

Federal Nutrition Programs and Emergency Food Referral Chart for Older Adults

[USDA National Hunger Hotline](#) 1-866-3-HUNGRY/1-866-348-6479 or 1-877-8-HAMBRE /877-842-6273 (for Spanish)
[Eldercare Locator](#): 1-800-677-1116

U.S. Department of Agriculture—Food and Nutrition Service Programs				
Age Served	Name of Program	How It Works	Who Can Apply	Learn More
All ages but special rules for adults age 60 and older.	<p>Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps)</p> <p>Program may be called something else in your state (such as CalFresh in California, 3SquaresVT in Vermont, or Food Assistance Program in Florida) or called EBT.</p>	<p>Participants receive monthly benefits (loaded on an EBT card that's like a debit card) to buy food at grocery stores, farmers' markets, and other food retail outlets across the country that accept SNAP. SNAP participants have the choice of what food items to buy with SNAP, meaning they can buy the foods that are right for them.</p> <p>In some states, SNAP benefits can be used to purchase groceries online (this is not widely available but is becoming more common).</p> <p>Special SNAP rules apply when there is a natural disaster.</p> <p>SNAP benefits are available to anyone who meets the eligibility criteria. There are no caps on the number of people who can participate (different rules apply in Puerto Rico).</p> <p>The average benefit for an older adult living alone is roughly \$130 per month.</p>	<p>For people/households with low income. (program rules vary, please check your state's SNAP eligibility information).</p> <p>Special program rules for older adults (age 60 and older) and individuals with disabilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No gross income test • Deduction of out-of-pocket medical expenses in excess of \$35 per month • No cap on housing expenses <p>States can adopt policies to help adults age 60 and older apply such as a standard medical deduction, longer certification periods, or</p>	<p>Reaches about 5.8 million older adults each month, but could reach millions more.</p> <p>Call the SNAP information line at 1-800-221-5689 for information on how to apply in your state.</p> <p>Check this SNAP prescreening tool to see if you might be eligible.</p>

		The minimum benefit is \$20 per month.	elderly simplified applications.	
Age 60 and older	Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) Program may be called something else in your state.	Provides a monthly food box with items like canned fruit and vegetables, cheese, shelf stable milk, cereals, potatoes, grains, peanut butter, and dried beans. Administered by a State agency in conjunction with local food banks, nutrition programs, and community action organizations.	For low-income (at or below 130% federal poverty level) adults ages 60 and older. Participation caps apply and the program is limited to designated service areas in states that participate.	Reaches about 761,000 older adults each month USDA information on CSFP.
All ages	Emergency Food (e.g., food banks, food pantries/food shelves, and soup kitchens)	Food distributed (e.g., grocery bags or boxes) via food bank partners, including pantries, senior centers, and faith-based groups. Hours and days of operation vary so contact your local pantry before going. Programs may be available for home-bound older adults. Types of foods offered varies. Many food banks use The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), a means-tested federal program that provides food commodities at no cost to individuals and families in need of short-term hunger relief.	For people/households, , including older adults, with low income but requirements vary depending on the site. Some sites require referrals.	Check out Feeding America for information on food banks and emergency food sites. Eldercare.acl.gov
All ages	Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)	Provides a monthly package of foods to participants. Administered by more than 270 Tribal governments that store and distribute USDA foods, determine applicant eligibility, and provide nutrition education to participants.	For people/households, including older adults, with low income living on Indian reservations and Native American households residing in designated areas near reservations or in Oklahoma.	Reached around 75,000 people in FY 2020 See USDA's website for more information.

