

Michigan SNAP BENEFITS

A Plain-Language Navigation Guide

For Individuals, Families, and Nonprofits Serving Vulnerable Populations | Updated May 2026

What This Guide Covers

Eligibility rules • Income limits • Required documents • Step-by-step application • Work requirements • Why people lose benefits • Key contacts

Federal Changes in Effect (2025–2026)

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), signed July 4, 2025, expanded ABAWD work requirements (now ages 18–64), narrowed non-citizen eligibility, and made other national changes to SNAP. This guide reflects rules as of May 2026. Always verify current rules with MDHHS at michigan.gov/mdhhs or newmibridges.michigan.gov.

Section 1: What Is SNAP?

SNAP stands for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. In Michigan it is administered by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). Benefits are issued monthly through the Michigan Bridge Card accepted at authorized grocery stores, farmers markets, and major online retailers including Amazon and Walmart.

Michigan uses a 200% FPL income threshold through BBCE with no asset test, and has fully lifted the drug felony ban. SNAP is known as the Food Assistance Program (FAP) in Michigan, and benefits are loaded on the Michigan Bridge Card. The Upper Peninsula and some downstate counties have historically qualified for ABAWD waivers due to high unemployment. Michigan has some of the most severe ongoing environmental food security concerns — particularly in Flint — that intersect with SNAP eligibility.

Michigan SNAP: Key Facts at a Glance

- 200% FPL gross income limit through BBCE — no asset test for most households
- Full drug felony ban lift — no conditions or requirements

- SNAP called 'Food Assistance Program (FAP)' in Michigan; benefits on the Michigan Bridge Card
- Upper Peninsula and some downstate counties have historically had ABAWD waivers — verify current status
- MI Bridges portal (newmibridges.michigan.gov) for online applications, renewals, and case management
- Michigan Works! Agency network provides E&T services for ABAWD compliance statewide

Section 2: Eligibility Requirements

2.1 Residency

You must currently reside in Michigan. There is no minimum residency period. You do not need a permanent address — a shelter address, transitional housing, or a signed statement from a non-relative can satisfy this requirement.

2.2 Citizenship and Immigration Status

The following individuals are generally eligible:

- U.S. citizens (born or naturalized)
- Lawful Permanent Residents (Green Card holders) who have held status for at least 5 years
- Certain refugees, asylees, and Special Immigrant Visa holders

2025 Change: Non-Citizen Eligibility Narrowed

The OBBBA (July 4, 2025) removed SNAP eligibility for humanitarian parolees, most asylum seekers pending a decision, and several other previously eligible categories. U.S.-born children in mixed-status households may still qualify. Contact your local MDHHS office or legal aid if your immigration status is unclear.

2.3 Household Composition

Your SNAP household includes everyone who lives together and regularly purchases and prepares food together. Members who buy and prepare food separately may form their own household unit.

2.4 Income Limits

Michigan uses Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) at 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. There is no asset test for most households. This makes Michigan one of the more

accessible SNAP states in the Midwest — significantly more permissive than neighboring Indiana (130% FPL).

Exception: Households where all members are age 60+ or have a documented disability have NO gross income limit — only the net income test applies.

Michigan SNAP Income Limits and Maximum Benefits (FY 2026, Oct. 1, 2025 – Sept. 30, 2026)

HH Size	Gross Limit	Elderly/Disabled Gross Limit	Net Limit (100% FPL)	Max Monthly Benefit
1	\$2,510	No limit*	\$1,255	\$292
2	\$3,398	No limit*	\$1,699	\$536
3	\$4,287	No limit*	\$2,144	\$766
4	\$5,178	No limit*	\$2,589	\$994
5	\$6,067	No limit*	\$3,034	\$1,155
6	\$6,956	No limit*	\$3,478	\$1,386
7	\$7,845	No limit*	\$3,923	\$1,532
8+	+\$889/person	No limit*	+\$445/person	+\$177/person

* Elderly/disabled households (at least one member 60+ or disabled) have no gross income limit — only the net income limit applies. Michigan uses BBCE at 200% FPL. Limits update each October 1.

