

# Utah 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 DWS at [jobs.utah.gov](https://jobs.utah.gov) or 1-866-435-7414.

## Section 1: What Is SNAP?

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

Utah does NOT use Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) — it is one of only approximately six states in the nation applying the standard 130% FPL income limit and a full asset test. A purchase restriction on soft drinks and candy became effective January 1, 2026. Benefits are issued on the Utah Horizon Card. EBT loads on the 1st through 10th of each month based on the last digit of your Social Security Number. Utah's strong LDS community culture creates some social stigma around SNAP that advocates should be aware of.

### Utah SNAP: Key Facts at a Glance

- Standard 130% FPL gross income limit — Utah does NOT use BBCE
- Asset limits apply: \$2,250 most households; \$3,250 for elderly/disabled households

- ACTIVE January 1, 2026: Soft drinks and candy no longer purchasable with Utah EBT (Horizon Card)
- Modified drug felony ban: eligible if complying with sentence terms
- EBT loads 1st–10th of month based on last digit of Social Security Number
- Utah myCase ([jobs.utah.gov/mycase](https://jobs.utah.gov/mycase)) for online applications and benefit management

### **ACTIVE PURCHASE RESTRICTION — Effective January 1, 2026**

Soft drinks (soda): Carbonated beverages with added sugar or artificial sweeteners cannot be purchased with Utah SNAP EBT. Plain sparkling water, flavored sparkling water without added sugar, and beverages with more than 50% juice content remain eligible.

Candy: Sugar and sweetener confections, chocolate products, and other candy cannot be purchased. Granola bars, protein bars, and baking ingredients including chocolate chips remain eligible.

Your benefit amount does NOT change. All staple groceries remain fully eligible: fresh and frozen produce, meat, dairy, bread, cereals, 100% juices, sports drinks, protein bars, and all other standard SNAP foods.

For questions: contact DWS at 1-866-435-7414 or visit [jobs.utah.gov](https://jobs.utah.gov).

## Section 2: Eligibility Requirements

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### 2.1 Residency

You must currently reside in Utah. 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 DWS 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

Utah uses the standard federal 130% FPL gross income limit and does NOT use BBCE. Utah is one of only approximately six states that has not adopted BBCE, alongside South Dakota, Tennessee, Mississippi, Kansas (for asset test only), and Wyoming. Most households must pass both income tests and 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.

### Utah 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. Utah uses standard federal 130% FPL, NOT BBCE. Asset limits: \$2,250 most households; \$3,250 for elderly/disabled. EBT loads on the 1st–10th based on last digit of SSN. 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



### Utah Deduction Note

Utah's housing costs have risen sharply in the Wasatch Front (Salt Lake City, Provo-Orem, Ogden). For households near the 130% FPL income limit, the excess shelter deduction — triggered when rent and utilities exceed 50% of net income — can be the difference between qualifying and not qualifying. Always report full shelter costs. Utah's desert climate also means summer air conditioning costs can be significant; claim the Standard Utility Allowance.

## 2.5 Asset Limits

Utah HAS asset limits. Most households: \$2,250 in countable assets. Elderly/disabled households: \$3,250. Primary home, one vehicle, and retirement accounts are generally exempt. Bring bank statements to your appointment.

## Section 3: Work Requirements

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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 Utah Workforce Centers / SNAP E&T 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. Utah enforces ABAWD rules statewide.

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.

#### **Utah ABAWD Note**

Utah does not have a statewide ABAWD waiver. Work requirements apply in all counties. Utah Workforce Centers and the SNAP E&T program offer employment and training activities that satisfy ABAWD requirements. Contact DWS at 1-866-435-7414 or visit [jobs.utah.gov](https://jobs.utah.gov) to connect with available E&T activities in your area.

### **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 Utah myCase ([jobs.utah.gov/mycase](https://jobs.utah.gov/mycase)), by phone, or in person at your DWS office. Submit documentation before your benefit period runs out.

