

# SNAP POLICY CHANGES & WHAT TO DO

▲ IN EFFECT: FEBRUARY 1, 2026

■ WORK REQUIREMENTS NOW IN EFFECT — YOUR BENEFITS MAY BE AFFECTED — CHECK YOUR ELIGIBILITY ■

## WHAT HAS CHANGED

- **Work requirements expanded to new groups**  
Adults ages 55-64, AND parents of children 14 or older must now work at least 20 hours/week – or face a 3-month benefit limit every 3 years.

AGES 55-64

PARENTS OF TEENS 14+

- **Exceptions eliminated for 3 key groups**  
These groups previously held exceptions and are NO Longer protected from work requirements:

VETERANS

PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

YOUTH AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE

- **Immigrant eligibility largely eliminated**  
Asylees, refugees, and immigrants who are not Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs) are mostly no longer eligible for SNAP benefits.

- **WIC now requires a separate income check**  
Families enrolled in SNAP, Medicaid, or TANF are NO LONGER automatically income-eligible for WIC. A new, separate income verification is now required for all WIC applicants.

- **Fewer children auto-certified for school meals**  
As families lose SNAP or cycle on and off due to work requirements and time limits, fewer children will be automatically certified for free or reduced-price school meals.

### ✓ VOLUNTEER & TRAINING COUNT!

Approved volunteer activities and job training can satisfy the 20-hr/week work requirement.

*\*Note: Adults 60–64 are still subject to the new work requirements even though they are exempt from some basic SNAP work rules. Exemptions to ALL work requirements apply for: pregnant individuals, Native Americans/Tribal Members, and those under 18 or 65+.*

### VARIES BY CASE

How these rules apply depends on your situation. An exemption may still apply. Contact a SNAP Navigator.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- 1 **Check your status & exemptions**  
Use Essex County's WeCareCustomer Service Portal to review your application status and see if a work requirement exemption applies to you.
- 2 **Find a free SNAP Navigator**  
A local SNAP Navigator will assess your eligibility and current benefit status — confidentially and for free. Use the QR code below to find one.
- 3 **Get employment or volunteer support**  
Find jobs, job-seeking support, and volunteer opportunities through NJ's One Stop Career Centers in East Orange and Newark.
- 4 **Enroll in SNAP Employment & Training**  
The SNAP E&T Program offers approved training that counts toward your work requirement. Learn more via QR code below.
- 5 **Access food & nutrition resources**  
Find food resources through Essex County's Food & Health Equity Coalition (FHEC). School Meals and Summer EBT applications are also here.
- 6 **Re-verify WIC eligibility**  
Being on SNAP no longer automatically qualifies you for WIC. Contact your WIC office to complete a new income verification.

## WIC OFFICE CONTACTS — ESSEX COUNTY

East Orange WIC

wic@eastorange-nj.gov

Rutgers NJMS WIC

rutgerswic@njms.rutgers.edu

Newark WIC

newarkwic@ci.newark.nj.us

- 7 **School Meals & Summer EBT**  
Complete applications for students through the FHEC portal — see QR code below.

1

Essex County's WeCare Customer Service Portal



2

Find a SNAP Navigator in Essex County



3

Find employment and job-seeking support



4

Learn more about the SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) Program



5

Access food and nutrition resources



6

WIC Participant Portal



7

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