

Keep This for Future Reference

What is ESAP?

ESAP is a simplified process to apply for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). If you are eligible for SNAP, you will receive a Louisiana Purchase Card, and SNAP benefits will be automatically deposited into your account every month.



Who is eligible?

You may be eligible for SNAP through ESAP if:

- All adults in your household are age 60 or over and/or disabled, and
- The household does not have earned income.

How do you apply for SNAP through ESAP?

You may apply by uploading them on CAFÉ, mail, in person, or via fax:

 Upload www.dcfslouisiana.gov/CAFE	 Mail DCFS ES Document Processing Center PO Box 260031 Baton Rouge, LA 70826- 9918	 In Person Find office: www.dcfslouisiana.gov/directory	 Fax 225-663-3164
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What happens after we receive your application?

- You will be assigned a worker.
- You will receive a letter in the mail notifying you of your scheduled appointment.
- You will be interviewed by a worker.
- Your worker will determine your eligibility using data matching. Data matching is a process that compares the data you send to us with data from other sources such as the Social Security Administration.
- We will send you a letter within 30 days of the date we receive your application to let you know if you are eligible or not. If you are eligible, the letter will also tell you the amount of your benefits and when they will begin.
- If you are eligible, your case will be certified for 36 months.
- If you are not currently certified for SNAP benefits, we will send a Louisiana Purchase Card to you within 7 days from the date we received your application or when your case is certified, whichever comes first. Receipt of the card does not necessarily mean that you have been

determined eligible for benefits. If you are certified, you will be able to activate your card and your benefits will be deposited into an account each month. When you activate your card, you will select a Personal Identification Number (PIN). You will use your Louisiana Purchase Card and PIN to access your benefits to help pay for your groceries. It will be your responsibility to keep your card and PIN safe. Anyone who knows your PIN can access your benefits with your card.

What will we do with the information that you provide?

- Information you give us on your application form will be verified by federal, state, and local offices including computer cross-matching with other agencies. Someone from our agency may contact other people in order to verify your eligibility for benefits.
- The immigration status of household members is subject to verification through the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) and may affect eligibility and benefit amount.
- You will not have to provide immigration status information or documents for any household members who are not eligible because of immigration status and who are not asking for benefits.
- If a member of your household does not wish to provide information about his/her citizenship or immigration status, he or she will not be eligible for benefits. Other family or household members may still receive benefits, if they are otherwise eligible. You can apply for and get benefits for eligible household members even if your household includes other members who are not eligible because of immigration status.





Why do we need your Social Security Number and are you required to provide it?

- The collection of information requested on the application form, including Social Security Numbers (SSNs) of household members, is voluntary and authorized under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, (7 U.S.C. 2011-2036), as amended. Failure to provide required information including SSNs or proof you have applied for an SSN for household members may result in that person's ineligibility for SNAP. You will not have to provide Social Security Numbers for any household members who are not eligible because of immigration status and who are not asking for benefits.
- SSNs are used to:
 - collect information from other sources,
 - check identity of household members,
 - determine whether your household is eligible, and
 - prevent households from getting more benefits than they are entitled to receive.
- SSNs are used in state and federal program reviews, audits, and computer-matching with other agencies such as Louisiana Workforce Commission, Social Security Administration, Internal Revenue Service, etc., through the State Income and Eligibility Verification System.
- Under the Privacy Act of 1974(P.L. 93-579), SSNs may be released for various reasons including those directly connected to the administration of the Child Support Enforcement Program.

What if your circumstances change?

- You must report when the household monthly gross income exceeds 130% of the federal poverty level for your household size.

- You must report if you receive lottery or gambling winnings of \$4250 or more, won in a single game before taxes or other withholdings. This must be reported by the 10th of the month following the month the lottery or gambling winnings were won.
- You can report other changes in your circumstances, but you are not required to do so.

You may report changes by uploading them on CAFÉ, mail, in person, or via fax:			
 Upload www.dcfslouisiana.gov/CAFE	 Mail DCFS ES Document Processing Center PO Box 260031 Baton Rouge, LA 70826-9918	 In Person Find office: www.dcfslouisiana.gov/directory	 Fax 225-663-3164

What Must be Verified and Examples of Proof?

- **Identity** – driver’s license, work or school ID, ID for health benefits or another social services program, voter’s registration card, check stub, or birth certificate.
- **Social Security Number** – copy of the social security card or papers you received at the hospital for a newborn. A Social Security Number is not required for any household member who is not eligible due to immigration status.
- **Immigration status** – if not a U.S. citizen, forms or cards from USCIS that prove the person is a legal immigrant (unless you choose not to apply for this person).
- Income such as contributions, child support, alimony, Social Security, SSI, VA, retirement checks, **Unemployment Compensation (UCB) - award letters, court orders, statements from contributors Income that stopped within the last 2 months** – pink slip, termination notice, or statement from former employer, termination notice or statement from source of any income that ended.
- **Medical expenses** – receipts, pharmacy printouts for last 3 months, doctor bills or other papers that show medical expenses for household members who are disabled or over age 59
- **Child support payments made to someone outside your home** – court order or other legal papers and proof that you are making payments such as cancelled checks or wage withholding statements.

