

# California Community Colleges HEALTH & WELLNESS



## California Community Colleges Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) Guidebook

College student hunger is a pressing concern. Researchers find that up to one-third of community college students regularly experience very low food security.<sup>1</sup> (Wisconsin HOPE Lab, 2017). There is a significant body of research linking student health—both behavioral and physical—to academic retention and success. Hunger and housing problems cause students to miss classes and school activities, avoid buying required textbooks, and even drop classes.<sup>2</sup> In a recent survey of more than 43,000 students, 42-44 percent of students receiving D's or F's in college had very low food security, compared to only 24 percent of students receiving A's.<sup>3</sup> With growing awareness of these challenges, more and more colleges have begun to implement basic needs support programs on campus.

Federal and state benefits programs such as CalWORKs and CalFresh are powerful tools for addressing hunger. **Many California Community College (CCC) students have low income status and are eligible for these benefits.** When colleges participate in these programs as benefits retailers, students can use their EBT (Electronic Benefits Transfer) card to buy groceries and other items on campus. **However, most CCC are not currently set up to accept EBT cards at campus stores or dining halls.** This creates a missed opportunity to support these students.

### Part 1: Introduction to the EBT Guidebook

In 2017, 70 community colleges responded that 56% of students were food insecure<sup>4</sup>. In a Fall 2017 survey conducted by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, results indicated **strong campus buy-in to address basic needs insecurity**. The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office recognized the impact of unmet basic needs on student wellness and success, and the critical role community colleges can play to address food security and assembled the **CCC EBT Guidebook to help CCC understand and pursue the process for accepting EBT benefits at campus stores, dining halls, and other point-of-sale (POS) locations**. It is intended as a practical document with step-by-step guidance, tips, and tools you can use.

<sup>1</sup> Goldrick-Rab, S., Richardson, J., & Hernandez, A. (March 2017). *Hungry and Homeless in College: Results from a National Study of Basic Needs Insecurity in Higher Education*. Wisconsin HOPE Lab.

<sup>2</sup> Dubick, J., Mathews, B., & Cady, C. (October 2016). *Hunger on Campus: The Challenge of Food Insecurity for College Students*. College and University Food Bank Alliance and partners.

<sup>3</sup> Goldrick-Rab, S., Richardson, J., Schneider, J., Hernandez, A., & Cady, C. (April 2018). *Still Hungry and Homeless in College*. Wisconsin HOPE Lab.

<sup>4</sup> Goldrick-Rab, S., Broton, K. M., & Hernandez, D. C. *Addressing Basic Needs Security in Higher Education: An Introduction to Three Evaluations for Food and Housing at community Colleges*. Wisconsin HOPE Lab.

The *EBT Guidebook* was created using resources linked throughout this document. The *EBT Guidebook* was also developed by the California Community College's Chancellor's Office using information and insights provided by Daren Lynne, Director of Special Projects & Academic Support, Los Angeles City College Foundation. Ms. Lynne was integral to the food security efforts of Los Angeles Trade Technical College (LATTC) and Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD).

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office anticipates the *EBT Guidebook* will be a useful and valuable resource in your work to support student wellness.<sup>5</sup>

The *Guidebook* focuses on helping colleges apply to accept EBT benefits at POS locations. If you are interested in learning about comprehensive approaches to CCC student hunger and homelessness, visit the California Community Colleges Health & Wellness website:

<http://www.cccstudentmentalhealth.org/basic-needs-initiative/>

## Part 2: Overview of Key Concepts

EBT, CalFresh, and SNAP are different terms that are often used interchangeably, which can be confusing. This section provides a brief overview of terms discussed in the *EBT Guidebook*.

**Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT)** is an electronic system through which states issue benefits. Benefits programs that are issued through EBT include, but are not limited to: CalFresh; CalWORKs; Medi-Cal/Medicaid; and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Special Supplemental Nutrition Program.



People who receive cash or nutrition benefits use an **EBT card** to pay for items at participating retailers. EBT cards look like debit cards, use a magnetic stripe and Personal Identification Number (PIN) like debit cards, and are designed to be discreet. An EBT card is used for all the programs described in this *EBT Guidebook*.

**EBT cash** benefits are intended to provide financial assistance for necessities such as rent, utilities, and food and other household essentials. People who receive EBT cash benefits can use their EBT card to pay for these items in participating stores; they can also withdraw money at ATMs. Any item that can be legally purchased with currency can be purchased with EBT cash benefits, but some types of stores are excluded (see Tool 1 for more about eligible stores).

EBT cash programs include state general assistance; refugee assistance; and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), known in California as **CalWORKs** (California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids). To receive CalWORKs benefits, a person must be pregnant or the parent of a child under 19, have low or very low income, and meet other requirements.

<sup>5</sup> Although this *Guidebook* mainly refers to students, we wish to acknowledge that some faculty and staff also participate in these benefits programs. Food insecurity is a widespread issue that cuts across social and cultural categories.

**CalFresh** is California's implementation of SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.<sup>6</sup> CalFresh provides monthly benefits for households with low income to pay for food, food products, and food-producing plants or seeds. (For a list of eligible and ineligible items, see Tool 1.) CalFresh recipients do not need to be eligible for other financial assistance or social services programs to participate in CalFresh. CalFresh eligibility is based on household size, income, and monthly expenses. There are also certain eligibility requirements that are specific to students. According to [GetCalFresh.org](http://GetCalFresh.org), as many as 2 in 5 students are eligible for CalFresh.

The **Restaurant Meals Program (RMP)** is a long-standing program that allows CalFresh recipients who are homeless, disabled, or 60 years of age or older to use their CalFresh benefits to buy hot, nutritious, prepared meals. The purpose of this program is to provide reduced-cost meals to people who may not have the tools or ability to cook food at home.

The *EBT Guidebook* uses “**benefits retailer**” to describe any store, restaurant, or college that participates in EBT cash, CalFresh, or the Restaurant Meals Program. In other words, these are retailers that are set up to accept EBT cards as payment for food or other items.

### Part 3: Deciding to Become a Benefits Retailer

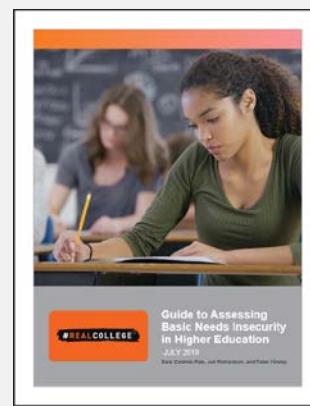
Before your campus begins the application process for any of these benefits programs, it is helpful to consider why, how, and with whom you will partner to become a benefits retailer (see Tool 2 for potential partners).

With your partners, reflect on how becoming a benefits retailer complements your college’s overall commitment to student health and wellness. Your college may have an advanced student food security strategy already in place, or it might be just beginning to explore this issue. Understanding the needs of your students, identifying your goals, and honing your strategy from the beginning will help you later in the process, as you reach out to other stakeholders, decision-makers, and the community (see Tool 3 for ways to develop your strategy).

**The list below provides steps that may help clarify your planning process.** However, it’s also important not to lose momentum at this stage. Ideally, you will balance your broad, campus-level perspective with practical steps toward becoming a benefits retailer.

#### Key Resource: Survey Guide

Check out the [Guide to Assessing Basic Needs Insecurity in Higher Education](#) (2018) from The Hope Center to learn how to use surveys to assess basic needs insecurity on your campus. Campus-level data can help you develop a focused argument for becoming a benefits retailer.



<sup>6</sup> SNAP was formerly known as “food stamps,” but this term should not be used, because it is outdated and stigmatizing. It is mentioned here only to provide a frame of reference for readers.

### **Planning Steps:**

- ✓ Research the current state of benefits at your college. For example, does your campus already accept EBT cash? Are efforts underway at the district level to roll-out the Restaurant Meals Program?
- ✓ Bring the right partners to the table (see Tool 2).
- ✓ Achieve buy-in among decision-makers (see Tool 3 for strategies and data sources). On many campuses, you will need support from the Office of the Vice President of Student Services. Other key decision-makers may include administrative services and dining management.
- ✓ Consider how cash or food benefits fit into your college's strategic plan, commitment to student health and wellness, and/or food security approach. Why should your campus become a benefits provider?
- ✓ Do a preliminary assessment of the resources (people, time, training, etc.) your campus will need to pursue the application or implementation process. This *EBT Guidebook* can help you with this assessment.
- ✓ Decide which program(s) you will pursue. For example, will you begin with becoming an EBT cash provider, or will you pursue EBT cash and the Restaurant Meals Program simultaneously?
- ✓ Work with partners, as applicable, to establish agreed-upon next steps and realistic timelines.

### **Part 4: Accepting EBT Cash**

The simplest way for colleges to begin accepting benefits is by becoming an EBT cash retailer. This allows students to buy food and other items on campus with their EBT card using their cash benefits, such as CalWORKs.

Retailers do not need special state or federal government approval to begin accepting EBT cash. This is one reason why EBT cash is often the easiest route for schools.

For official information, visit the [California EBT Project Office](#) website and review the pages for merchants.

### **Steps to Become an EBT Cash Retailer**

- ✓ Determine whether you have the right equipment in place in your cafeteria and/or stores. EBT cards require the use of a PIN, so your point-of-sale (POS) equipment must have a PIN pad.
- ✓ If needed, purchase and install POS terminals with PIN pads.
- ✓ Contact your credit card vendor to ensure your agreements allow for processing of EBT transactions. You and your processor must be compliant with the Quest Operating Rules:  
<https://web.nacha.org/quest/quest-operating-rules>
- ✓ If needed, work with your credit card vendor to update your agreements.

