



## Immigrant Eligibility for Food Assistance (SNAP)

### What is Food Assistance (SNAP)?

**Food Assistance (SNAP)**, formally called **Food Stamps**, helps people pay for food. You get a card you can use to buy food at grocery stores.

### Can I get Food Assistance?

You need to have low income to get help. You do not have to live with children or be elderly or disabled.

You must be lawfully present in the United States to get Food Assistance.

Some immigrants with low income may be eligible based on immigration status:

- Refugees and Asylees may get Food Assistance.
- Adults with Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) status for more than 5 years and children (under age 18) of people with LPR status for any period of time
- Some immigrants with special status

Children (under age 18) of Lawful Permanent Residents can get Food Assistance even if their parents have had that status less than 5 years.

### Even if you are here lawfully, you may not be able to get Food Assistance if:

1. You are an adult Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) in your first 5 years with that legal status (and you are **not** a Refugee or Asylee);
2. You applied for Asylum or another change in immigrant status with the federal immigration authorities but have not gotten a decision yet; or
3. You have another less common legal status.

### If you are in one of these three groups, you still may be able to get Food Assistance if:

- You are **elderly or disabled**;
- You have been a victim of **domestic violence**;
- You are **waiting for work documentation**;
- You got work documentation, but you are **not employed**; or
- You got Food Assistance or had an application pending as of **May 1, 2012**;

If you have children born in the United States, they may be eligible for Food Assistance even if you are not eligible based on your immigration status.

**For questions about public programs, contact:**

Maine Equal Justice (MEJ)  
Phone number 207-626-7058, extension 205, or go to  
[maineequaljustice.org/about-us/contact-us/](http://maineequaljustice.org/about-us/contact-us/) and leave a message online

**For questions about immigrant status you can contact:**

Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project (ILAP)  
Phone number 207-780-1593 or toll-free at 1-800-497-8505  
Email address: [ilap@ilapmaine.org](mailto:ilap@ilapmaine.org)