.
- ☐ Respond by the date listed. Provide any requested information on time.
- ☐ Reach out with questions. Asking early prevents gaps in your benefits.

If the work requirement applies to you

- ☐ Reach 80 hours a month through work, approved volunteering, or approved training. You can combine them.
- ☐ Register at Virginia Workforce Connection: vawc.virginia.gov for free help finding work and training.
- ☐ If you are pregnant, have a child under 14 that you purchase and prepare meals for, or cannot work due to a health condition, tell your local office. You may be exempt.
- ☐ If you earn more than $217.50 a week before taxes, you do not have to meet the ABAWD work requirement. Your earnings qualify you for an exemption, even if you work fewer than 20 hours a week.

Where to get help

Your local department of social services. Contact for questions about your case and exemptions.

Commonhelp.virginia.gov. Check your case and update your information.

Need food now? Find a food bank. Federation of Virginia Food Banks.

SNAP work requirement FAQs.

Check out Virginia's Resources for Navigating Eligibility Changes page to find resources that can connect you to various needs.



Our Commitment

Virginia's service, safety, transparency and stewardship commitments during implementation.

These changes are the result of federal law, and Virginia is required to apply them. What Virginia decides is how to help people through them. Our commitment is simple: reach affected households early and clearly, make the next step easy to take, and connect people to real help so they can keep their benefits and move toward steadier work.

- **Service.** Meet people where they are with plain language and a clear path to help.
- **Safety.** Protect the food assistance eligible Virginians rely on.
- **Transparency.** Be honest about what is changing and what people need to do.
- **Stewardship.** Administer SNAP accurately and responsibly for the people and communities we serve.

About the Virginia Department of Social Services

The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS), one of the Commonwealth's largest government agencies, is comprised of approximately 2,000 state staff who proudly serve alongside more than 10,000 employees of 120 local departments of social services and community action agencies to deliver critical social services to Virginia's most vulnerable citizens. VDSS is committed to ensuring Virginians have access to the high-quality human services and resources needed to enhance their individual and collective well-being, and shape strong futures for themselves, their families and communities. The agency provides a wide range of services and resources in the areas of food and energy assistance, foster care and adoption, child support, and abuse and neglect prevention, among others. For more information, visit dss.virginia.gov.