- ✓ Contact your third-party debit transaction processor. Ask them to have the California EBT IIN (Issuer Identification Number: 507719) added to the debit card transaction set of your POS equipment.
  - If the processor asks for a federal or state government number, they are referring to the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) number. You do not need an FNS number, because you are planning to accept EBT cash benefits, not CalFresh/food benefits. Tell them to fill the FNS number field with seven zeroes (0000000).
- ✓ At the locations where you will accept EBT cash, train staff in advance so that they are prepared to answer students' questions, as needed (see Key Resource: Training Guide, below). For example, you may want to let staff know that:
  - Your location now accepts EBT cash, which is not the same as SNAP/CalFresh.
  - It's important not to stigmatize or single out students who pay with EBT cards; staff should treat students paying with EBT like anyone else using a debit card.
  - Students must have their EBT card with them, and their PIN, in order to use EBT as payment.
  - Students may use EBT cash for food and any other item that can be legally purchased with cash (see Tool 1 for eligible and ineligible purchases).
  - If you provide cash back for debit card purchases, you can also provide cash back for EBT cash purchases.
- ✓ Test your ability to accept EBT cash as payment. For example, inform a small group of interested students that they can now use EBT cash, and test for one month.
- ✓ Market your college as an EBT cash retailer to your whole campus (see Part 7 for more information).

## Part 5: Applying for the Restaurant Meals Program

Several counties participate in the Restaurant Meals Program (RMP), which allows people who are homeless, elderly, or disabled to use their CalFresh benefits to buy meals at restaurants, cafeterias, and other prepared-food vendors. To participate in the RMP, a CCC must be located in a participating county and must have a qualifying food facility on campus.<sup>7</sup>

Recent state laws have been passed to try to get more higher education institutions to participate in the Restaurant Meals Program.<sup>8</sup> As of 2017, if a college is located in an RMP county and the college operates a qualifying food facility on campus, **the college is required to apply** to become an approved RMP vendor. If a college is located in a RMP county, but all food facilities on campus are operated by outside vendors, the college is **only required to provide information** to their vendors about the RMP and how to apply.

For official information and to apply, visit the [California Department of Social Services Restaurant Meals Program](#) website.

<sup>7</sup> [AB 1894](#), signed into law in September 2018, allows any California State University (CSU) to participate in RMP, even if the CSU is not located in a participating county. This law does not apply to CCC.

<sup>8</sup> [AB 1747](#), effective January 1, 2017. For more information, review [All County Letter No. 16-112](#).

(For a list of CCC campuses located in RMP counties, visit [New Tools to Reduce College Campus Hunger: AB 1747 \[Weber\] Implementation Fact Sheet](#).)

### **Steps to Apply for RMP**

- ✓ Check to make sure your county participates in the RMP: [Alameda](#), [Los Angeles](#), [Orange](#), [Riverside](#), [Sacramento](#), [San Diego](#), [San Francisco](#), [San Luis Obispo](#), [Santa Clara](#), or [Santa Cruz](#).
- ✓ Make sure your campus has qualifying food facilities. To qualify, food facilities must: sell prepared food that is intended to be consumed on-site, provide a lower-cost meal option, have more than 50 percent of total sales in food, and not be exclusively a carry-out facility (such as a concession stand).<sup>9</sup>
- ✓ Confirm with campus stakeholders that an RMP application is not already in progress.
- ✓ Consider whether your campus will apply independently, with other colleges in your district, with your contracting food vendor(s), or at the district level.
  - For example, LATTC started the RMP process as a single campus. Their Culinary Arts and Professional Baking program provides fresh food daily to their cafeteria and campus restaurant, so they had qualifying food facilities. They then added two other LACCD campuses that also had culinary instruction programs providing food services for the campus cafeteria, and, finally, they added six other LACCD campuses with food services provided by a contracted vendor.
- ✓ Contact [county social services](#) to inquire about their process for becoming an RMP provider. Most of the county-specific RMP webpages, linked above, provide a phone number or email address for the social services division or staff member to contact. Your county will be able to work with you to submit your application, and they may have an enrollment packet for you.
  - If applicable, discuss with your county social services department whether your college should apply for RMP independently, with other colleges or vendors, or as a district.
- ✓ If any concerns about the RMP arise after discussing it with the county, examine these issues with your key stakeholders or decision-makers. Determine whether these issues are resolvable, more information is needed, or your strategy needs to shift.
  - For example, after meeting with the county, LATTC had concerns that there would be a large number of people who were not students coming to campus regularly for the RMP. They explored how the county advertises RMP-participating institutions, and found that the information was listed in a lengthy document on the county website. LATTC determined that it was unlikely that many people who were not students would find this information and come to campus just for the RMP.
- ✓ If you will be applying with multiple campuses, your district, or vendor(s), complete Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with these other parties.

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<sup>9</sup> For more information, review [All County Letter No. 16-112](#).

- ✓ Sign an MOU with the county. The MOU will spell out the county's responsibilities and your college's responsibilities, such as providing low-cost meals and publicizing the program among students.
- ✓ Because CCC are state entities rather than nonprofit or for-profit restaurants, your college or district's legal department may advise or request changes to the county's standard RMP MOU.
- ✓ Complete the [USDA Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program Application for Meal Services](#) (FNS 252-2) and submit it to the county. Application items include:
  - Copy of a government identification card and Social Security card for owners or officers. Note that you will need to provide identification information for an individual responsible person at your college; your county may be able to advise whom that person should be (for example, at LATTC, this was their Vice President of Administrative Services).
  - Current Business License/Seller Permit
  - Current Public Health Operating Permit
- ✓ The county may have additional documentation that they require from all applicants or from higher education institutions in particular.
  - For example, LATTC's application included supplemental items:
    - LACCD Combined Cost of Goods Sold Report for the previous year
    - Campus maps showing the cafeteria locations
    - Healthier Options Checklist demonstrating that there are healthy (whole grain, fruit and vegetable) and reduced-price options available
    - Sample Menu of Healthy Options, Monday through Thursday for breakfast and lunch
- ✓ When ready, the county will submit your application to the USDA.
- ✓ If your application is approved, the USDA will send you an FNS number. Send a copy of your approval to the county.
- ✓ Contact your POS vendor to integrate EBT into your existing payment processing machines, or sign up for flat-rate processing with a third-party EBT vendor (e.g., [www.goebt.com](http://www.goebt.com)). This step can only be completed once you have your FNS number.
- ✓ Advertise the RMP on campus. Post signs or decals in your participating locations. The county will also list your college as an RMP vendor on its website and/or outreach materials. See Part 7 for more outreach strategies.

#### **Highlighted College: Los Angeles Community College District**

Los Angeles Trade Technical College, Los Angeles City College, and Los Angeles Valley College have worked to successfully become an EBT cash, RMP, and CalFresh retailer over the last four years, and these activities represent just one component of the college's comprehensive, ongoing student support efforts. Other current strategies include:

- Weekly pop-up food pantries conducted on campus in partnership with a faith-based organization, feeding 1,000-2,500 students in a single day (advertised through social media on Twitter handle @LATTCcares and Instagram #LATTCares, #LACCCares)

- Creating a “core list” of food items with Office Depot to receive reduced-price snacks for students
- Working with contracted vendors (Pacific Dining) to provide breakfast and lunch support to students during midterms and finals, such as a breakfast burrito, peanut butter sandwich, yogurt

Speaking at the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office 2018 [Basic Needs Summit](#) was a pivotal experience for Daren Lynne, who is integral to LACCD’s food security efforts:

“The summit provided a place for like-minded, like-tasked, individuals to gather and discuss these issues. I now had a core group on could call on for advice, and found that I had information others needed so that they did not duplicate the effort. I want to stress that these summits or conferences are key to making sure the colleges are successful. Here at LACCD, we now realize we need to work together collaboratively to save time and resources; to identify core goals and strategies; and to provide a uniform solution, which can then be added to or subtracted from to meet the individual campus’s need/goals/resources.”

## Part 6: Applying for CalFresh

A college can also apply to become a CalFresh retailer, which allows students to use their **CalFresh** benefits on campus to buy groceries. However, it is less common for CCC to become CalFresh providers than EBT cash retailers, due to the application criteria.

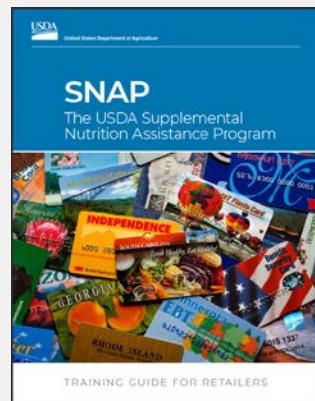
For official application requirements, visit the USDA website for [SNAP Retail Food Stores and Farmers Markets](#).

