

# SNAP Tribal Consultation

## SNAP and SNAP Employment & Training

December 11th, 2025 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Thank you for attending! Please make yourself comfortable



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**PUBLIC HEALTH &  
HUMAN SERVICES**



# Agenda

Time	Topic	Presenter
8:30 AM – 9:00 AM	Welcome and Introductions	Heidi DeRoche, Jennifer Fox, Chappell Smith
9:00 AM – 9:45 AM	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	Jack Albertin
9:45 AM – 10:30 AM	SNAP Employment and Training (SNAP E&T)	Cori Walker
10:30 AM – 10:45 PM	Break	
10:45 PM – 11:30 PM	Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD)	Jack Albertin
11:30 PM – 11:45 PM	Next Steps	Leah Burnham
11:45 PM – 12:00 PM	Closing and Wrap-up	Jennifer Fox, Chappell Smith, Heidi DeRoche
12:00 PM	Sack lunch provided by DPHHS	



# Prayer & Introductions

Welcome



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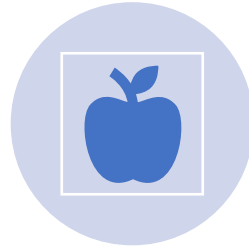
# Montana's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

*Jack Albertin, SNAP Program Compliance Supervisor*

# SNAP Program in Montana



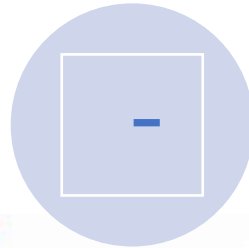
Quick Review:  
WHAT'S SNAP?



Gaining access to  
benefits



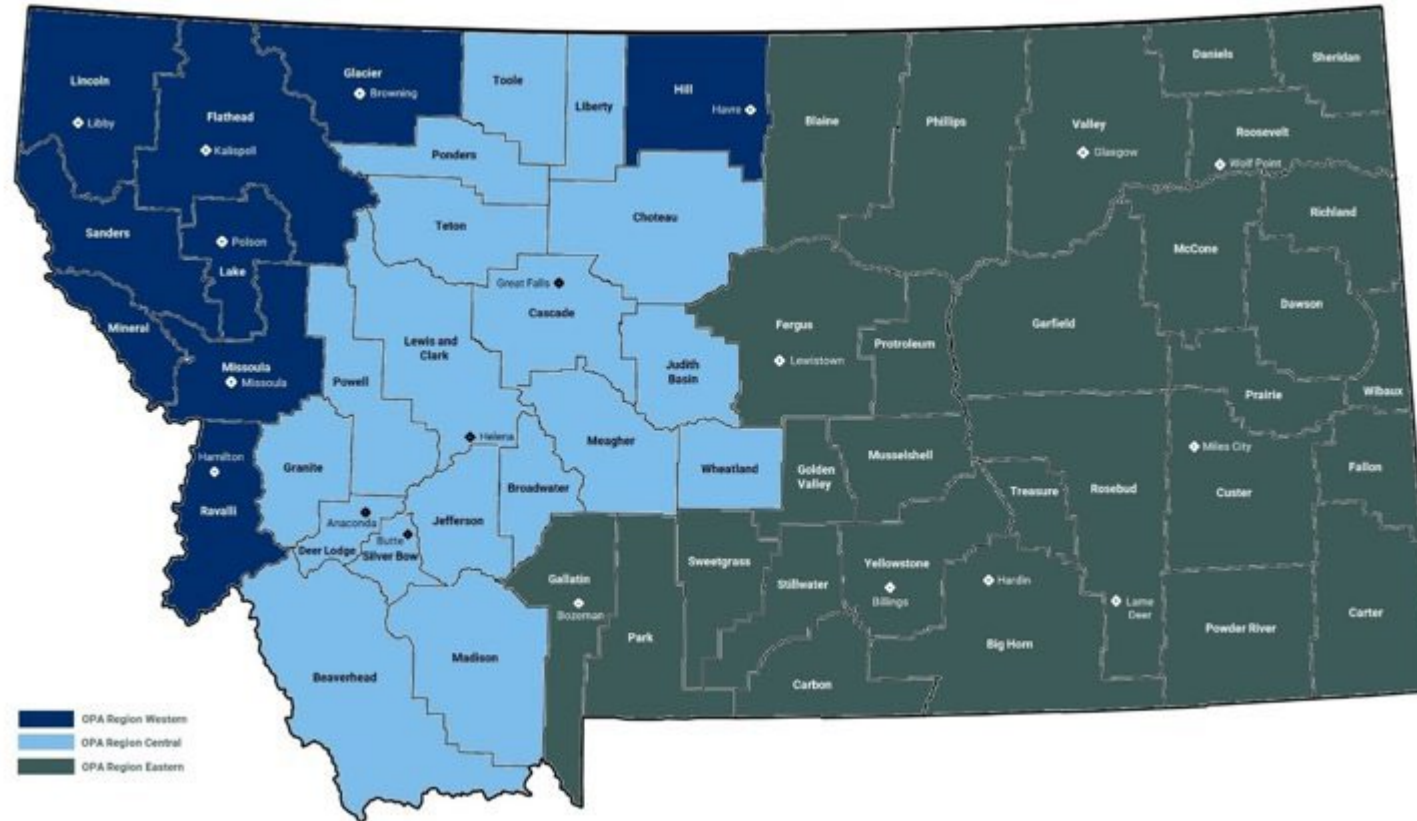
Benefits Available  
and how those are  
determined