How Net Income Is Calculated

Net income = gross income minus approved deductions. Standard deductions include:

- 20% earned income deduction — automatically applied to all wages and self-employment income
- Standard deduction: \$204/month for households of 1–3; higher for larger households
- Excess shelter deduction: rent/mortgage plus utilities exceeding 50% of net income after other deductions
- Dependent care deduction: childcare or adult care costs paid while working, searching, or in training
- Medical expense deduction: out-of-pocket costs over \$35/month for members 60+ or with a disability
- Child support deduction: legally obligated child support paid to someone outside the household



Michigan Deduction Note

Michigan's varied housing markets — from metro Detroit and Grand Rapids urban cores to rural Upper Peninsula communities — create different deduction profiles. Detroit-area residents should document full shelter costs given significant rent levels. In Flint, out-of-pocket medical costs associated with the water crisis may qualify for the medical expense deduction if you are 60+ or disabled. Ask your MDHHS caseworker how to document environmental health costs.

2.5 Asset Limits

For most Michigan BBCE-eligible households, there is NO asset test. Savings, vehicles, and investments are not counted. Exception: elderly/disabled households whose income exceeds 200% FPL face a \$4,500 asset limit. Primary home and one vehicle are always exempt.

Section 3: Work Requirements

Work requirements are the most common reason people lose SNAP benefits.

3.1 Standard Work Requirements (All Adults 16–59)

All able-bodied adults between ages 16 and 59 must meet at least one of the following:

- Be employed (any number of hours)
- Be registered for work with Michigan Works! Agency network
- Participate in an approved employment or training program
- Not have voluntarily quit a job without good cause or reduced hours below 30/week

3.2 ABAWD Rules

ABAWDs are adults ages 18–64 without dependents who are not disabled and not otherwise exempt. Michigan enforces ABAWD rules in counties without active waivers.

ABAWDs must complete at least 80 hours per month (20 hours/week): employment, job training, volunteering, or participation in an approved work program.

Without meeting this requirement, ABAWDs can only receive SNAP for 3 months in any 36-month period.



Michigan ABAWD Note

Michigan's Upper Peninsula and some downstate counties have historically had active ABAWD waivers due to high local unemployment — meaning work requirements were not enforced in those areas. Contact your local MDHHS office to confirm whether your county currently has a waiver in effect. Michigan Works! Agencies offer employment and training programs that satisfy ABAWD requirements statewide. If no waiver applies in your area, document 80 hours/month of qualifying activity through work, training, or volunteering.

3.3 Exemptions from ABAWD Requirements

The following individuals are exempt from ABAWD time limits:

- Physically or mentally unfit for employment (documented by a physician or licensed clinical social worker)
- Pregnant
- Responsible for a dependent child under age 14 living in the same household
- Enrolled at least half-time in a recognized school, training program, or institution of higher education
- Participating in a drug or alcohol treatment or rehabilitation program
- Age 15 or younger, or 65 or older
- Recently released from an institution (incarceration or psychiatric facility)
- Survivors of domestic violence
- Experiencing homelessness (may qualify under 'unfit for employment' — ask your caseworker)

3.4 How to Document Work or an Exemption

Report work activity or exemption status through MI Bridges (newmibridges.michigan.gov), by phone, or in person at your MDHHS office. Submit documentation before your benefit period runs out.

Section 4: Required Documents

Gather these before applying. Missing documents are the most common cause of delays.

4.1 Always Required

- Proof of Identity: Driver's license, state-issued ID, passport, or birth certificate
- Social Security Number (SSN): For each household member applying
- Proof of Michigan Residency: Utility bill, lease agreement, official mail, or a signed statement from a non-relative

4.2 Income Verification

- Pay stubs from the last 30 days (for employed applicants)
- Most recent W-2, 1099, or tax return (for self-employment income)
- Award letter or benefit statement for Social Security, SSI, unemployment, or other unearned income
- Documentation of child support received or paid

4.3 Deduction Documentation (Strongly Recommended)

- Rent or mortgage statement
- Utility bills (or claim the Standard Utility Allowance — ask your caseworker which produces a higher deduction)
- Childcare or dependent care receipts
- Medical bills for members 60+ or with disabilities

Tip: Apply First, Gather Documents Later

Submit your application as soon as possible to lock in your application date — benefits are generally backdated to that date if approved. Your caseworker will notify you of any additional documents needed.

Section 5: Step-by-Step Application Process

Step 1: Check Your Eligibility

Use the SNAP eligibility calculator at snapeligibilitycalculator.com, call 1-855-275-6424, or visit your local MDHHS office.

Step 2: Apply

Method	Details
MI Bridges Online	newmibridges.michigan.gov — apply online 24/7, upload documents, track your case. Recommended.
Phone	Call 1-855-275-6424 or your local MDHHS office.
In Person	Visit your local MDHHS office. Find locations at michigan.gov/mdhhs/office-locator .
By Mail	Download application from michigan.gov/mdhhs ; mail to your local office.

