

Georgia 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 changes to SNAP nationally. This guide reflects rules as of May 2026. Always verify current rules with DFCS at dfcs.georgia.gov or gateway.ga.gov.

Section 1: What Is SNAP?

SNAP stands for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. In Georgia it is administered by the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS). Benefits are issued monthly through an EBT card accepted at authorized grocery stores, farmers markets, and major online retailers including Amazon and Walmart.

Over 1.3 million Georgians receive SNAP benefits across all 159 counties — the second-highest county count of any state. Georgia uses the standard 130% FPL gross income limit and retains the asset test, making it stricter than many neighboring states. DFCS administers SNAP through the Georgia Gateway portal and county offices statewide.

Georgia SNAP: Key Facts at a Glance

- Standard 130% FPL gross income limit — Georgia does NOT use BBCE
- Asset limits apply: \$2,750 most households; \$3,750 for elderly/disabled households
- SNAP Works: Georgia's state E&T program connecting ABAWDs with job training and placement

- No statewide ABAWD waiver — work requirements enforced statewide; verify county-level waivers
- Georgia Gateway (gateway.ga.gov) handles online applications, renewals, and case management
- 159 county DFCS offices — every county has a physical office for in-person applications

Section 2: Eligibility Requirements

2.1 Residency

You must currently reside in Georgia. 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 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 DFCS 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

Georgia uses the standard federal 130% FPL gross income limit and does NOT use Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE). Most households must pass both gross and net income tests, plus an asset test.

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

Georgia 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	\$1,644	No limit*	\$1,266	\$292
2	\$2,226	No limit*	\$1,714	\$536
3	\$2,808	No limit*	\$2,163	\$766
4	\$3,391	No limit*	\$2,611	\$994
5	\$3,973	No limit*	\$3,059	\$1,155
6	\$4,555	No limit*	\$3,508	\$1,386
7	\$5,138	No limit*	\$3,956	\$1,532
8+	+\$583/person	No limit*	+\$449/person	+\$177/person

* Elderly/disabled households have no gross income limit — only the net income limit applies. Georgia uses the standard federal 130% 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

Georgia Deduction Note

Georgia households in Atlanta and other urban areas with high rents should always report full shelter costs — the excess shelter deduction (rent/utilities over 50% of net income) can be the difference between qualifying and not at the 130% FPL threshold. Rural households with

transportation costs related to medical care or job training may deduct those through dependent care or medical expense deductions.

2.5 Asset Limits

Georgia HAS asset limits. Most households: \$2,750 in countable assets. Elderly/disabled households: \$3,750. Primary home, one vehicle, and retirement accounts are generally exempt. Bring bank statements to every appointment.

Asset documentation needed: Bank statements (most recent month) for all checking and savings accounts. Investment account statements if applicable. Your 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 Georgia Department of Labor / SNAP Works program
- 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. Georgia enforces ABAWD rules statewide. Under the OBBBA (November 2025), the age range expanded from 18–54 to 18–64.

ABAWDs must complete at least 80 hours per month (20 hours/week) of qualifying activity: 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.

Georgia ABAWD Note

Georgia does not have a statewide ABAWD waiver. Work requirements are enforced in all 159 counties. ABAWDs must document 80 hours/month of qualifying activity. SNAP Works is Georgia's state-administered Employment & Training program that can help ABAWDs meet requirements through job search, training, education, and employment. Contact your county DFCS office to enroll in SNAP Works.

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 Georgia Gateway (gateway.ga.gov), by phone, or in person at your DFCS office. Submit documentation before your benefit period runs out — the agency cannot retroactively restore lost months.

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 Georgia 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

4.4 Asset Documentation

Bank statements (most recent month) for all checking and savings accounts. Investment account documentation if applicable. Primary home and one vehicle are always exempt.

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 1-877-423-4746, or visit your local DFCS office.

Step 2: Apply

Method	Details
Georgia Gateway Online	gateway.ga.gov — apply 24/7, upload documents, check status, renew benefits.

Method	Details
Phone	Call 1-877-423-4746 or your county DFCS office.
In Person	Visit your county DFCS office. Georgia has offices in all 159 counties.
By Mail	Download application from dfcs.georgia.gov ; mail to your county office.

Step 3: Attend Your Interview

After submitting, DFCS 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

DFCS 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. DFCS 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

Georgia fully lifted the drug felony ban. Individuals with any drug-related felony conviction are fully eligible for SNAP if they otherwise meet income requirements — no additional conditions 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 SNAP Works Employment Program

SNAP Works is Georgia's state-administered SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) program. Non-exempt adults may be referred to SNAP Works by their DFCS caseworker. Participation in SNAP Works counts toward ABAWD work requirements and offers job search assistance, training programs, education opportunities, and employment referrals. If you are an ABAWD looking for ways to meet the 80-hour monthly requirement, ask your caseworker about SNAP Works enrollment.

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 for most households. 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/parish 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 DFCS 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 Georgia Legal Services (georgiapl.org, 1-404-524-5811) for free legal assistance.

Section 8: Key Contacts and Resources

Resource	Contact / What They Help With
DFCS SNAP Line	1-877-423-4746 dfcs.georgia.gov
Georgia Gateway	gateway.ga.gov — apply, manage benefits, upload documents
DFCS County Office Locator	dfcs.georgia.gov/county-offices — all 159 counties
SNAP Works (E&T Program)	Contact your county DFCS office — job training for ABAWD compliance
Georgia 211	Dial 211 georgia211.org — food banks, benefits navigation
Atlanta Community Food Bank	acfb.org 404-892-9822 — metro Atlanta food resources
Georgia Legal Services	georgiapl.org 1-404-524-5811 — free legal help with SNAP appeals

A Note on Navigating Georgia's System

Georgia's 130% FPL limit and asset test mean deductions and pre-screening are especially important. Many households near the gross income limit qualify after shelter and other deductions are applied. For advocates in Atlanta and other high-rent areas: help clients document and claim the full shelter deduction. SNAP Works enrollment is the key tool for ABAWDs who cannot meet the 80-hour requirement independently.

This guide was compiled using information from the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS), 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 dfcs.georgia.gov or gateway.ga.gov or by contacting your local office.