## **Section 4: Required Documents**

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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 Utah 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 (especially heating — or claim the Standard Utility Allowance if higher)
- 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. Your primary home and one vehicle are always exempt.

### **Tip: Apply First, Gather Documents Later**

Submit your application to lock in your application date — benefits are generally backdated to that date if approved. Your caseworker will specify what additional documents are needed.

# Section 5: Step-by-Step Application Process

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## Step 1: Check Your Eligibility

Use the SNAP eligibility calculator at [snapeligibilitycalculator.com](https://snapeligibilitycalculator.com), call 1-866-435-7414, or visit your local DWS office.

## Step 2: Apply

Method	Details
Utah myCase Online	jobs.utah.gov/mycase — apply online 24/7, upload documents, track your case. Recommended.
Phone	Call 1-866-435-7414 or your local DWS Employment Center.
In Person	Visit your local DWS Employment Center. Find locations at jobs.utah.gov/wi/home/office.
By Mail	Download application from jobs.utah.gov; mail to your local Employment Center.

## Step 3: Attend Your Interview

After submitting, DWS 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

DWS 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

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### 6.1 Experiencing Homelessness

You do not need a permanent address to apply. DWS 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

Utah has a modified drug felony ban. Individuals with drug felony convictions may receive SNAP if they are in compliance with the terms of their sentence, including any required substance abuse treatment and supervision requirements. Bring documentation of your current compliance status (letter from probation officer, treatment provider) when applying.

### 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 Stigma and Cultural Context in Utah

Utah has a strong cultural and religious emphasis on self-reliance, particularly within the LDS (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) community, which can create social stigma around SNAP participation. Research consistently shows that many eligible Utah families do not apply because they feel embarrassed or believe they 'should not need help.' SNAP is a federal benefit earned through work and taxes — there is no shame in using it. If you or someone you serve is hesitant to apply, the Utah Food Bank ([utahfoodbank.org](http://utahfoodbank.org)) provides confidential SNAP application assistance and can help navigate the process discreetly. Utah also has a parallel church welfare system — some families use both; they are not mutually exclusive.

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

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### 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. Verify 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 DWS 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 Utah Legal Services ([utahlegalservices.org](http://utahlegalservices.org), 801-328-8891) for free legal assistance.

## Section 8: Key Contacts and Resources

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Resource	Contact / What They Help With
DWS SNAP Line	1-866-435-7414   <a href="http://jobs.utah.gov">jobs.utah.gov</a>
Utah myCase Portal	<a href="http://jobs.utah.gov/mycase">jobs.utah.gov/mycase</a> — apply, manage benefits, upload documents
DWS Employment Center Locator	<a href="http://jobs.utah.gov/wi/home/office">jobs.utah.gov/wi/home/office</a>
Utah SNAP E&T	Contact your DWS office — employment training for ABAWD compliance
Utah Food Bank	<a href="http://utahfoodbank.org">utahfoodbank.org</a>   801-978-2452 — food resources and SNAP application assistance
Utah 211	Dial 211   <a href="http://211utah.org">211utah.org</a> — food banks, emergency resources, benefits navigation
Utah Legal Services	<a href="http://utahlegalservices.org">utahlegalservices.org</a>   801-328-8891 — free legal help with SNAP appeals

### A Note on Navigating Utah's System

Utah's 130% FPL limit, asset test, purchase restriction (soda and candy since January 2026), and no BBCE make it one of the stricter SNAP states in the Mountain West. Deductions are especially critical — the shelter deduction can make the difference for many Wasatch Front households who appear over the gross limit. The cultural stigma around SNAP in Utah is a real barrier — the Utah Food Bank's confidential application assistance is a valuable tool for advocates working with hesitant clients.

*This guide was compiled using information from the Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS), 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 [jobs.utah.gov](http://jobs.utah.gov) or [mycase.utah.gov](http://mycase.utah.gov) or by contacting your local office.*