**New York’s Combined Application Projects:**

**Automatically Enrolling Eligible SSI Recipients into SNAP**

For more than two decades, New York has operated a Combined Application Project (CAP) called the New York State Nutrition Improvement Project (NYSNIP), which automatically enrolls single Supplemental Security Income (SSI) live-alone recipients into SNAP.

From December 2021 through November 30, 2024, NYS will transition from NYSNIP to a new CAP called the New York State Combined Application Project (NYSCAP). This guide provides details about this transition and describes how NYSCAP works.

**What Is a CAP?**

CAPs are a [partnership](https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/snap/14-State-Options.pdf) between the Social Security Administration (SSA), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), and state and local agencies to streamline SNAP application procedures for individuals receiving SSI benefits. The projects are designed to strengthen access to nutrition benefits for this vulnerable population.

NYS uses the standard CAP model, which includes simplified joint SNAP/SSI application processing by SSA as individuals apply for or are recertified for SSI. CAPs use standard benefit amounts and/or standard shelter expenses in the benefit calculation and require evaluations to ensure cost neutrality is maintained.

**NYSNIP to NYSCAP**

Since 2014, OTDA has struggled to comply with the cost neutrality requirements of a CAP. For this reason, NYS submitted a waiver request to USDA/FNS to implement a new revised SSI CAP that will be simpler, more cost-neutral, and easier to evaluate for cost neutrality in the future. This new CAP, called NYSCAP, launched in December 2021.

NYSNIP and NYSCAP will run concurrently through November 30, 2024. New participants meeting NYSNIP criteria are placed into NYSCAP, and current NYSNIP participants are continuing to be recertified and/or re-budgeted and converted into NYSCAP. Only a small number of cases still need to be converted during 2024.

**Automatic Enrollment into NYSCAP**

CAPs automatically enroll single Supplemental Security Income (SSI) live-alone recipients into SNAP. Separate SNAP applications, interviews, or verifications are not needed to be automatically enrolled.

The SNAP office/HRA center uses monthly data matching to find eligible NYSCAP participants from the list of newly approved SSI recipients in New York State.

NYSCAP is available only to:

* SSI live-alone recipients—those classified as “living alone” by the Social Security Administration (SSA) (i.e., live by themselves and pay their food, shelter, and clothing expenses).
* This code, called an “A/A,” designates a federal SSI living code of ‘A’ and a State Supplement code of ‘A.’

SSA sets these codes, not the SNAP office/HRA center. Only SSA can code SSI recipients as live-alone.

OTDA clarified the following in [24-ADM-09](https://otda.ny.gov/policy/directives/2024/ADM/24-ADM-09.pdf):

* SSI recipients who live in a dwelling with a spouse but are coded A/A can participate in NYSCAP as their own separate SNAP household unless their spouse applies for SNAP, in which case they would need to be on a SNAP case together and would not be eligible for NYSCAP.
* If a married couple has two NYSCAP cases opened automatically, they can both have a separate case in the same dwelling based on each being coded A/A. However, if these two married individuals were to apply outside of the NYSCAP auto-enrollment process, the normal mandatory household composition rules would apply, and they would need to be on the same SNAP case together and would not be eligible for NYSCAP.
* SSI couples and recipients in other living arrangement categories cannot participate in NYSCAP, but they may be eligible for SNAP through the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP)—another senior/disabled SNAP initiative in NYS—or through the regular SNAP application process.

**18- to 21-year-old SSI Recipients Coded A/A by SSA**

SSI participants ages 18 to 21 can be coded A/A, designating them as SSI live-alone, even if they reside with their parents. These SSI recipients can participate in NYSCAP as a separate SNAP household if the parents do not receive SNAP benefits. If both the parents and the 18- to 21-year-old SSI live-alone are either current SNAP participants or are applying for SNAP, then this family must apply together as one household under regular SNAP eligibility rules.

**NYSCAP Enrollees Must Use Benefits Within 90 Days**

A person enrolled in NYSCAP must redeem their SNAP benefits within the first 90 days of the auto-enrollment. This means they must use their EBT card at a local SNAP vendor to purchase food. By doing this, the enrollee agrees to participate in SNAP and provides an electronic application signature allowing them to receive monthly SNAP benefits. If benefits are not accessed within 90 days, the NYSCAP case will be automatically closed by the SNAP office, and benefits will be removed and will not be restored.