			<p>Participation caps apply.</p> <p>Households cannot participate in FDPIR and SNAP at the same time.</p>	
Age 60 and older (and children in child care centers and homes and emergency shelters)	Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	<p>Two meals (breakfast, lunch, or supper) and one snack, or two snacks and one meal, to each eligible participant, each day.</p> <p>Meals are free, at a reduced-price, or paid, depending on the income of the participant.</p> <p>New and improved nutrition standards.</p>	<p>For people age 60 and older and/or individuals who are functionally impaired at participating non-residential adult day care centers.</p> <p>Funding available to serve all eligible centers approved by the state.</p> <p>(Program also serves children in eligible settings)</p>	<p>Reached more than 100,000 adults on an average day in FY 2021</p> <p>Contact your state CACFP agency for information.</p>
Age 60 and older	Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)	Annual vouchers (worth a total of \$20 – \$50) to use for eligible foods (fruits, vegetables, honey, and fresh-cut herbs) at participating farmers' markets, roadside stands, and community-supported agriculture programs.	<p>For people age 60 and older with low income (at or below 185% of the federal poverty level), but states have the option to tie eligibility to participation in other programs like SNAP or CSFP.</p> <p>Participation caps apply and not all states participate.</p>	<p>Reached about 725,000 older adults with a voucher in FY 2020</p> <p>USDA information on participating states.</p>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—Administration for Community Living Programs

Age Served	Name of Program	How It Works	Who Can Apply	Learn More
Age 60 and older	<p>Congregate Nutrition Program</p> <p>Program may be called something else in your state, such as Meals with Friends.</p>	<p>Provides group meals at participating sites throughout the country such as recreation centers, senior housing, places of worship, and other community spaces.</p> <p>Meals (typically lunch) served Mondays through Fridays and must provide at least one-third of the recommended dietary allowance.</p> <p>Meals are free but voluntary contributions are accepted.</p> <p>Meals must provide at least one-third of the Reference Daily Intake and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.</p>	<p>For adults age 60 and older (plus spouse, household member with a disability, or caregiver accompanying an older adult to site as well as site volunteers).</p> <p>Participation caps apply, and while there is no income test to participate, preference is given to those with the greatest economic and social needs, with particular attention to low-income older individuals, including those that are low-income minorities, have limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas.</p>	<p>Reached about 1.5 million older adults with more than 73 million meals in 2019</p> <p>Check out the Eldercare Locator to locate a participating site.</p> <p>Meals on Wheels provides a listing of sites.</p>
Age 60 and older	<p>Home-Delivered Meals</p> <p>Program may be called something else in your state, such as Meals on Wheels.</p>	<p>Meals must provide at least one-third of the recommended dietary allowances.</p> <p>Meals are free but voluntary contributions are accepted.</p> <p>Note: Meals on Wheels programs throughout the country offer home-delivered meals and may have different criteria for participation; some are funded with Title III, OAA funding, while others rely in whole or in part on non-governmental funding.</p>	<p>For people who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 years of age • frail, homebound, or isolated • spouses of or a person with disabilities who live with a participating senior <p>Participation caps apply, and while there is no income test to participate, preference is given to those with the greatest economic</p>	<p>Reached more than 884,000 people with nearly 150 million home-delivered meals in 2019</p> <p>Check out the Eldercare Locator for information on home delivered meals.</p> <p>Meals on Wheels provides a listing of sites as well as other home delivered meal services.</p>

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Adults of All Ages living with HIV	Ryan White Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Category	Provides medically tailored food and nutrition services (FNS), such as home-delivered meals, congregate meals, grocery bags, food pantries, and vouchers that complement and are necessary to the fulfillment of medical nutritional therapy (MTN).	For people with HIV. Participation caps apply.	Contact the Food is Medicine Coalition at fimc@glwd.org for information on participating organizations. People with HIV can apply for services by contacting agencies that provide FNS and MNT through the Ryan White Treatment and Modernization Act.
Adults with Severe and/or Chronic Illness	Medicaid, Medicare, PACE, and other Affordable Care Act (ACA) Innovations (sometimes called medically tailored meals)	In most cases, these benefits cover home-delivered meals for adults meeting a certain illness criteria, often through the intermediary of a managed care plan. Meal plans are tailored to the medical needs of the participant to improve health. In certain instances, medically tailored food and nutrition services may be an insurance benefit or a reimbursable service for people with severe and/or chronic illness.	For people with severe and/or chronic illness referred by a medical professional or healthcare plan.	Contact the Food is Medicine Coalition at fimc@glwd.org for information on participating organizations.