Step 3: Attend Your Interview

After submitting, MDHHS will schedule a mandatory interview — typically by phone. Missing the interview is the most common reason applications are denied. Contact your office immediately to reschedule if needed.

Step 4: Receive a Decision

MDHHS must process standard applications within 30 days. If approved, you will receive an EBT card by mail. If denied, you have 90 days to appeal.

Expedited / Emergency Processing (7-Day)

You may qualify if: gross monthly income is under \$150 AND liquid assets under \$100; OR combined monthly income and liquid assets are less than monthly rent plus utilities; OR you are a migrant/seasonal farmworker with liquid assets under \$100.

Section 6: Special Situations

6.1 Experiencing Homelessness

You do not need a permanent address to apply. MDHHS accepts shelter addresses, transitional housing, or a signed statement from a non-relative. Dial 211 for local shelter and benefits navigation resources.

6.2 People With Disabilities or Elderly Members

Households where all members are 60+ or disabled benefit from: no gross income test (only net income limit), uncapped shelter deduction, medical expense deduction, and higher asset limits (where applicable).

6.3 Drug Felony Convictions

Michigan has fully lifted the federal drug felony ban. Individuals with any drug-related felony conviction are fully eligible for SNAP if they meet income and other standard requirements — no additional conditions, treatment requirements, or drug testing apply.

6.4 Students

Students enrolled at least half-time must meet at least one exception: work 20+ hours/week, participate in work-study, care for a dependent child under 6, receive TANF, or be enrolled in an approved training program.

6.5 Flint and Environmental Health Considerations

Flint-area residents who incurred out-of-pocket medical costs related to the water crisis may be eligible for the SNAP medical expense deduction if at least one household member is 60+ or disabled. Medical costs over \$35/month can be deducted from countable income, increasing benefit amounts. If you are a Flint resident with documented medical expenses, ask your MDHHS caseworker specifically about the medical expense deduction. Contact the Genesee County MDHHS office (810-257-3637) for local guidance.

Section 7: Why People Lose Benefits — and How to Avoid It

Most Common Reasons SNAP Benefits Are Cut Off

1. Missing the recertification (renewal) deadline

Certification periods last 6–12 months. Set a calendar reminder 60 days before your certification end date and monitor your online account regularly.

2. Failing the ABAWD work requirement without claiming an exemption

ABAWDs who do not work 80 hours/month and have not claimed a valid exemption are cut off after 3 months. Check county/local waiver status and document any exemption in writing at every recertification.

3. Missing the interview or not responding to agency notices

Keep your phone number and mailing address current. Check your online account regularly for notices.

4. Failure to report changes in income or household composition

Report changes within 10 days. Failure to report can result in overpayments and case closure.

Your Right to Appeal

If MDHHS denies or reduces your benefits, request a Fair Hearing within 90 days of the notice. If you request within 10 days of a termination notice, your benefits may continue during the review. Contact Michigan Legal Help (michiganlegalhelp.org, 1-888-783-8190) for free legal assistance.

Section 8: Key Contacts and Resources

Resource	Contact / What They Help With
MDHHS FAP Line	1-855-275-6424 michigan.gov/mdhhs
MI Bridges Portal	newmibridges.michigan.gov — apply, upload documents, manage benefits
MDHHS Office Locator	michigan.gov/mdhhs/office-locator
Michigan Works! (E&T)	michiganworks.org — employment training for ABAWD compliance
Food Bank of Eastern Michigan	fbem.org 810-239-4441 — eastern Michigan and Flint area food resources
Michigan 211	Dial 211 mi211.org — food banks, emergency resources
Michigan Legal Help	michiganlegalhelp.org 1-888-783-8190 — free legal help with SNAP appeals

A Note on Navigating Michigan's System

Michigan's 200% BBCE, no asset test, and full drug felony ban lift make it one of the more accessible states in the Midwest. The Upper Peninsula ABAWD waiver is worth verifying for any UP resident. For advocates working in Flint: medical expense deductions for water crisis-related health costs are an underutilized benefit tool for elderly and disabled households. MI Bridges is the primary access point and allows full case management online.

This guide was compiled using information from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, and publicly available state SNAP resources. It is informational only and does not constitute legal advice. Rules may change — always verify at michigan.gov/mdhhs or newmibridges.michigan.gov or by contacting your local office.