



# Food Assistance Benefits



## What are food assistance benefits?

- Food assistance benefits, or food stamps, assist low-income people with buying food.
- In Ohio, food stamps are given to recipients on an Ohio Direction Card, an electronic benefit card that looks similar to a debit card. The card can be used at participating grocery stores.
- Food stamp recipients do not need to have minor children.



## How do I get food assistance benefits?

You can apply for food assistance by:

- 1) Going online to <https://benefits.ohio.gov/>.
- 2) Visiting your county department of job and family services (JFS) and filling out an application.
- 3) Printing an application at [www.jfs.ohio.gov/ofam/cmandfsa.stm](http://www.jfs.ohio.gov/ofam/cmandfsa.stm) to turn in at your county department of job and family services.

For information on Franklin County JFS: [jfs.franklincountyohio.gov](http://jfs.franklincountyohio.gov).



## What do I bring when I apply?

You will need to bring certain items for each person in your household who is applying for benefits.

The list of items includes: Social Security Number, proof of income, proof housing and utility costs, proof of child support paid or received, and proof of child care expenses. Be sure to get a receipt for any documents you turn in.



## How do I know if I am eligible for food assistance?

You may qualify for benefits if your household's gross monthly income is at or under 130% of the federal poverty guidelines.

If you have income over the limit, you may still qualify if someone in your household is elderly or disabled.

# of people in household	130% monthly income of federal poverty guidelines
1	1,287
2	1,736
3	2,184
4	2,633
5	3,081
6	3,530
7	3,980
8	4,430



## Recertification

- Each assistance group (AG) must have a recertification interview at least once every 12 months.
- Most interviews are conducted on the phone, unless you request an in-person interview or JFS requires you to come in because of a special situation.
- Each AG must turn in recertification forms and provide updated documents. If possible, keep a receipt or other verification that this information was submitted.
- If you turn in all the necessary documents, JFS should issue food stamps within 30 days of your recertification.



## How will my food stamp amount be calculated?

- JFS will review your income and expenses including rent/mortgage costs, utility costs, medical expenses, and payments for child support and child care.
- The amount of food stamps you get also depends upon the size of your household.
- If you receive subsidized housing assistance and the housing unit has central utility meters where you are only charged for excess heating or cooling costs, you are entitled to have the standard utility allowance applied toward the calculation of your food stamp benefits.

# of people in household	Maximum Monthly Benefits (as of 2018)
1	\$192
2	\$353
3	\$505
4	\$642
5	\$762
6	\$914
7	\$1011



## How do I file an appeal?

If you disagree with a decision the county department of job and family services made about your food assistance application, or if there is a delay in processing a new application or recertification, you may request a state hearing with the Bureau of State Hearings in one of five ways:

- 1) Phone: 1-866-635-3748
- 2) Email: [BSH@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:BSH@jfs.ohio.gov)
- 3) Fax: 614-728-9574
- 4) Mail: Ohio Dept. of Job and Family Services State Hearings P.O. Box 182825 Columbus, OH 43218
- 5) Online: [www.ifs.ohio.gov/ols/bsh/State-Hearing--Request-Page.stm](http://www.ifs.ohio.gov/ols/bsh/State-Hearing--Request-Page.stm)

## How to Contact LASC:

### FRANKLIN & MADISON

Call (614) 241-2001 or Toll Free 1-888-246-4420  
 1108 City Park Avenue, Columbus, OH 43206  
 Office Hours: 8:30am-5:00pm Monday-Friday  
 Online: [www.columbuslegalaid.org](http://www.columbuslegalaid.org)

### DELAWARE, MARION, MORROW, & UNION

Call (740) 383-2161 or Toll Free 1-888-301-2411  
 150 Oak Street, Marion, OH 43302  
 Office Hours: 9:00am-5:00pm Monday-Friday  
 Online: [www.columbuslegalaid.org](http://www.columbuslegalaid.org)

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