### **Steps to Apply as a CalFresh Retailer**

- ✓ Determine whether your campus store(s) is/are eligible to accept CalFresh benefits.
- ✓ Stores must meet one of two criteria to be eligible.
  - Criterion A: maintain a continuous stock of a certain variety and quantity of staple foods, including perishable foods. Staple foods are non-prepared foods in these four categories: fruits and vegetables; meat, poultry or fish; dairy products; and breads or cereals. Stores must stock at least three units of three staple varieties in each of these four categories, including at least three units of one perishable food in at least two categories.
  - Criterion B: have more than fifty percent of total gross retail sales from the sale of staple foods. (This criterion often applies to stores that sell one type of staple food, such as butchers.)
  - There are additional requirements for these categories. Visit [SNAP: Is My Store Eligible?](#) for up-to-date requirements and examples.
  - Staple food guidelines can be found here:  
<https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/snap/SNAP-Staple-Foods.pdf>
- ✓ Colleges must have the required product mix in their stores before they submit the application.
- ✓ Register for a [USDA eAuthentication account](#).
- ✓ Return to "[How Do I Apply to Accept Benefits?](#)" to login and begin your application. You will need:
  - Basic information (name of applicant, date when your location opened, location name, location address, etc.)
  - Ownership information
  - Actual or estimated sales for the past year across various item types (e.g., staple foods, hot and cold prepared foods, nonfood items like soap or paper)
  - Number of varieties of each staple food category (e.g., number of kinds of fruits and vegetables)
  - Information about how many units you stock of each variety of staple foods
  - Information about how many perishable foods you stock in each staple food category
  - Supplemental information about your location's open days, equipment, and bank
  - Colleges do not need to fill out section 14 on the FNS-252 SNAP Retailer Application form
- ✓ You will need to submit supporting documentation such as:

### **Key Resource: Training Guide**

The USDA provides a 20-page [SNAP Training Guide for Retailers \(Spanish version\)](#) with detailed information about SNAP program rules. CalFresh retailers are strongly encouraged to review this guide. It covers topics such as respecting people who pay with EBT; processing EBT at POS; handling coupons, bag or bottle fees, and taxes; and more.



- The individual that submits the application is required to send a copy of their valid California ID.
- As with the Restaurant Meals Program, you must submit this information for an individual person with responsibility for these services at your campus. If they leave the organization, you must update your information on your USDA account.
- Copy of your business tax return
- ✓ Once approved, you will receive a SNAP retailers license, training manual, and IT/set-up specifications. Visit the [SNAP Retailers Store Training Information](#) page to view the training guide and watch a training video.
- ✓ As with EBT cash and RMP, you will need to work with your existing payment processing vendor or a third-party EBT vendor to set your POS to accept CalFresh.
- ✓ Within 30 days of your accepted application, a USDA Inspector will conduct an unannounced audit of your location. The Inspector will confirm that you have the type, variety, and quantity of staple foods that you claimed in your application.
- ✓ There are many strategies and resources available to market your college as a CalFresh retailer. See Part 7 for suggestions.

SNAP retailer applications and supporting documentation should be sent to the following address:  
 SNAP Retailer Service Center USDA – Food and Nutrition Service  
 PO BOX 7228  
 Falls Church, VA 22040

#### **Highlighted College: Humboldt State University (HSU)**

Finding that 19% of their students reported having CalFresh benefits, HSU embarked on the application process to become a CalFresh retailer. They successfully achieved this process, conducting over 11,000 EBT transactions amounting to more than \$100,000 in sales in 2016-2017. HSU [Oh SNAP!](#), the college's student-driven food program, helped support outreach to students and reduce stigma around EBT.

For more information about how HSU became a CalFresh vendor, including the challenges they faced, view their presentation from the 2018 CSU Basic Needs Initiative Conference: [EBT Implementation: Humboldt State University](#)

#### **Part 7: Marketing Your College as a Benefits Retailer**

Once you are ready to begin accepting EBT payments, you will want to **share the news with your whole campus community!** This section focuses on outreach and engagement strategies.

You will also want to ensure that key personnel are able to speak knowledgeably with students about EBT cash, CalFresh, and/or the RMP. For example, consider the **different messaging and training needs** of different stakeholders. Sales or service staff members will need to be able to ring up purchases at POS

using EBT cards. They will also need to know, for example, whether the campus store accepts both EBT cash and CalFresh. On the other hand, student services staff and counselors will benefit from knowing how to prescreen students for CalFresh. Finally, leadership staff will want to be able to articulate how being an EBT retailer fits into the campus's broader approach to addressing students' basic needs. Reflecting on what your various campus stakeholders need to know will help you develop clear, consistent messaging.

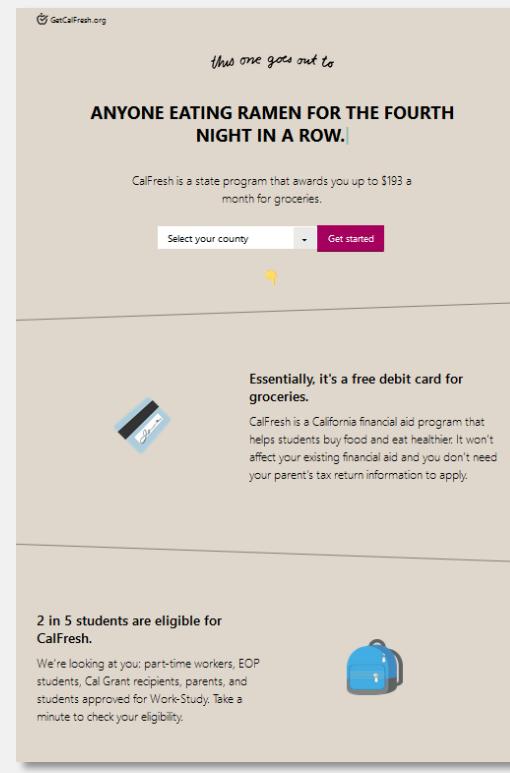
### Sample Marketing and Outreach Strategies

- ✓ Does your campus have a broader marketing strategy or umbrella campaign for student wellness or food security activities on campus? If so, work with them to leverage their communication channels and/or branding.
- ✓ Use student-friendly visuals and language to engage and welcome students. Incorporate recognizable imagery, like your school mascot.
- ✓ Post information about EBT at POS and in all relevant stores or dining halls. This helps students know they can use their EBT card without having to ask.
- ✓ Post flyers at other key locations that students experiencing food insecurity may visit, such as the campus food pantry, financial aid office, library, and athletic center. Make sure relevant campus departments and partners (see Tool 2) are aware of this new payment option.
- ✓ Include information about EBT on your campus website, such as on the pages for dining services, campus stores, CalFresh outreach, CalWORKs, etc.
- ✓ Send email announcements to all faculty and staff to let them know that EBT cards can now be used on campus, at which locations, and for what benefits (cash or CalFresh).

### Key Resource: Students.GetCalFresh.org

GetCalFresh.org is an official State of California CalFresh outreach partner. They are one of several online portals to connecting California residents to benefits programs. They are included here as an example of effective student marketing.

Their [Students](#) page includes engaging graphics (e.g., emojis), streamlined information, and student-friendly language. For example, under the heading "this one goes out to," sample taglines include "Anyone who couldn't find free pizza at a club meeting night" and "Anyone whose friend wouldn't swipe them into the dining hall."



- ✓ In your messaging to employees, be mindful of the fact that food insecurity doesn't only impact students. Some faculty or staff members may also participate in CalFresh, CalWORKs, or another benefits program.
- ✓ When possible, include brief information about: how to apply for benefits (see "CalFresh Outreach," below); and how students who are not eligible for benefits can receive help with food insecurity (for example, include a link to your campus food pantry).
- ✓ Avoid stigmatizing terms such as "needy," "poor," "impoverished," or "food stamps."
  - Neutral language is preferable: "cash or food benefits," "cash or nutritional assistance," etc.
  - Use people-first language whenever possible, such as "students who receive CalFresh benefits," "student-parents who participate in CalWORKs," "people who receive cash or food benefits."

### **CalFresh Outreach**

Many students who are eligible for benefits do not apply. They may not be aware that they are qualified, they may be confused or intimidated by the application process, or they may be deterred by social stigma. A 2016 study at one campus found that only 20% of students who were eligible for CalFresh actually participated in the program.<sup>10</sup>

The [CalFresh Outreach](#) program is an important part of the State of California's efforts to educate people about benefits for which they are eligible. We provide some quick strategies and resources below to help your campus support student enrollment in CalFresh.

- ✓ [Students.GetCalFresh.org](#) is an easy referral to provide to students interested in applying for CalFresh. It provides basic CalFresh information and links students to their county CalFresh website.
- ✓ [BenefitsCal.com](#) is another useful referral source. It connects users to applications for CalWORKs, CalFresh, and medical benefits in California. BenefitsCal is available in multiple languages.
- ✓ There are several CalFresh Outreach contractors who provide training and technical assistance (TTA) to organizations that want to help people enroll in CalFresh. For 2019-2021, these contractors are [California Association of Food Banks](#), [California State University, Chico – Center for Healthy Communities](#), [Catholic Charities of](#)

### **Key Resource: CalFresh Biteable**

Watch this short video to learn more about the CalFresh prescreening, application, and approval processes: [Basic Needs: Helping Students Enroll in CalFresh](#). This video was created specifically for CCC administrators, faculty, and staff.



<sup>10</sup> Bianco, S., et al. (Fall 2016). Identifying Food Insecure Students and Constraints for SNAP/CalFresh Participation at California State University, Chico. Retrieved from <http://www.csuchico.edu/chc/assets/documents/chico-food-insecurity-report-2016.pdf>

[California](#), [2-1-1 San Diego](#), and [Redwood Community Health Coalition](#). Find contact information for these TTA providers here: [CalFresh Prime Contractor Contact List](#).