**SNAP Benefits/Budgeting Under NYSNIP/NYSCAP**

Enrollees in NYSCAP will initially receive a minimum benefit level that can be as low as $23. However, by filling out and returning the NYSCAP Statewide SNAP Case Information Collection Sheet (LDSS-4841) included with their NYSCAP opening notice (includes questions about shelter and utility costs), benefits may be adjusted up to the maximum SNAP benefit level—as high as $292.

There are no negative actions for not returning the LDSS-4841. The Information Collection Sheet gives enrollees the opportunity to provide and, if necessary, verify information that may qualify the household for a higher SNAP benefit.

**Under NYSNIP, the SNAP budgeting/benefit is standardized.** The benefit standards consider four factors:

* The cost of shelter
* Eligibility for the heating/cooling standard utility allowance
* Presence of other income
* Geographic location

See the most recent NYSNIP Matrix by Shelter Type at the end of this desk guide.

**Under NYSCAP, the SNAP budgeting/benefit is individualized**. NYSCAP enrollees will have their SNAP case opened with their actual SSI and any other income already budgeted, but with no shelter, medical, or other deductions other than the standard deduction.

The NYSCAP Statewide SNAP Case Information Collection Sheet (LDSS-4841) is provided to notify the SNAP office of the enrollee’s circumstances. Once the SNAP office receives a completed LSDD-4841 and any needed documents, the enrollee’s SNAP budget and benefit amount must be updated using standard SNAP budgeting.

Under NYSCAP rules, enrollees will automatically receive a reminder notice six months after the opening of their NYSCAP case if they have not returned the LDSS-4841.

* This notice provides the enrollee with another opportunity to share information on their shelter and utility costs with the SNAP office to maximize the household’s SNAP benefit.
* Households that do not respond to this notice will not be subject to negative action. However, the household will continue to receive $23 in monthly SNAP benefits instead of getting a benefit that could be as high as $292.

Upon receiving a completed LDSS-4841, the SNAP office must update the SNAP budget using standard SNAP budgeting rules, including:

* Adding the actual shelter expense,
* Determining the Heating/Cooling Standard Utility Allowance, and
* Adding in any medical expenses eligible under SNAP rules.

NYSCAP enrollees must meet the same SNAP verification requirements as all other SNAP cases, except:

* They **may self-declare all shelter-related expenses** (e.g., rent, mortgage, taxes, and insurance on the dwelling) unless questionable.

**Interim Report**

Households participating in NYSCAP will receive an interim report called the NYSCAP SNAP Case Interim Report (LDSS-4836, LDSS-4836 NYC) at the midpoint of their certification period.

The interim report is sent at the **18-month point of their 36-month certification period.**

The following **interim reporting** rules apply:

* The NYSCAP SNAP Case Interim Report (LDSS-4836), which collects information about the households needed to complete a SNAP budget using standard SNAP budgeting procedures, ***must be responded to or the SNAP case will be closed****. This can include mailing a completed form back to the SNAP office or calling the SNAP office and having a caseworker document the responses in the case record.*
* If the interim report is returned but there is not enough information to complete a SNAP budget, the SNAP office must contact the household to clarify or request needed documentation.

**NYSCAP Recertification**

Under SNAP rules a household is only authorized eligible for SNAP benefits for a specified, limited period of time, called the certification period. At the end of that period, the SNAP case is automatically closed unless the SNAP Office authorizes a new certification period. This process is called a recertification.

The **NYSCAP** certification period lasts up to **36 months (3 years)**.

At the end of a certification period, **NYSCAP households must**:

* Follow the recertification process in place for all SNAP recipients in order to continue to receive SNAP benefits.
* Complete and return a SNAP application/recertification form that will be sent in a notice of expiration.
* Follow regular SNAP documentation requirements.

NYSCAP households who are found eligible when recertifying will be given a new 36-month certification period for SNAP.

Participants who lose SSI live-alone status will removed from NYSCAP. However, they can still receive regular SNAP benefits if they apply and are found eligible.

