

# SNAP & Students

## Checklist for Determining Student Eligibility

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SNAP rules limit the eligibility of certain groups of people, including students. Follow this checklist to determine if an applicant meets the criteria of an “eligible student” under SNAP rules.

Please note that there are additional SNAP income and eligibility rules that all SNAP applicants, including students, must meet in order to qualify to receive a SNAP benefit each month.

### 1. Establish applicant’s status as a student.

The applicant:

- Yes**  **No** Is enrolled in a higher education institution that normally requires a high school diploma or equivalency certificate for enrollment. This includes but is not limited to: colleges\*, universities\*, correspondence school or online courses, vocational and trade/technical schools at the post-high school level.
- Yes**  **No** Is enrolled at least half-time (using the school’s definition of half-time).
- Yes**  **No** *For an applicant applying between semesters:* intends to register for the next school term.

If “Yes” to all of the above, the applicant is considered a student and the student rule applies. Proceed to Step 2. If “No” to any of the above, the applicant is **not** considered a student and the student rules do not apply (continue to screen applicant under regular SNAP rules).

### 2. Is the student enrolled in a college meal plan?

- Yes**  **No** The applicant receives 50% or more of their meals from a college meal plan.

If “Yes”, the student is **not** eligible for SNAP, as he/she is defined as living in an institution.

If “No”, continue to Step 3.

### 3. Does the student meet ANY of the following exemptions?

*Student Is Working:*

- Works an average of 20 hours per week.
- Self-employed an average of 20 hours per week and receives average weekly earnings at least equal to the federal minimum wage multiplied by 20 hours.
- Eligible to participate in state or federal work-study, regardless if the student is actively employed or participating in work-study.\*\*

*Continued →*

*\*Colleges or universities that offer degree programs, regardless of whether a high school diploma is required, are considered institutions of higher education.*

*\*\*This exemption is temporary, and will expire 30 days after the COVID-19 federal public health emergency is lifted.*

*Individual Characteristics:*

- 17 years of age or under or 50 years of age or over.
- Mentally or physically unfit to work.
- Primary caretaker for a household member who is under 6.
- Primary caretaker for a household member between the ages of 6 and 11, if no adequate child care is available that would make it possible to work and go to school.
- Single parent enrolled full-time who is responsible for the care of a child under 12.
- Has an expected family contribution (EFC) of \$0 in the current academic year under federal student financial aid rules.\*\*

*Student Participates in a Qualifying Government Program:*

- Receives benefits from Family Assistance (FA) or Safety Net Assistance (SNA).
- Receives unemployment benefits.
- Attends a State University of New York (SUNY) or City University of New York (CUNY) community, comprehensive, or technology college and is enrolled in a qualified certificate or degree Career and Technical Education (CTE) program.
- Attends an Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) and is enrolled in a qualified CTE program, remedial courses, basic adult education, literacy, or English as a second language.
- In school through SNAP E&T, WIOA or Department of Labor program.

If a student meets **any** of the above exemptions, they are an “eligible student” based on SNAP’s student eligibility criteria. Note that there are additional SNAP income and eligibility rules that all SNAP applicants, including students, must meet in order to receive a SNAP benefit each month.

Additionally, those considered “eligible students” are exempt from:

- SNAP E&T work requirements, and
- SNAP Time Limit Rules for ABAWD’s (currently suspended until September 30, 2021)

**For more information and resources, visit our Students and SNAP webpage:  
[HungerSolutionsNY.org/federal-nutrition-programs/snap/snap-eligibility-for-college-students/](https://HungerSolutionsNY.org/federal-nutrition-programs/snap/snap-eligibility-for-college-students/)**

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