- ✓ In most counties, there are several colleges or universities, food banks, community-based organizations, and other agencies that have already received CalFresh Outreach training. Find a list of these organizations here: [Contractors by County](#). Contact these organizations in your county to establish them as a referral source for your students.
- ✓ Your college may already have a CalFresh Outreach program in place. If so, provide their contact information in all your communications about EBT, so that students know where on campus they can go if they want help applying.

## Part 8: Conclusion

Accepting EBT cards is just one aspect of addressing food insecurity, but it is an important one. CalFresh and CalWORKs help key community college populations such as students with low-income status, working students, and student-parents. Reducing stigma around food and cash benefits helps more students learn about and enroll in these programs. And when students don't have to go hungry or leave campus to buy food, they have more time and energy to focus on their academic success.

Becoming a benefits retailer also helps advance educational equity. The students who are most likely to experience food insecurity are often those who are also at greater risk for not graduating from college. People who are more likely to experience food insecurity include students who are former foster youth; black; lesbian, gay, or bisexual; gender non-binary; working; and/or parents.<sup>11</sup> By expanding benefit services on campus, colleges have a valuable opportunity to improve educational outcomes for historically underrepresented students.

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<sup>11</sup> Goldrick-Rab, S., Richardson, J., Schneider, J., Hernandez, A., & Cady, C. (April 2018). *Still Hungry and Homeless in College*. Wisconsin HOPE Lab.

## Part 9: Tools Appendix

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Tool 1: Allowable EBT Cash and CalFresh Purchases					
Allowed with EBT Cash	Not Allowed with EBT Cash	Allowed with CalFresh	Not Allowed with CalFresh	Allowed with RMP	Not Allowed with RMP
Anything that can be legally purchased with cash can be purchased with EBT cash benefits, except from excluded stores (see right).	<p>Purchases from businesses including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Liquor stores that don't accept CalFresh</li> <li>- Casinos</li> <li>- Night clubs</li> <li>- Adult entertainment businesses</li> <li>- Smoke or cannabis shops</li> <li>- Spas or massage salons</li> <li>- Gun or ammo shops</li> </ul> <p>For more excluded stores, visit: <a href="#">EBT Project Merchant Questions and Answers</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Foods for the household to eat (fruits, dairy, bread, meat, etc.)</li> <li>- Food-producing plants and seeds</li> <li>- Candy, soda, ice cream, and other snack foods</li> <li>- Birthday or special occasion cakes</li> <li>- Energy drinks that have a nutrition label</li> <li>- Live seafood, such as lobster</li> </ul> <p>For more detail, visit: <a href="#">What Can SNAP Buy?</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alcohol, cigarettes, or tobacco</li> <li>- Vitamins or medicine</li> <li>- Foods that are intended to be eaten in the store</li> <li>- Hot/prepared foods</li> <li>- Nonfood items, including household supplies, paper products, and pet food</li> <li>- Other live animals and birds</li> </ul> <p>For more detail, visit: <a href="#">What Can SNAP Buy?</a></p>	- Hot and prepared foods	- Groceries or non-food items

Note that your POS system may be able to automatically scan and identify items that are eligible for CalFresh. This allows students to pay for CalFresh-eligible and other items all together in one purchase, using their EBT card and a separate form of payment.

If your POS system cannot automatically identify CalFresh-eligible items (as is the case at many small or independent stores), students will need to pay for their CalFresh items as a separate transaction from any other items. See the USDA [SNAP Training Guide for Retailers \(Spanish\)](#) for more information.

## Tool 2: Campus Partners

Depending on the program you are pursuing (EBT cash, CalFresh, or RMP), you will want to engage other partners to provide input, assistance, or outreach support.

Which departments or team members on campus are already working to address student hunger?

Who are other natural allies in this effort? (Consider partners with whom you frequently work, committees on which you serve, etc.)

Who will need to coordinate or manage the various components of the process (for example, working with payment processing vendors)?

Who are the decision makers you need to engage?

Who else should be at the table? (For example, students can provide valuable insight on existing needs and marketing strategies.)

Stakeholders to consider:

- ✓ Dining services
- ✓ Administrative/invoicing services
- ✓ Campus food pantry
- ✓ CalWORKs representative
- ✓ Student support and/or basic needs workgroups or committees
- ✓ Associated Student Body
- ✓ Extended Opportunity Programs & Services (EOPS)
- ✓ TRIO Program
- ✓ Veterans Resource Center
- ✓ Foster Youth Success Program
- ✓ Financial Aid
- ✓ Student health services
- ✓ Disability services

Tool 3: Achieving Decision-Maker Buy-in		
Sample Resources		
Data Category	Sample Data Source	Sample Data
Stakeholder Support	Basic needs committees; student groups	Committee statements of support; student requests or petitions
College Plans	Strategic planning documents; mission and vision statement	"Provide workshops, tools, and clear guidance for faculty and staff on how to identify and respond to distressed students, students in crisis, students experiencing <b>food insecurity</b> or homelessness, mental health issues etc. and connect these students to appropriate and available resources" (Long Beach City College, 2017-2020 Strategic Enrollment Management Plan)
Local College or District Data	CalWORKs status data (Data Mart); campus surveys; student income data	# of students who participate in CalWORKs; % of students who participate in CalFresh; approximate # of students eligible to participate
State Data	<a href="#">Basic Needs Survey Report</a> (2018), from the CCC Chancellor's Office	56.8% of respondents had direct contact with students experiencing basic needs security multiple times per week or every day
National Data	<a href="#">Still Hungry and Homeless in College</a> (2018), from the Wisconsin HOPE Lab  <a href="#">Hunger on Campus</a> (2016), from the College and University Food Bank Alliance (CUFBA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 42% of community college students experienced low or very low food security in last 30 days (HOPE Lab)</li> <li>• Among students receiving D's and F's, more than half were food insecure (HOPE Lab)</li> <li>• One-third of students believed hunger or housing problems negatively impacted their education (CUFBA)</li> </ul>
Sample Talking Points		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student hunger harms academic performance and retention. <i>Use national data.</i></li> <li>• Priority populations, including former foster youth and LGBTQ students, are more likely to experience food insecurity. <i>Use national or state data.</i></li> <li>• We know there is a need for this. Many of our students receive these benefits, and even more of our students are eligible to receive them. <i>Use college or district data, and statements of interest from students if available.</i></li> <li>• This is a low-cost strategy to support our students' health and wellness. <i>This argument is especially applicable to EBT cash, which has a more minimal application and administrative burden.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The state does not charge any fees to become a benefits retailer.</li> <li>○ There are limited fees to use an EBT payment processing vendor. <i>In many cases, you will be able to work with your existing payment vendor</i></li> <li>○ The main cost is staff time to complete the application, install hardware/software, track inventory and sales (CalFresh only), and provide or receive POS training.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• By tapping into a key financial resource for our students, we may increase sales.</li> </ul>		

Supplemental Information for colleges to apply as an EBT Retailer

- updated FNS 252 application
- SNAP Staple Foods

SNAP retailer applications and supporting documentation should be sent to the following address:

SNAP Retailer Service Center USDA – Food and Nutrition Service  
PO BOX 7228  
Falls Church, VA 22040

1 When did or when will the store open for business under your ownership (MM/DD/YYYY):

2 Store Name: 3 Legal Business Name (if different from store name): 4 Chain Store Number (if applicable):

5 Store Location Address (do not enter P.O. Box here):  
Street Number: Street Name:  
City: Additional Address (Bldg #, Unit #, Stall #, etc.):  
State: Zip Code:

6 Store Mailing Address:  
(Skip if your mailing address is the same as your store location. If you have a PO Box address, enter it in the street name field):  
Street Number: Street Name:  
City: State: Zip Code: If foreign address, add Country:

7 Store Telephone Number: 8 Alternate Telephone Number:  
(       ) - (       ) -

9 Owner or Store Email Address:

10 Is your business any one of the following: a delivery route; food buying cooperative; farmers' market; farm stand/stall/u-pick; military commissary/exchange; or a specialty food store that primarily sells one food type such as meat/poultry, seafood, bread, or fruits/vegetables?  Yes  No  
 Meat/Poultry Market  Bakery  Military Commissary/Exchange  Farmers' Market  Food Buying Cooperative  
 Seafood Market  Produce Market  Delivery Route  Direct Marketing Farmer  
(Farm Stand/Stall/U-Pick)

*Do not use this Form FNS-252 if you are applying as a restaurant. Restaurants must use Form FNS-252-2, Application for Meal Services.*

11 Type of Ownership (check only one box):

Privately Held Corporation  Sole Proprietorship  Limited Liability Company  Nonprofit Organization  
 Publicly Owned Corporation  Partnership  Government Owned

11a Is your firm legally organized as a nonprofit entity?  Yes  No

11b If yes, does your firm have 501(c)(3) nonprofit tax-exempt status?  Yes  No

12 Corporation or Government Agency Information: If privately held corporation, nonprofit organization, or limited liability company, enter the name and address of your corporation as on record with the State. If government owned, enter the name and address of the responsible government agency. If publicly owned corporation, enter the name and address of the parent corporate office. All others, skip question 13.