What are your rights and responsibilities?

When you receive benefits from the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, you have certain rights and responsibilities that are explained below.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color,

national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the agency (state or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (833) 620-1071, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to:

1. **mail:**
Food and Nutrition Service, USDA
1320 Braddock Place, Room 334
Alexandria, VA 22314; or
2. **fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**
FNCSIVILRIGHTSCOMPLAINTS@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

- A program complaint may be filed with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) by emailing LAHelpU.dcf@la.gov or by calling 225-342-2342.
- Fair Hearing – If you do not agree with any decision made on your case, you have the right to ask that your case be reviewed. You can tell us that you want a fair hearing in writing, in person, or by calling this office. You have the right to look at your case record before the hearing.
- Confidentiality – All the information you give us is confidential. This means that we cannot give information about your case to other people except under special conditions. Examples of those conditions include official review by other State and Federal agencies or Federal, State and private collection agencies for the collection of claims against SNAP benefits. Information from your case may also be given to law enforcement officials for the purpose of catching persons fleeing to avoid the law and for investigation of a felony or probation/parole violation.
- Voter Registration – If you are not registered to vote where you live now, you may indicate that you would like to apply to register to vote on the ESAP Application. Please note that the information you give to the agency will remain confidential and will be used only for voter registration purposes. Applying to register or refusing to register to vote will not affect the amount of assistance or services that you may receive from the Department of Children and Family Services. DCFS will assist you with completing a Louisiana Voter Registration Application unless assistance is refused.
- You may fill out the application form in private.

- Cooperation – You have to cooperate by providing the information we need to determine your eligibility for benefits. You will be expected to cooperate if a home visit is necessary to determine your eligibility. If your case is selected for a quality control review by state or federal reviewers, you have to cooperate with them.

Are there penalties in SNAP?

If you knowingly report incorrect information, your benefits may be denied, reduced, or ended and you may be subject to criminal prosecution.

If you do the following:	You will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hide information or give false information • Trade or sell SNAP benefits or EBT cards (Louisiana Purchase Cards) • Use SNAP benefits to buy ineligible items, which includes alcohol, tobacco, hot food, and any food sold for on-premises consumption. Nonfood items are also not allowed • Use someone else’s SNAP benefits • Pay for food purchased on credit with SNAP benefits 	<p>Lose your SNAP benefits for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 year for the first violation • 2 years for the second violation • Permanently for the third violation <p>You may also be fined up to \$250,000 or imprisoned for up to 20 years or both</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade SNAP benefits for illegal drugs 	<p>Lose your SNAP benefits for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 years for the first violation • Permanently for the second violation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade SNAP benefits for firearms, ammunition, or explosives • Trade, buy, or sell SNAP benefits of \$500 or more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lose your SNAP benefits permanently
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give false information about who you are or where you live in order to receive benefits in more than one case at the same time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lose your SNAP benefits for 10 years

Information on Non-Cash Services

Your household may be authorized to receive the following non-cash TANF/MOE funded services. For additional information, please visit our website at www.dcfslouisiana.gov or contact your local DCFS Office.

- **Jobs for America’s Graduates LA (JAGS-LA) Program** – Helps keep in school students (age 12 through 21) at risk of failing who face at least two barriers to success which may include economic, academic, personal, environmental, or work related barriers; assists out-of-school youth in need of a high school education; provides an avenue for achieving academically; and assists students in ultimately earning recognized credentials that will make it possible for them to exit school and enter post-secondary education and/or the workforce. Call 225-219-0368.

- **Nurse Family Partnership Program** – Serves low-income, first-time mothers who are no more than 28 weeks pregnant by providing nurse home visitation services beginning early in pregnancy and continuing through the first two years of the child’s life. Call 504-219-9520 or 337-898-6097.
- **Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)** – Enhances family stability by facilitating links between the particular child/family and community resources/systems through trained, qualified, and supervised advocates who provide skilled communication, necessary transportation, efficient and thorough information gathering, and other services identified in an individual case. Call 225-930-0305 and 1-888-567-2272.
- **Drug Court Programs** – Combines both treatment and educational components with the ability of a supervising judge to award incentives and sanctions based upon the performance of the clients while in treatment. Treatment is community-based and drug court participants are required to meet with the judge on a regular basis to review progress. Call 504-568-2020.
- **Alternatives to Abortion** – Provides intervention services including crisis intervention, counseling, mentoring, support services, and pre-natal care information, in addition to information and referrals regarding healthy childbirth, adoption, and parenting to help ensure healthy and full-term pregnancies as an alternative to abortion.
- **LA 4 Public Pre-Kindergarten Program** – Provides high quality early childhood education for low income 4-year-olds in participating public school districts and Charter schools.