

INFORMATION FOR PENNSYLVANIA EMPLOYEES IMPACTED BY COVID-19

1. UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION (UC) BENEFITS

You may be eligible if:

- Your employer temporarily closes or goes out of business because of COVID-19
- Your employer reduces your hours because of COVID-19
- You have been told not to work because your employer feels you might get or spread COVID-19
- You have been told to quarantine or self-isolate, or live/work in a county under government-recommended mitigation efforts

Apply:

- Online – it's the fastest and easiest way to get started

Important info:

- If you are eligible for UC, you will receive two letters and a four-digit PIN
- Your PIN will arrive in the U.S. mail – keep it in a safe, easy to remember place
- If approved, your first benefit payment should arrive within four weeks of filing for UC
- Continue filing your bi-weekly claim (every two weeks) – **even while waiting for approval**
- We are experiencing very large call volumes. Please email us at uchelp@pa.gov, or via [UC LiveChat](#).
- **(NEW) The Waiting Week is suspended.** Previously, claimants were not eligible for benefits during their first week of unemployment (the "waiting week.") This has been suspended; eligible claimants may receive benefits for the first week that they are unemployed
- **(NEW) Work Search and Work Registration requirements** are temporarily waived for all UC claimants. Claimants are not required to prove they have applied or searched for a new job to maintain their UC benefits. Claimants are also not required to register with www.PACareerLink.gov.
- At this time, benefits are not being extended beyond 26 weeks.

Important information for CLAIMANTS in BANKRUPTCY – DUE TO COVID-19

Due to COVID-19, regular mail collection to the Department of Labor & Industry may be delayed or interrupted for the next few weeks due to many commonwealth employees working from home. As a result, if you have sent the department a bankruptcy notice, it may not be reviewed in time to avoid sending you billing notices or automatically offsetting your benefits. To provide us with your bankruptcy notice in a timely fashion, please send information about your bankruptcy to the following resource account at RA-OUCB-BPC@pa.gov. If you are able, please attach a copy of any bankruptcy paperwork to the email to expedite processing. If you are unable to attach the bankruptcy notice, please include your name, bankruptcy number, and the last four digits of your Social Security number on the email.

We will make every effort to stop inappropriate collection efforts once we receive your email. If an amount is mistakenly taken by offset, a refund will be made as soon as possible.

2. THE SUPPLEMENT NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) helps Pennsylvanians buy food. People in eligible low-income households can obtain more nutritious diets with SNAP increasing their food purchasing power at grocery stores and supermarkets. Those who are eligible receive an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) ACCESS Card to make food purchases. Experiencing a food emergency and need food right away? Help is available.

Questions?

Call the Department of Human Services Helpline, toll-free, at 1-800-692-7462 (1-800-451-5886 for individuals with hearing impairments) or your county assistance office.

How to Apply for SNAP

Please apply using the option that best suits you. If you do not know if you are eligible, you may still apply.

- **Online:** Apply for or renew your SNAP benefits online by using [COMPASS](#).
- **In-person:** File an application at [your county assistance office](#). You can download an application right here, fill it out, and return it to your county assistance office:
 - [Application for cash assistance, SNAP, and Medical Assistance benefits](#) (English version)

- [Solicitud para recibir beneficios](#) (Spanish version)

If you need help completing the application form or need more information about benefits, trained [county assistance office](#) staff can help you in person.

The following can apply:

- The head of the household
- The spouse of the head of household
- Any other responsible household member
- A designated authorized representative (can be a friend, relative, neighbor, or anyone else the applicant trusts to go food shopping and use their SNAP benefits)

Simple SNAP application

Use the Simple SNAP application for if everyone in the household is age 60 or older or has a disability, purchases and prepares food together, and does not receive any earnings from work. (A household is a group of people who usually purchase and prepare meals together. People in the household are not required to be related.) If you are 60 or older, find helpful information on our [SNAP for Older Adults page](#).

- [Simple Application for Simple Application for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) (English)
- [Solicitud simple para el Programa de Asistencia Nutricional Suplementaria](#) (Spanish)

If applying online, [COMPASSOpens In A New Window](#) will detect if you qualify for the simplified application and provide it for you.

Maximum Benefit Amounts

October 2019 through September 2020:

Family Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Each Additional
Maximum	\$194	\$355	\$509	\$646	\$768	\$921	\$1,018	\$1,164	Add \$146

Frequently Asked Questions



How do SNAP benefits work?