12a Corporation Name:

12b Corporation Address:  
Street Number: Street Name: Additional Address (Bldg #, Unit #, Stall #, etc.):  
City: State: Zip Code: If foreign address, add Country:

12c If publicly owned or government owned, enter a contact person:

Contact Person Name: Telephone Number: (       ) - Email Address:

13 If you have an Employer Identification Number (EIN), enter it here:

RSC

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

**14** Owner/Officer Information: Enter the name and home address of all officers, owners, partners, and members. If this is a publicly owned corporation or government owned store, skip to question 15. See instructions for more information about this question.

**14a** Print name exactly as it appears on the social security card:

First Name:	Middle Name:	Last Name:
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Street Number:	Street Name:	Additional Address (Bldg #, Unit #, Stall #, etc.):		
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City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ If foreign address, add Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number:	Date of Birth: (MM/DD/YYYY)	Business Title (owner, partner, etc.):	Email Address:
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**14b** Print name exactly as it appears on the social security card:

First Name:	Middle Name:	Last Name:
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Street Number:	Street Name:	Additional Address (Bldg #, Unit #, Stall #, etc.):		
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City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ If foreign address, add Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number:	Date of Birth: (MM/DD/YYYY)	Business Title (owner, partner, etc.):
-------------------------	-----------------------------	--

Email Address:

**14c** Print name exactly as it appears on the social security card:

First Name:	Middle Name:	Last Name:
-------------	--------------	------------

Street Number:	Street Name:	Additional Address (Bldg #, Unit #, Stall #, etc.):		
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City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ If foreign address, add Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number:	Date of Birth: (MM/DD/YYYY)	Business Title (owner, partner, etc.):
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Email Address:

**14d** Print name exactly as it appears on the social security card:

First Name:	Middle Name:	Last Name:
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Street Number:	Street Name:	Additional Address (Bldg #, Unit #, Stall #, etc.):		
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City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ If foreign address, add Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number:	Date of Birth: (MM/DD/YYYY)	Business Title (owner, partner, etc.):
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Email Address:

**15** Answer the questions for all officers, owners, partners, members, and/or managers.

**15a** Has any officer, owner, partner, member and/or manager ever been denied, withdrawn, disqualified, suspended, or been fined for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), WIC, business, alcohol, tobacco, lottery, and/or health violations?  Yes  No

**15b** If Yes, provide an explanation:

**15c** Has any officer, owner, partner, member and/or manager currently or ever been suspended or debarred from conducting business with or participating in any program administered by the Federal Government?  Yes  No

**15d** If Yes, provide an explanation:

**15e** Is any officer, owner, partner, and/or member currently receiving assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program?  Yes  No

**15f** If Yes, has the officer, owner, partner, and/or member reported this store ownership to their SNAP caseworker?  Yes  No

**15g** If No, provide an explanation:

**15h** Has any officer, owner, partner and/or member ever been disqualified from receiving assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for an intentional program violation (IPV) or fraud?  Yes  No

15i If Yes, provide an explanation:

15j Does any officer, owner, partner, and/or member currently own any other SNAP authorized stores?  Yes  No

15k If Yes, how many currently authorized stores do you own? \_\_\_\_\_

Yes  No

16 Was any officer, owner, partner, member, and/or manager convicted of any crime after June 1, 1999?  Yes  No

16a If Yes, provide an explanation:

Yes  No

Yes  No

17 Do you sell products wholesale to other businesses such as hospitals or restaurants?  Yes  No

17a If Yes, do your retail food sales meet or exceed \$250,000 or 50% of your total gross sales?  Yes  No

Yes  No

18 Do you sell gasoline?  Yes  No

19 Answer the following questions regarding staple food varieties that you have currently and on a continuous basis in your store. Enter the number of varieties for each staple food category if less than 10. Check "10+" if the number of varieties for each staple food category is equal to or greater than 10.

19a Indicate the number of varieties in the Breads and/or Cereals staple food category (Examples: rice, pasta, flour, pita, tortilla, etc.) that you have currently and on a continuous basis in your store: \_\_\_\_\_ OR  10+

19b Indicate the number of varieties in the Dairy products staple food category (Examples: soymilk, butter, yogurt, infant formula, etc.) that you have currently and on a continuous basis in your store: \_\_\_\_\_ OR  10+

19c Indicate the number of varieties in the Meat, Poultry, and/or Fish staple food category (Examples: beef, pork, eggs, tuna, etc.) that you have currently and on a continuous basis in your store: \_\_\_\_\_ OR  10+

19d Indicate the number of varieties in the Vegetables and/or Fruits staple food category (Examples: apple, tomato, peach, carrot, etc.) that you have currently and on a continuous basis in your store: \_\_\_\_\_ OR  10+

20 Answer the following questions regarding stocking units of staple food varieties that you have currently and on a continuous basis in your store:

20a Do you have at least three stocking units of each variety in the Breads and/or Cereals category (Examples: 3 bags of rice, 3 boxes of pasta, etc.)?  Yes  No

20b Do you have at least three stocking units of each variety in the Dairy products category (Examples: 3 cartons of soymilk, 3 cans of infant formula, etc.)?  Yes  No

20c Do you have at least three stocking units of each variety in the Meat, Poultry, and/or Fish category (Examples: 3 cans of tuna, 3 cartons of eggs, etc.)?  Yes  No

20d Do you have at least three stocking units of each variety in the Vegetables and/or Fruits category (Examples: 3 apples, 3 cans of peaches, etc.)?  Yes  No

21 Answer the following questions regarding perishable foods that you have currently and on a continuous basis in your store:

21a Do you have at least one variety of perishable foods in the Breads and/or Cereals category (Examples: bread, pita, etc.)?  Yes  No

21b Do you have at least one variety of perishable foods in the Dairy products category (Examples: refrigerated cow's milk, refrigerated butter, etc.)?  Yes  No

21c Do you have at least one variety of perishable foods in the Meat, Poultry, and/or Fish category (Examples: fresh eggs, frozen chicken, etc.)?  Yes  No

21d Do you have at least one variety of perishable foods in the Vegetables and/or Fruits category (Examples: fresh apples, frozen broccoli, etc.)?  Yes  No

22 Total Retail Sales: Enter the total retail sales from all products you sell at this location (both food and nonfood products and services). If you sell products wholesale to other businesses, do not include those sales. If your store has been open under your ownership for more than one year, you must enter actual total retail sales from your most recent IRS tax return for this store (22a). If your store has been open under your ownership for less than one year, you must provide estimated sales (22b). You must complete either 22a or 22b.

22a Actual Retail Sales: \_\_\_\_\_ in tax year 20\_\_\_\_\_

22b Estimated Retail Sales: \_\_\_\_\_ (check one) Day  Week  Month  Year

22c Enter the total retail sales percentage for each sales category for products you sell at this store location (e.g., if 25% of total retail sales comes from accessory foods, enter 25% where indicated). If you do not sell items in a category, enter "0" (e.g., if you do not sell nonfood items, enter 0). If you do not have the actual total retail sales percentage(s) for one or more sales categories below, provide your best good faith estimate.

Sales Category	% Total
Staple Foods (Examples: rice, milk, beef, apples, etc.)	
Accessory Foods (Examples: chips, candy, snack foods, soft drinks, condiments, etc.)	
Hot Foods (Examples: hot coffee, hot soup, hot pizza, etc.)	
Cold Foods Prepared on Site (Only include items intended for immediate consumption or carryout. Examples: sandwiches, fresh salads, salad bars, etc.)	
Nonfood Items (Examples: household supplies, tobacco products, gasoline, alcohol, pet foods, lottery, etc.)	
Total Sales Percentage (total must equal 100%)	

23 How many cash registers are at this store? \_\_\_\_\_

24 Are optical scanners used at this store?  Yes  No

25 Is this store open year round?  Yes  No

25a If No, check which month(s) you are open:

Jan  Feb  Mar  Apr  May  Jun  Jul  Aug  Sep  Oct  Nov  Dec

26 Is this store open 7 days a week, 24 hours per day?  Yes  No

26a If No, indicate operating hours:

	Opening Time	Select AM or PM	Closing Time	Select AM or PM
Monday:	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Tuesday:	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Wednesday:	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Thursday:	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Friday:	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Saturday:	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Sunday:	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

27 Provide the name and address of the financial institution (bank) that you will be using for SNAP payment deposits:

27a Financial Institution Name:

27b Financial Institution Mailing Address:

Street Number:	Street Name:	Additional Address (Bldg #, Unit #, Stall #, etc.):		
City:	State:	Zip Code:	If foreign address, add Country:	

28 If known, provide the name, phone number, and mailing address of the Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) equipment provider for your store:

28a Equipment Provider Name: 28b Equipment Provider Phone Number:

28c Equipment Provider Mailing Address:

Street Number:	Street Name:	Additional Address (Bldg #, Unit #, Stall #, etc.):		
City:	State:	Zip Code:	If foreign address, add Country:	

29 Do you have a website for your store? If yes, provide website address:

30 If you have additional information or comments you would like to provide to FNS (such as any special circumstances that FNS should know), please provide the information here:

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**PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT - Authority:** Section 9 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended, (7 U.S.C. 2018); section 205(c)(2)(C) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 405(c)(2)(C)); and section 6109(f) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. 6109(f)), authorizes collection of the information on this application.

