

Transforming
Lives

Basic Food Forum

Community Services Division
Department of Social and Health Services
April 2021



Community Services Office lobbies are closed

- All business is conducted over the phone at 877-501-2233.
- **Identicard service is back.**
- Telephonic signature used for all applications and reviews.
- No EBT cards issued at the local offices except for clients with general delivery.
- Drop boxes are still available.

Change to Public Charge

- August 2019 rule expanding public charge has been rescinded.
- Department of Homeland Security has reverted back to 1999 Public Charge rule.
- Food benefits are not included in public charge.

Disaster Cash Assistance Program

- Reinstated April 19
- Temporary program
- The cash program is meant to help some Washingtonians meet their basic needs during the state of emergency.
- You are not required to be a U.S. citizen or to have certain immigration status to receive DCAP.
- DCAP is for households that don't qualify for other DSHS cash programs.
- The DCAP program may be offered monthly. A new application and interview are required for each request during this time.

Pandemic EBT

- Letters were mailed March 23, 2021.
- P-EBT cards currently being mailed out.
 - This will continue for several weeks.
 - P-EBT benefits will appear on a separate card.
- If customers are found eligible, cards will have retroactive food benefits for September 2020 to January 2021.
- If customers have questions, please call 833-518-0282.

Student Eligibility for Basic Food

- Expanded pool of eligible students.
- Expected family contribution (EFC) = \$0
- Maximum Pell grant recipient.
- Eligible for work study.
 - Even if not participating.
- Temporary rules.

Basic Food Allotments

- All households will receive the maximum benefit amount for their household size.
- Since March 2020.
- **Also, April 2021**

Basic Food benefit increases

- Due to the Consolidated Appropriations act passed by Congress, food benefits will *temporarily* increase by 15%.
- No effect on emergency allotments or P-EBT.
- Clients do not need to do anything.
- Clients will not receive a letter advising them about the increase in food benefits.
- Food benefits will return to regular issuance amounts October 2021.
- January's 15% increase was added to cards on February 28, 2021.

NEW: Customer Connect

- New interactive voice response system.
- Front-end of the Contact Center phone number.
- Allows customers to choose self-service or assisted service.

FEATURES:

Verify case status, including benefit amounts, next benefit payment, benefit balances and when their next review is due.

Questions?

Kristen Charlet

Kristen.charlet@dshs.wa.gov

509-833-0112

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