**Changes to the NYSNIP Benefit Matrix and Benefit Allotments**

The NYSNIP matrix will sunset on November 30, 2024, due to the transition to NYSCAP for all NYSNIP cases.

**Find Out More:**

[OTDA](http://otda.ny.gov/) policy memos concerning NYSNIP/NYSCAP:

* [“New York State Nutrition Improvement Project” (04-LCM-13)](http://www.otda.ny.gov/policy/directives/2004/LCM/04_LCM-13.pdf)
* [21TA/DC080—Preliminary Guidance Regarding the New York State Combined Application Project (NYSCAP)](https://otda.ny.gov/policy/gis/2021/21DC080.pdf)

NYSCAP forms and materials that can be downloaded and are part of this toolkit:

* NYSCAP Statewide Information Collection Sheet (LDSS-4841)
* NYSCAP Interim Report (LDSS-4836 [English](https://hungersolutionsny.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/LDSS-4836-rev-9-23.pdf) and [Spanish](https://hungersolutionsny.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/LDSS-4836-SP-rev-9-23.pdf) and LDSS-4836 NYC [English](https://hungersolutionsny.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/LDSS-4836-NYC-rev-9-23.pdf) and [Spanish](https://hungersolutionsny.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/LDSS-4836-NYC-SP-rev-9-23.pdf))
* NYSNIP Benefit Matrix (at the end of this guide)

The Nutrition Outreach and Education Program (NOEP) offers free and confidential services to connect potentially eligible individuals and families with SNAP benefits. NOEP Coordinators provide pre-screening, application, and recertification assistance, and help resolve issues with SNAP cases. Visit [FoodHelpNY.org](https://hungersolutionsny.org/find-food-help/) to find a NOEP near you.

**For More Information**

If you have any questions about this article or any other SNAP-related question, please contact Dawn Secor at (518) 436-8757, ext. 142, or [dawn.secor@hungersolutionsny.org](mailto:dawn.secor@hungersolutionsny.org)

**NYSNIP BENEFITS MATRIX BY SHELTER TYPES**

***10/1/24– 11/30/24***

The New York State Nutrition Improvement Project (NYSNIP) is a pilot project that auto-enrolls single SSI live-alone recipients into the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) for up to 4 years.

NYSNIP is being phased out and will end on November 30, 2024. Anyone still on NYSNIP will be transferred to the New York State Combined Application Project (NYSCAP) at their next recertification or before the end of the year.

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| **HOUSEHOLD** | | **MONTHLY FOOD STAMP BENEFIT AMOUNT** | | |
| **New York City** | **Nassau/Suffolk** | **Upstate** |
| **Shelter Type 94 (High Shelter/SUA)** | **SSI Only**  **Other Income** | $292  $292 | $292  $292 | $292  $289 |
| **Shelter Type 95 (Low Shelter/SUA)** | **SSI Only**  **Other Income** | $292  $292 | $292  $292 | $269  $260 |
| **Shelter Type 96 (High Shelter/ SUA/$21 HEAP\*)** | **SSI Only**  **Other Income** | $292  $292 | $292  $292 | $292  $289 |
| **Shelter Type 96**  **(High Shelter/No SUA\*\*)** | **SSI Only**  **Other Income** | $51  $42 | $51  $42 | $51  $42 |
| **Shelter Type 97 (Low Shelter/ SUA/$21 HEAP\*)** | **SSI Only**  **Other Income** | $292  $292 | $292  $292 | $269  $260 |
| **Shelter Type 97**  **(Low Shelter/No SUA\*\*)** | **SSI Only**  **Other Income** | $44  $38 | $44  $38 | $44  $38 |
| **Shelter Type 98**  **(No Shelter or SUA Data)** | **SSI Only**  **Other Income** | $44  $38 | $44  $38 | $44  $38 |

**High shelter** = Greater than $309/month

**Low shelter** = Less than or equal to $309/month

**SUA** = Eligible for Level 1 (heating/cooling) SUA

**\*SUA/$21 HEAP =** Eligible for Level 1 (heating/cooling) SUA

**\*\*No SUA** = Not eligible for Level 1 (heating/cooling) SUA

**No Shelter/ SUA** = no information on the household’s shelter costs or heating/cooling expenses