- Information is collected primarily for use by the Food and Nutrition Service in the administration of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program;
- Additional disclosure of this information may be made to other Food and Nutrition Service programs and to other Federal, State or local agencies and investigative authorities when the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program becomes aware of a violation or possible violation of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as explained in the next section called "Use and Disclosure";
- Section 278.1(b) of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program regulations provides for the collection of each owner's Social Security Number (SSN), Employee Identification Number (EIN) and tax information;
- The use and disclosure of SSNs and EINs obtained by applicants is covered in the Social Security Act and the Internal Revenue Code. In accordance with the Social Security Act and the Internal Revenue Code, applicant social security numbers and employer identification numbers may be disclosed only to other Federal agencies authorized to have access to social security numbers and employer identification numbers and maintain these numbers in their files, and only when the Secretary of Agriculture determines that disclosure would assist in verifying and matching such information against information maintained by such other agency [42 U.S.C. 405(c)(2)(C)(iii); 26 U.S.C. 6109(f)];
- Furnishing the information on this form, including your SSN and EIN, is voluntary but failure to do so will result in denial of this application;
- The Food and Nutrition Service may provide you with an additional statement reflecting any additional uses of the information furnished on this form.

**USE AND DISCLOSURE - Routine Uses:** We may use the information you give us in the following ways:

- We may disclose information to the Department of Justice (DOJ), a court or other tribunal, or another party before such tribunal when the USDA is involved in a lawsuit or has an interest in litigation and it has been determined that the use of such information is relevant and necessary and the disclosure is compatible with the purpose for which the information was collected;
- In the event that the information in our system indicates a violation of the Food and Nutrition Act or any other Federal or State law whether civil or criminal or regulatory in nature, and whether arising by general statute, or by regulation, rule, or order issued pursuant thereto, we may disclose the information you give us to the appropriate agency, whether Federal or State, charged with the responsibility of investigating or prosecuting such violation or charged with enforcing or implementing the statute, or rule, regulation or order issued pursuant thereto;
- We may use your information, including SSNs and EINs, to collect and report on delinquent debt and may disclose the information to other Federal and State agencies, as well as private collection agencies, for purposes of claims collection actions including, but not limited to, the Treasury Department for administrative or tax offset and referral to the Department of Justice for litigation. (Note: SSNs and EINs will only be disclosed to Federal agencies authorized to possess such information);
- We may disclose information to other Federal and State agencies to verify the information reported by applicants and participating firms, and to assist in the administration and enforcement of the Food and Nutrition Act, as well as other Federal and State laws. (Note: SSNs and EINs will only be disclosed to Federal agencies authorized to possess such information);
- We may disclose information to other Federal and State agencies to respond to specific requests from such Federal and State agencies for the purpose of administering the Food and Nutrition Act as well as other Federal and State laws;
- We may disclose information to other Federal and State agencies for the purpose of conducting computer matching programs;
- We may disclose information (excluding EINs and SSNs) to private entities having contractual agreements with us for designing, developing, and operating our systems, and for verification and computer matching purposes;
- We may disclose information to the Internal Revenue Service for the purpose of reporting delinquent retailer and wholesaler monetary penalties of \$600 or more for violations committed under the SNAP. We will report each delinquent debt to the Internal Revenue Service on Form 1099-C (Cancellation of Debt). We will report these debts to the Internal Revenue Service under the authority of the Income Tax Regulations (26 CFR Parts 1 and 602) under section 6050P of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 6050P);
- We may disclose information to State agencies that administer the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), authorized under Section 17 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (CNA) (42 U.S.C. 1786), for purposes of administering that Act and the regulations issued under that Act;
- Disclosures pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(b)(12). We may disclose information to "consumer reporting agencies" as defined in the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. 1681a(f)) or the Debt Collection Act of 1982 (31 U.S.C. 3711(d)(4));
- We may disclose information to the public when a retailer has been disqualified or otherwise sanctioned for violations of the Program after the time for administrative and judicial appeals has expired. This information is limited to the name and address of the store, the owner(s) name(s) and information about the sanction itself. The purpose of such disclosure is to assist in the administration and enforcement of the Food and Nutrition Act and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program regulations.

**CERTIFICATION AND SIGNATURE** - By signing below, you are confirming your understanding of and agreement with the following

- I am an owner of this firm;
- I have provided truthful and complete information on this form and on any documents provided to the Food and Nutrition Service;
- If I provide false information, my application may be denied or withdrawn;
- Any information I have provided or will provide may be verified and shared by the USDA as described in the Privacy Act and Use and Disclosure statement;
- By my signature below, I release my tax records to the Food and Nutrition Service;
- I will receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program training materials upon authorization. It is my responsibility to ensure that the training materials are reviewed by all firm's owners and all employees (whether paid or unpaid, new, full-time or part-time), and that all employees will follow Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program regulations. If I do not receive these materials I must contact the Food and Nutrition Service to request them;
- I am aware that violations of program rules can result in administrative actions such as fines, sanctions, withdrawal or disqualification from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; I am aware that violations of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program rules can also result in Federal, State and/or local criminal prosecution and sanctions;
- I accept responsibility on behalf of the firm for violations of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program regulations, including those committed by any of the firm's employees, paid or unpaid, new, full-time or part-time. These include violations such as but not limited to:
  - Trading cash for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits (i.e. trafficking);
  - Accepting Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits as payment for ineligible items;
  - Accepting Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits as payment on credit accounts or loans;
  - Knowingly accepting Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits from people not authorized to use them;
- Disqualification from the WIC Program may result in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program disqualification, and a disqualification from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program may result in WIC Program disqualification;
- In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, no customer may be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs, or disability. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program customers must be treated in the same manner as non-Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program customers;
- Participation can be denied or withdrawn if my firm violates any laws or regulations issued by Federal, State or local agencies, including civil rights laws and their implementing regulations;
- I am responsible for reporting changes in the firm's ownership, address, type of business and operation to the Food and Nutrition Service.
- If your store is disqualified or fined for violating Program rules, FNS may publicly disclose your store's name and address, owners' names, and the penalty. If your store is permanently disqualified, all owners' names will be publicly disclosed through the General Service Administration's (GSA) System for Award Management (SAM). Being listed in GSA-SAM could affect your ability to get or keep a job or to receive a private loan for your business or for a house, car, or college.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program authorization may not be transferred to new owners, partners, or corporations. An unauthorized individual or firm accepting or redeeming Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits is subject to substantial fines and administrative sanctions.

**PENALTY WARNING STATEMENT** - The Food and Nutrition Service can deny or withdraw your approval to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits if you provide false information or try to hide information we ask you to give us. In addition, if false information is provided or information is hidden from the Food and Nutrition Service, the owners of the firm may be liable for a \$10,000 fine or imprisoned for as long as five years, or both (7 U.S.C. 2024(f) and 18 U.S.C. 1001)

I have read, understand and agree with the conditions of participation outlined in the Privacy Act, Use and Disclosure, Penalty Warning and Certification Statements, and agree to comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements associated with participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Title

MAIL YOUR COMPLETED APPLICATION TO THE RETAILER SERVICE CENTER (SEE FIRST PAGE OF INSTRUCTIONS).

# Instructions for Form FNS-252

## Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

### Application for Stores



United States Department of Agriculture  
Food and Nutrition Service

#### General Instructions

Use Form FNS-252, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Application for Stores to apply for authorization to participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

These instructions should be used when submitting a paper application by mail to USDA, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS).

The information you provide on the application form will be used by FNS to determine your store's eligibility to accept and redeem SNAP benefits. Your store may be visited as part of this review. If approved, your store will be issued a SNAP license.

You must train your employees on the SNAP rules and regulations. Training materials are available on our public website for your convenience and included in your information packet if FNS approves your application. You may also obtain training information translated into other languages from this site.

*Do not use this Form FNS-252 if you are applying as a restaurant. Restaurants must use Form FNS-252-2, Application for Meal Services.*

#### Reminders

You must answer all of the questions on the application form, with the following exceptions:

- Question 3.
- If the store is owned by a sole proprietorship or partnership, skip question 12.
- If the store is owned by a privately held corporation or LLC skip question 12c.
- If the store is owned by a public corporation or government agency skip question 14.

#### How to Apply

You can apply online or submit a paper application by mail. Use only one method.

#### Which Filing Method Can I Use?

**Apply Online:** Go to the USDA, FNS website at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap> and follow the instructions to submit an online application.

**Apply by Mail:** Complete Form FNS-252, attach the required documents, sign and date the application, and mail it to the SNAP Retailer Service Center. **If there are multiple owners, then each owner must individually sign a certification and signature statement (page 6 of the application) and these documents must be submitted with the application.** The SNAP Retailer Service Center address is listed on the cover letter that was mailed to you with the application. You can also find the SNAP Retailer Service Center address at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap>.

#### Authorization Processing Time

You must complete the application and submit all the supporting documents before FNS processes your application. An incomplete application or failure to submit documentation will result in a delay.



*You cannot accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits until you are authorized and licensed by FNS.*

Contact the SNAP Retailer Service Center to inquire about the status of an application.

#### Specific Instructions

Print or type your answers so they are clear and legible. Keep a copy of what you submit to FNS for your records.

**Question 1 - Store Opening Date:** Enter the date that the store opened for business or will open for business under your ownership. You can enter a future opening date. Your store may be visited following the submission of your application. As a result, you are responsible for ensuring that your firm can meet eligibility requirements for participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program from the day your application is submitted.

**Question 2 - Store Name:** Enter the most commonly referred to name of your business (e.g., the doing business as name, trade name, etc.).

**Question 3 - Legal Business Name:** If your legal business name (e.g., Joe's Enterprise, LLC) is different from your store name, enter it in question 3.