Eligibility and  
reporting  
requirements



# Office of Public Assistance (OPA) Locations



# Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Definition

- Eligible households receive benefit allotment on an Electronic Benefit Transfer Card
- Factors affecting SNAP allotment include income, expenses, and others to be discussed
- Households must remain eligible and held to specific reporting requirements



# Accessing and Use of SNAP Benefits

- Issued on an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card
  - Montana Access Card

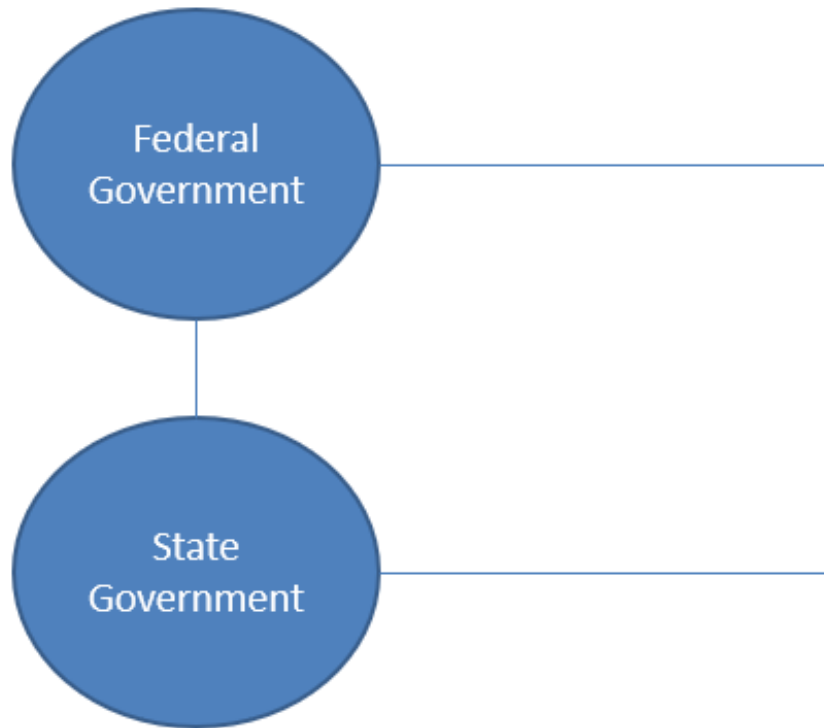


- Eligible food items
  - Examples
    - Intended for home consumption
    - Seeds
    - Plants for a home garden
- Ineligible food items
  - Examples
    - Alcohol
    - Household products
    - Cigarettes
    - Ready to eat hot food
    - Pet food



# Program Administration

- SNAP is a cooperation between Federal and State governments



## Responsibilities:

- Guidelines for State operations
- Authorization and supervision of retailers

## Responsibilities:

- Certify eligibility
- Ensure correct benefit amounts



# SNAP Application Process



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# Application

Clients, or their authorized representative(s), can apply for SNAP benefits in the following ways:

- Paper Applications
  - <https://dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/OfficeofPublicAssistance>
- Online Applications
  - [apply.mt.gov](https://apply.mt.gov)
- Telephonic Applications
  - 1-888-706-1535



# Application Continued

After an application is received:

- The date the application is received is the application start date. This determines:
  - Date benefits will be issued from
  - Timeline for mandatory/non-mandatory verifications
- Interview
  - Confirms information provided by the client and resolves any questions
  - Advise the household of its:
    - Rights for benefits application (Civil Rights Law)
    - Responsibilities, providing verifications, etc.
    - Reporting requirements (i.e., when the client must reach out)



# Application Continued

- Verifications
  - Mandatory verifications (Income)
  - Non-mandatory but beneficial (Rent/Utilities)
  - Normal processing requires verifications before issuance; expedited processing can allow issuance for a time before verifications are received



# Eligibility Factors

Determination of benefits considers several elements:

- Household Composition
- Identity, Citizenship, Residency
- Income
- Work Patterns
- Expenses



# Household Composition

- Family Relationships in the home
- Who physically lives in the home
- Anyone living in the home part-time
- Anyone temporarily out of the home
- Anyone who purchases and prepares food separately



# Identity, Citizenship, Residency

- **Identity & Citizenship:** Identity is typically verified with an SSN and each recipient must be a US Citizen, US National, or eligible alien
- **Residency:** Current residential address in Montana, or a general delivery address in a city, if homeless



# Income

- Income plays a very large part in a household's eligibility for SNAP benefits
- Countable and Excluded income types
  - Countable - Wage income, Social Security, Self-Employment
  - Non-Countable - Per Capita, IIM
- SNAP uses gross income amount to make determinations



# Expenses

- There are several allowable expenses and deductions for SNAP
  - Earned income deduction
  - Standard deduction
  - Dependent care expense
  - Dependent mileage expense
  - Child Support expense
  - Medical expenses
  - Shelter and utilities
- These reduce the amount of income that is considered for benefit determination



# Maximum Benefit Allotment (2025)

- 1 person - \$298
  - 2 people - \$546
  - 3 people - \$785
  - 4 people - \$994
  - 5 people - \$1183
  - 6 people - \$1421
  - 7 people - \$1571
  - 8 people - \$1789
  - Each additional person - \$218
- This is the Maximum Amount allowable for Benefit Issuance based on the size of the household



# Retailer & Online Purchasing

You can purchase items online with SNAP EBT at major retailers:

- Walmart
- Costco
- Safeway
- Smith's
- Target
- Amazon
- Albertson's
- Rosauers

\*\* The USDA SNAP website provides a more comprehensive list of online retailers:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/online>



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# Discussion

- Questions:
  - Do you have questions about eligibility or administration?
  - How can access to SNAP be improved (i.e., PAHL, OPA, self-service portal)?
  - What barriers are individuals experiencing?
  - Do you have policy questions?
  - Additional questions?



# Montana's SNAP Employment & Training (E&T) Program

*Cori Walker, SNAP E&T Program Coordinator*

More than  
a job.



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# Montana's SNAP E&T Goal

To help individuals gain self-sufficiency by supporting SNAP clients through:

- Overcoming barriers to employment
- Accessing resources in communities
- Gaining employment or increasing wages
- Retaining employment



# What is SNAP Employment & Training?



Provides free employment and education training and support for people receiving SNAP benefits.



SNAP E&T is a voluntary program



Includes assistance with job searching, obtaining a GED or HiSET, vocational education programs, apprenticeships, English language skills, self-employment training, and job retention



Weekly case management meetings with a case manager



Supportive services to help pay for costs related to finding employment or educational opportunities.



# Montana's SNAP E&T Counties

Big Horn	Cascade	Deer Lodge	Fergus
Flathead	Gallatin	Golden Valley	Judith Basin
Lewis & Clark	Lincoln	Missoula	Musselshell
Petroleum	Ravalli	Silver Bow	Wheatland
Yellowstone			

maximus



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# SNAP E&T Qualifying vs. Non-Qualifying Components

- **Qualifying Components**

- Components that relate to furthering education, employment-related skills, or increasing work experience
- Per federal guidelines, participating in a qualifying component for 80 hours per month (20 average hours per week) will qualify as a work exemption for SNAP Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) Work Requirements

- **Non-Qualifying Components**

- Components that can help with securing employment or retaining employment
- Per federal guidelines, SNAP E&T hours spent on activities related to non-qualifying components do not qualify for a SNAP ABAWD work-requirement exemption.