**Question 4 - Chain Store Number:** Enter the store number if the store is part of a chain of stores and you refer to it by a number, i.e., "Fine Foods #426." Enter only the number in this field (do not enter a pound sign).

**Question 5 - Store Location Address:** Enter the store location address. Do not enter a P.O. Box number here. Use the Additional Address line for the unit number, building number, stall number, etc., and for addresses with multiple businesses at one location.

**Question 6 - Store Mailing Address:** If your store has a mailing address that is different than the location address, enter it here. If you have a P.O. Box, enter it in the street name field.

**Questions 7 - Store Telephone Number:** Enter the store's telephone number, including area code.

**Questions 8 - Alternate Telephone Number:** Enter an alternate telephone number, such as a cellular number, including area code. We may use the alternate telephone number to contact you during a disaster situation. The alternate telephone cannot be the same as the store telephone number.

**Question 9 - Email Address:** Enter the owner or store email address where you want to receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program official correspondence.

**Question 10 - Special Store Type:** Check Produce Market if you primarily sell fruit/vegetable items purchased from others, rather than raised yourself.

Check Farmers Market if you represent a multi-stall market, where farmers sell their own agricultural products (fruits/ vegetables/meats/bread, etc.) directly to the public.

Check Direct Marketing Farmer (Farm Stand/Stall/U-Pick) if you produce and sell your own agricultural products at a roadside stand, a stall at a market, and/or have a "pick-your-own" operation on your farm.

Check Food Buying Cooperative if you are a private nonprofit association of consumers whose members pool their resources to buy food.

*Do not use this Form FNS-252 if you are applying as a restaurant. Restaurants must use Form FNS-252-2, Application for Meal Services.*

**Question 11 - Ownership Type:** Select the ownership type that best describes your business.

**Question 11a:** select "yes" or "no" to indicate if you are legally organized as a nonprofit entity.

**Question 11b:** select "yes" or "no" to indicate if you have 501(c)(3) non-profit tax-exempt status.

**Question 12 - Corporation or Government Agency Information:** For privately held corporations, nonprofit organizations, and limited liability companies, enter the name and address that is on record with the State. For publicly owned corporations (also referred to as publicly traded corporations), enter the parent corporation name and address. For government owned stores, enter the name and address of the responsible government agency. For publicly owned corporations or government owned stores enter the name, telephone number and email address of the contact person or the person responsible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program license.

**Question 13 - Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN):** An EIN is a nine digit number assigned by the Internal Revenue Service to businesses for tax filing and reporting purposes. If you have an EIN number enter it exactly as assigned.

**Question 14 - Owner/Officer Information:** Do not complete this question if you indicated the ownership type is publicly owned corporation (i.e., publicly traded corporation) or government owned store in question 11. For all other ownership types, you must provide information for all owners, members, partners, primary shareholders and officers of corporations, including entities with non-profit status.

**For each Owner, Partner, Officer, Member, Shareholder:** Enter the first name, middle name, and last name of each person exactly as it appears on their social security card. Enter the home address, social security number and date of birth for each person.

**Email Address:** Enter the email address for all owners/officers here (optional).

If there are more than four primary owners, make a copy of page 2 and enter the additional person(s) information.

**Questions 15 and 16 - Ownership Questions:** For each question, check only one box.

**Question 15b, 15d, and 16a:** If you answer "Yes" to either question 15a, 15c or 16, provide an explanation.

**Question 15g:** If you answer "No" to question 15f, provide an explanation.

**Question 15i:** If you answer "Yes" to question 15h, provide an explanation.

**Question 15k:** If you answer "Yes" to question 15j, enter the number of currently authorized SNAP stores under your ownership.

**Question 17 - Wholesale Sales:** Select "Yes" or "No" to indicate if your store sells products to other businesses (i.e., sells to hospitals, restaurants, etc.).

**Question 17a:** If you answer "Yes" to question 17, indicate if your retail food sales meet or exceed \$250,000 or 50% of your store's total gross sales.

**Question 18 - Gasoline Sales:** Select "Yes" or "No" to indicate if your store sells gasoline.

**Question 19-21: Staple Food Varieties & Depth of Stock:** Please answer the questions regarding staple food varieties and the depth of stock that you have currently and on a continuous basis in your store. Additional information related to staple food varieties and minimum stocking requirements can be found online at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailers-store-training-information>.

For each question, check only Yes or No.

**Staple Foods:** Staple food means those food items intended for home preparation and consumption in each of the following food categories: meat, poultry, or fish; bread or cereals; vegetables or fruits; and dairy products. A list of examples of staple foods can be found online at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailers-store-training-information>.

**Variety:** Variety means different kinds of products in each of the four staple food categories. A list of examples of acceptable varieties in each of the staple food categories can be found online at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailers-store-training-information>.

**Stocking Unit:** A stocking unit is a can, bunch, box, bag, or package for the product as typically sold. A list of examples of stocking units can be found online at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailers-store-training-information>.

**Perishable Foods:** Perishable foods are items which are either frozen staple food items or fresh, unrefrigerated or refrigerated staple food items that will spoil or suffer significant deterioration in quality within 2-3 weeks.

**Question 22 - Retail Sales:** Enter the total retail sales from all products you sell at this location (both food and nonfood products and services). If the store has been in business for at least a year under your ownership, provide the actual retail sales amount for this store. If the store has been in business under your ownership for less than a year, enter estimated retail sales for a full year.

Exclude any wholesales. If you answered yes to question 17, FNS may contact you for further information about the dollar amount of wholesales.

**Question 22c:** Enter the total retail sales percentage for each sales category for products you sell at this store location. If you do not sell items in a category, enter "0". If you do not have the actual total retail sales percentage(s) for one or more of the sales categories, provide your best good faith estimate.

**Hot Foods and Cold Foods Prepared on Site:** Total retail sales percentages for these categories should only include prepared foods that are consumed on the premises or sold for carry out (i.e., foods not intended for home preparation or consumption).

**Accessory Food Items:** Snacks and desserts, such as potato chips and ice cream, are not considered staple foods. Spices, most beverages, seasonings, and other food items that complement or supplement meals are also not considered staple foods. These products are considered accessory food items. While still eligible for purchase with SNAP benefits, accessory food items do not count towards Criteria A or B. A full list of accessory foods can be viewed at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailers-store-training-information>.

**Staple Foods:** See information about staple foods in the instructions for questions 19-21.

**Total Sales Percentage:** Enter the sum of the retail sales percentages for all the products listed above it.

**Question 23 - Number of Cash Registers:** Enter the current number of cash registers at this store used for accepting payment for retail purchases.

**Question 24 - Optical Scanners:** Select "Yes" or "No" to indicate if optical scanners are used at your store.

**Question 25 - Store Open Year Round:** Select "Yes" or "No" to indicate if your store is open year-round.

**Question 25a:** If you answered "No" to question 25, check the boxes next to the months your store is open for business.

**Question 26 - Open 24/7:** Select "Yes" or "No" to indicate if your store is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Question 26a:** If you answered "No" to question 26 enter the opening and closing time for each day your store is open for business and indicate AM or PM.

**Question 27- Financial Institution Name and Address:** Provide the name and address of the financial institution that you will be using for SNAP payment deposits (i.e. what is your bank?).

**Question 28 - EBT Equipment:** If you have already selected the Electronic Benefit Transfer equipment provider for your store, please enter the provider name, address and phone number.

**Question 29 - Store Website:** If you have a public website for your store, please enter the full website address.

**Question 30 - Additional Information or Comments:** Enter any additional information or comments you would like to provide to FNS such as any special circumstances that FNS should know regarding your store or this application.

#### Privacy Act and Paperwork Reduction Notice.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to vary from 1 to 19 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, Room 1014, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, VA 22302, ATTN: PRA (0584-0008). Do not return the completed form to this address. Instead, see the *How to Apply* section.

To file a complaint of Discrimination, write to the USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410. Do not send the completed application form to this address.



United States Department of Agriculture

# What are Staple Foods?

Last Updated: March 5, 2018

## Staple Foods Overview

Retail food stores must meet [Criterion A or Criterion B staple food requirements](#) (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer-eligibility-clarification-of-criterion>) in order to be eligible to participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). **Staple foods** are the basic foods that make up a significant portion of a person's diet and are usually prepared at home and eaten as a meal. Staple foods do not include [prepared foods, heated foods](#) (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap-retail-merchants/retailer-eligibility-prepared-foods-and-heated-foods>), or [accessory foods](#) (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/retailer-eligibility-accessory-foods-store-eligibility-determinations>). The four **staple food categories** include:

1. Fruits or vegetables;
2. Meat, poultry, or fish;
3. Dairy products; and
4. Breads or cereals.

**Staple food varieties<sup>1</sup>** are different types of food within a staple food category. Included below are lists of acceptable staple food varieties in the four staple food categories, which can be used to determine whether or not a food item is a staple food for purposes of SNAP

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that changes to the definition of "variety" were codified in SNAP regulations through the final rule titled "[Enhancing Retailer Standards in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#)." (<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-12-15/pdf/2016-29837.pdf>) However, Sec. 765 of the [Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017](#) (<https://www.congress.gov/115/bills/hr244/BILLS-115hr244enr.pdf>), enacted after the date of publication of the final rule, provides that FNS apply the requirements regarding acceptable staple food varieties that were in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (the 2014 Farm Bill). This document reflects the definition of "variety" in place on February 6, 2014.

retailer eligibility. The lists also indicate which food items are considered to be **perishable staple food varieties**, which are either frozen staple food items or fresh, unrefrigerated, or refrigerated staple food items that would spoil or suffer significant deterioration in quality within 2-3 weeks at room temperature. Please note that a shelf-stable food item that does not require refrigeration until *after* it is opened is not a perishable food.