\*A participant can be in both a qualifying and non-qualifying component at the same time. They will qualify for a SNAP ABAWD work requirement exemption if they complete at least 80 monthly hours of activities each month, and if more than half of their hours were spent on qualifying activities.



# SNAP E&T Components

## Qualifying Components

- Vocational Education
- Basic Education
- English Language Acquisition
- Workfare
- Apprenticeship

## Non-Qualifying Components

- Job Search Training
- Job Retention
- Self-Employment Training

\*Federal rules dictate which components are qualifying and non-qualifying but state's determine which components are in the state plan.



# Vocational Education *Qualifying Component*



Programs focusing on the skills required for a specific job function or trade.



Provides practical, job specific instruction that can lead to certification, credentials, degrees, and licenses.

## **Examples:**

- Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)
- Certified Driver's License (CDL) program
- Flagging/Construction/Welding programs



# Basic Education *Qualifying Component*



Assists participants in achieving literacy needed to secure employment. This component is tied to a participant's short-term or long-term employment goal.

## Examples

Preparing to pass a high school equivalency test such as GED or HiSET.

Helping to increase from a third-to fifth-grade reading level.

Building finance and/or digital skills to help succeed in the workplace.



# Apprenticeship

## *Qualifying Component*



A work-based learning program offered through an employer or a program sponsor.

Apprenticeships are available in various industries:

- Manufacturing
- Construction
- Agriculture
- Healthcare
- Information Technology

**Example:** A program with a construction company, registered with the U.S. Department of Labor, where participants learn more difficult construction skills. This program would put the participant on the path to a journeyman certificate.



# English Language Acquisition *Qualifying Component*



Programs that help participants improve their English speaking, reading, or writing skills to increase employability.



**Examples:** Training program teaching English as a Second Language which will help someone speak English fluently, improve basic reading or writing in English, or general English literacy.

# Workfare

## *Qualifying Component*



Structured work activity performed at a public or non-profit worksite in exchange for SNAP benefits.



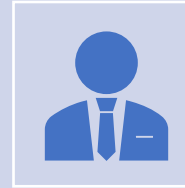
**Example:** A program at the Parks and Recreations Department has a Workfare slot for participants during the summer months. This may help participants with a current job reference, an opportunity to learn new skills, enhance soft skills, and expand their network of job contacts.



# Job Search Training, Job Retention, & Self-Employment Training - *Non-Qualifying*



Classes may be offered in groups, one-on-one, remotely or in person or online.



**Job Search Training:** provides job search techniques, including employment assessments, resume writing, and interview skills.



**Job Retention:** provides supportive services to participants who have found employment while receiving SNAP E&T services. Provided up to 90 days.



**Self-Employment:** provides training for participants to design and operate a small business or other venture.



# Supportive Services are available to SNAP E&T participants

Are there any other barriers to employment that are not addressed by this list of supportive services?

How can we better promote this program benefit?

- Transportation: Gas Gift Cards or Bus Passes
- Pre-Paid Mobile Phones and Minutes, Wi-Fi Hotspots
- Tuition & Fees, Student Activity Fees, College Transcripts, Textbooks
- Uniforms
- Interview Attire
- Driver's License, ID Cards, CDL
- Birth Certificates
- Business Licenses
- Personal Safety Items, Tools, Equipment
- Union Dues
- TB Tests, Drug Tests
- Legal Costs (up to \$100)
- Automobile Repairs (up to \$100)

*General cap of \$500 cumulative per participant per year.*

*\$1500 cap/year for tuition/fees for training and books/training materials.*



# Discussion

Are there other employment-related activities or services that SNAP E&T is not providing Tribal Constituents, that we should consider adding to the state plan?

## Summary of Current Components:

- Apprenticeship
- Basic Education
- English as a Second Language
- Vocational Education
- Workfare
- Job Search Training
- Self-Employment Training
- Job Retention



# Able Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD)

- *Jack Albertin, SNAP Program Compliance Supervisor*



# Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD)

Able-Bodied Adult  
Without Dependents  
(ABAWD)

SNAP recipients aged  
18-64 who do not live  
with a SNAP household  
member under the age  
of 14.

An ABAWD not meeting the  
ABAWD work requirement and  
has no other exemption has  
**SNAP benefits limited to three  
months.**

Individuals without an exemption  
can only receive SNAP benefits for  
3 months in a 3-year time-period.

- ***The current period is July 1, 2023 –  
June 30, 2026***



# ABAWD Exemptions Removed per HR1

## Effective October 1, 2025

- Exemption for former foster child when turned 18 and currently under the age of 24 removed
- Exemption for veterans removed
- Exemption for homeless individuals removed

## Effective November 1, 2025

- Montana's ABAWD **Geographic Waiver** was cancelled by USDA per HR1. ABAWDs with a residential address in the following regions had previously qualified for an ABAWD exemption:
  - Blackfeet Indian Reservation
  - Crow Indian Reservation
  - Fort Belknap Reservation
  - Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation
  - Rocky Boy's Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land
  - Fort Peck Indian Reservation



# ABAWD Exemptions Changed per HR1

Effective October 1, 2025

- The ages that we review for exemptions are now 17 and younger or 65 years or older (previously 55 or older)
- To qualify for an exemption for residing in a SNAP household with a minor, the minor must now be under the age of 14 (previously under the age of 18)



# ABAWD Exemptions Added per HR1

Effective October 1, 2025

HR1 adds new exceptions for Indians, also referred to as Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Indigenous Peoples, and Tribal Members. The new exceptions include:

- “An Indian” as defined in paragraph (13) of section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA);
- “An Urban Indian” as defined in paragraph (28) of Section 4 of the IHCIA; and
- “A California Indian” as described in section 809(a) of the IHCIA.



# ABAWD and Work Registration Comparison

## Work registration Exemptions ([SNAP 701.1](#))

- Under age 16 (not PI)
- 60 years of age or older
- Caring for a child under the age of 6
- Receiving TANF (unless sanctioned) or TANF post-employment
- Age 16 or 17 and attending school at least half-time
- Student enrollment at least half-time
- Participating in a drug or alcohol treatment program (not AA or NA)
- Participating in refugee employment services
- Disabled (SSA or VA)
- Mentally or physically unfit for employment
- Caring for an incapacitated person
- Working 30 hours per week or equivalent
- Receiving SSI or SSDI payments or a pending SSI application
- Receiving Unemployment (UI) or pending UI application

## ABAWD Exemptions ([SNAP 801.1](#))

- Age 17 or younger
- Age 65 or older
- Living with a child in the SNAP household under 14 years old
- Pregnancy
- Mentally or physically unfit for employment
- Working an average of 20 hours or more per week
- Combination of volunteer/work/in-kind services and average of 20 hours per week or more
- Participating in a Qualifying Component of SNAP E&T, WIOA or TAA
- Native American eligible to receive HIS benefits (Urban Indian, Indian, and California Indian)
- Meet a non-age-related (age 60-64) work registration exemption



# Discussion

- Are there questions on ABAWD policy?



# Next Steps

*Leah Burnham, Food Security Program & Compliance Supervisor*



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# Next Steps: SNAP State Plans

Tribal Governments are welcome and encouraged to review and provide feedback to DPHHS.

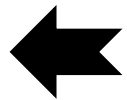
- To view how SNAP is currently administered in MT the full policy manual can be viewed here:  
<https://dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/snapmanual>
- Copies of the current SNAP E&T plan will be sent out via email after the tribal consultation for your review



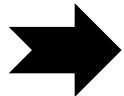
# Next Steps: Comments and Feedback

DPHHS would like to invite comments and gather feedback for improving SNAP and SNAP E&T delivery for Tribal Constituents. Together, we can ensure that the programs remain responsive, respectful, and rooted in the strengths of Tribal Nations in Montana.

**Comments received by February 28th will be used to develop the next annual state plan.**



Scan me with  
your phone  
or  
follow the  
link



<https://forms.office.com/g/GWDrX7mNYQ>



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# Next Steps for the State

The State of Montana will:

- Send out PowerPoint slides and other supporting documents
- Collect feedback on state plans through February 28th
- Utilize feedback to improve state plans



# Closing

*Jennifer Fox, Policy Bureau Chief*

*Chappell Smith, Human and Community Services Division Administrator*

*Heidi DeRoche, Tribal Relations Manager*



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