Also included below is an illustrative list of examples of staple food **stocking units**. A stocking unit is a can, bunch, box, bag, or package in which a product is usually sold.

The lists of examples that follow are intended to be *illustrative* and provide guidance, and should not be construed as an exhaustive list of staple food varieties or staple food stocking units.

## Examples of Staple Food Varieties

### The Vegetables or Fruits Staple Food Category: Examples of Staple Food Varieties

In the vegetables or fruits staple food category, “variety” is generally defined by product kind or main ingredient. This means that apples, bananas, and lettuce each represent discrete varieties. This also means that 100% apple juice and applesauce are not each considered discrete varieties, as they are both considered apples. For multiple-ingredient food products, the first ingredient determines variety; a can of ravioli with tomato sauce listed as the first ingredient would constitute a variety in the vegetables or fruits staple food category (i.e., tomato).

What follows is an illustrative, but not exhaustive, list of eight acceptable varieties in the vegetables or fruits staple food category. Within each variety are two different examples of food items for that variety. The multiple-ingredient food item examples in this list would be acceptable only if the main ingredient is in the vegetables or fruits staple category.

Perishable foods are indicated with an asterisk (\*).

#### *Vegetables or Fruits Examples:*

1. Potatoes (potatoes\* or frozen tater tots\*)
2. Oranges (100% orange juice\* or fresh oranges\*)
3. Tomatoes (canned tomato soup or sun dried tomatoes)
4. Apples (dried apples or pre-cut apple go-packs\*)
5. Pumpkin (canned pumpkin or fresh whole pumpkin)
6. Bananas (fresh bananas\* or frozen bananas\*)
7. Lettuce (fresh head of iceberg lettuce\* or pre-cut and bagged romaine lettuce\*)
8. Pineapples (canned pineapple rings or fresh whole pineapple\*)

## The Meat, Poultry, or Fish Staple Food Category: Examples of Staple Food Varieties

In the meat, poultry, or fish staple food category, “variety” is generally defined by product kind or main ingredient. This means that chicken, pork, and beef each represent discrete varieties. This also means that beefsteak and ground beef are not each considered discrete varieties, as they are both considered beef. For multiple-ingredient food products, the first ingredient determines variety. For example, a can of beef stew with beef listed as the first ingredient would constitute a variety in the meat, poultry, or fish staple food category (i.e., beef).

What follows is an illustrative, but not exhaustive, list of eight acceptable varieties in this staple food category. Within each variety are two different examples of food items for that variety. The examples of multiple ingredient food items in this list would be acceptable only if the listed main ingredient would be considered a variety in the meat, poultry, or fish staple category. Perishable foods are indicated with an asterisk (\*).

### *Meat, Poultry, or Fish Examples:*

1. Turkey (e.g., fresh deli-sliced turkey\* or fresh ground turkey\*)
2. Chicken (e.g., fresh chicken cutlets\* or frozen chicken nuggets\*)
3. Beef (e.g., fresh ground beef\* or beef jerky)
4. Tuna (e.g., fresh albacore tuna steak\* or canned albacore tuna fish)
5. Catfish (e.g., frozen catfish filet\* or smoked packaged catfish)
6. Lamb/Mutton (e.g., fresh lamb chops\* or fresh ground lamb\*)
7. Pork (e.g., pork loin\* or fresh sliced ham\*)
8. Chicken eggs (e.g., fresh chicken eggs\* or liquid chicken egg whites\*)

## The Dairy Products Staple Food Category: Examples of Staple Food Varieties

In the dairy products staple food category, “variety” is generally defined by product kind or main ingredient. This means that yogurt, cheese, and milk each represent discrete varieties. This also means that Swiss cheese and cheddar cheese are not each considered discrete varieties, as they are both considered cheese. Plant-based dairy products are also considered a variety in the dairy products staple food category based on their main ingredient and the traditional dairy product for which they are a substitute. For multiple-ingredient food products, the first ingredient determines the variety such that a jar of Alfredo sauce with milk listed as the first ingredient would constitute a variety in the dairy products staple food category (i.e., milk). Exceptions to this include plant-based dairy products, butter substitutes, and infant formula, which are considered staple food varieties in the dairy products category even though the first listed ingredient of those products is not always dairy-based.

What follows is an illustrative, but not exhaustive, list of nine acceptable varieties in the dairy products staple food category. Within each variety are two different examples of food items for that variety. The multiple ingredient food item examples in this list would be acceptable only if the main ingredient is in the dairy products staple category (with the exceptions of plant-based milked alternatives, butter substitutes, and infant formula). Perishable foods are indicated with an asterisk (\*).

### *Dairy Products Examples:*

1. Cheese (e.g., fresh deli sliced cheddar cheese\* or packaged grated parmesan cheese)
2. Milk (e.g., skim milk\* or whole milk\*)
3. Almond-based milk (e.g., refrigerated almond milk\* or shelf-stable almond milk)
4. Butter (e.g., frozen sweet cream butter\* or fresh salted butter\*)
5. Butter substitute (e.g., margarine\* or non-dairy spread\*)
6. Sour cream (e.g., fresh, lite sour cream\* or fresh, organic sour cream\*)
7. Yogurt (e.g., fresh whole milk French vanilla yogurt\* or fresh nonfat peach yogurt\*)
8. Infant formula (e.g., liquid, ready-to-feed formula or powdered milk formula)
9. Soy infant formula (e.g., liquid, ready-to-feed formula or powdered soy formula)

## The Bread or Cereals Staple Food Category: Examples of Staple Food Varieties

In the bread or cereals staple food category, “variety” is generally defined by product kind or main ingredient. This means that buns/rolls, bread, and pitas each represent discrete varieties. This also means that hotdog buns and hamburger buns are not each considered discrete varieties, as they are both considered buns/rolls. For multiple-ingredient food products, the first ingredient determines variety such that a frozen chicken pot pie with wheat flour listed as the first ingredient would constitute a variety in the bread or cereals staple food category (i.e., wheat).

What follows is an illustrative, but not exhaustive, list of nine acceptable varieties in the breads or cereals staple food category. Within each variety are two different examples of food items for that variety. The multi-ingredient food examples in this list would be acceptable only if the main ingredient is in the bread or cereal staple category. Perishable foods are indicated with an asterisk (\*).

### *Bread or Cereals Examples:*

1. Bread (e.g., a loaf of rye bread\* or a loaf of multigrain bread\*)
2. Pasta (e.g., gluten-free spaghetti or whole wheat rotini)
3. Tortillas (e.g., corn tortillas\* or flour tortillas\*)
4. Bagels (e.g., poppy seed bagels\* or plain bagels\*)
5. Pitas (e.g., low-carb pita\* or whole wheat pita\*)
6. Cold breakfast cereal (e.g., rice-based cereal or oat-based cereal)
7. Buns/rolls (e.g., frozen dinner rolls\* or hot dog buns\*)
8. Infant cereal (e.g., wheat-based infant cereal or oat-based infant cereal)
9. Rice (e.g., a bag of rice or a rice-based frozen meal\*)

## Examples of Staple Food Stocking Units

**Stocking units** are a can, bunch, box, bag, or package in which a product is usually sold. This list of examples serves to define “stocking unit” for the purposes of Criterion A eligibility. If a food item would not usually be sold individually, then it does not individually constitute a stocking unit. Such food items are usually sold in bunches, boxes, bags, or packages with a number of other identical items (e.g., a loaf of bread, a bunch of grapes, a carton of eggs, a bag of rice, or a package of sliced turkey). The individual sale of such food items would be impractical, given their small individual size. For such products, it is the bunch, box, bag, or package that represents one stocking unit. What follows is an illustrative, but not exhaustive, list of such products and their standard stocking unit size.

- Small fruit and berries: a package of blueberries or a package of strawberries
- Leaf vegetables: a head of lettuce or a bunch of collard green leaves
- Stalk/root vegetables: a bunch of carrots or a bunch of celery sticks
- Deli sliced items: a package of turkey slices or a package of cheddar cheese slices
- Grains: a bag or sack of rice or a box of oatmeal

If a food item is usually or often sold singly, then that single unit may constitute one stocking unit. What follows is an illustrative, but not exhaustive, list of such products and their standard stocking unit sizes:

- Loose fruit: a banana or an apple
- Large fruits or vegetables: a watermelon or a pumpkin
- Small portion or single-serving packages: a yogurt cup or a fruit cup

If a food item (e.g., grains, dried fruits, nuts, deli cold cuts, etc.) is stored singly in a common container or unit, but sold to customers by weight, then the standard stocking unit is considered to be one pound. A bulk canister containing three pounds of dried cranberries, available to and sold to the customer by weight, therefore, would constitute three stocking units of one variety in the fruit or vegetable staple food category.

If FNS determines that a bunch, box, bag, or package usually sold as a unit has been subdivided into unreasonably small units in order to meet this depth of stock provision, FNS will not consider such food items to constitute a stocking unit for the purposes of this depth of stock provision.

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**California Community Colleges Health & Wellness**  
[www.cccstudentmentalhealth.org](http://www.cccstudentmentalhealth.org)

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