SNAP benefits are placed in an electronic account that only the recipient can use. This system is called [electronic benefits transfer](#), or EBT. The eligible household receives the Pennsylvania EBT ACCESS card, which allows withdrawals for food purchases at grocery stores and supermarkets. The store uses the EBT ACCESS card to electronically subtract purchases from the SNAP account. The eligible household can only spend the amount that is in the account. This is not a credit card.

What are the income eligibility requirements?

To get SNAP benefits, your income must be under certain limits. SNAP households may receive deductions from their gross income for things like housing costs, child or dependent care payments, and medical expenses more than \$35 for older adults or people with disabilities.

Learn more about [eligibility requirements for SNAP](#)[Opens In A New Window](#).

How do I check the balance for my SNAP benefits to know how much I have?

- The best way to know your balance is to keep your last receipt.
- If you lose your last receipt and need to know your balance, call the recipient hotline, 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 1-888-EBT-PENN.
- [Go online](#)[Opens In A New Window](#) to view your transaction history, learn more about EBT, and more.

How can I figure out how to feed my family healthful foods on a budget?

The United States Department of Agriculture provides several resources to help you prepare healthy meals on a budget:

- [10 Tips Nutrition Series](#)[Opens In A New Window](#)
- [ChooseMyPlate.gov](#)[Opens In A New Window](#)
- [Plan, Compare and Prepare](#)[Opens In A New Window](#)
- [Eat Right When Money's Tight](#)[Opens In A New Window](#)

Pennsylvania provides additional information about healthy eating through [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education \(SNAP-Ed\)](#).

The [SNAP Recipe Finder](#)[Opens In A New Window](#) helps you create cookbooks and shopping lists. Use it to search for recipes based on total cost or cost per serving.

What should I do if I need food right away?

- Find a nearby [food pantry](#)[Opens In A New Window](#).
- Contact your [regional food bank](#)[Opens In A New Window](#).
- Contact your [county assistance office](#) for help finding food resources.

General Information about SNAP

- [Brochure for older adults](#)
- [A Blueprint for a Hunger-Free Pennsylvania](#)
- [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(Food Stamp\) Policy Handbook](#)
- [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education](#)
- [U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Web site](#)[Opens In A New Window](#)

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), 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. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form \(AD-3027\)](#)[Opens In A New Window](#) found online at [the U.S. Department of Agriculture website](#)[Opens In A New Window](#) or at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. **Mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture; Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, D.C. 20250-9410.
2. **Fax:** [\(202\) 690-7442](tel:2026907442); or
3. **Email:** program.intake@usda.gov.

3. HEALTHCARE/MEDICAL ASSISTANCE (MA)/MEDICAID

Medical Assistance (MA), also known as Medicaid, pays for health care services for eligible individuals.

How to Apply

There are different ways to apply for MA. Please choose the option that suits you best. If you do not know if you are eligible, you can still apply.

1. **Online:** Using the [COMPASS](#) website, you can apply for MA and many other services that can help you make ends meet.
2. **Telephone:** Call the Consumer Service Center for Health Care Coverage at 1-866-550-4355.
3. **In-Person:** You can contact your local [county assistance office \(CAO\)](#).
4. **On Paper:** You can download an application and send to your local CAO. If you need help completing the application form, a CAO staff member can help you. Click on one of the following links to download an application.
 - [Application for cash assistance, SNAP and Medical Assistance benefits](#) (PDF download)
 - [Solicitud para recibir beneficios](#) (Solicitud para recibir beneficios; PDF transferencia directa)

What if I am not eligible?

Contact your CAO and a trained staff member will determine what programs might be available to you. You can explore these links to learn about additional health care programs available in Pennsylvania.

- [Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening and Treatment](#)
- [Dental Service](#)
- [HealthChoices](#)
- [Health Insurance Premium Payment \(HIPP\) Program](#)
- [Home and Community-Based Services](#)
- [Limited English and Interpreters](#)
- [Medical Assistance Transportation Program \(MATP\)](#)
- [Medical Assistance Benefits for Workers with Disabilities](#)
- [Mental Health and Substance Abuse](#)
- [Pregnancy and Family Planning](#)
- [Prescription Drug Coverage](#)

What kind of care is available?

- Physical Health Options
- Mental Health/Substance Abuse Services Options

Where can I find information about providers accepting MA patients?

- If you are eligible for MA, you may call the Fee-for-Service Recipient Service Center at 1-800-537-8862. They will provide you with a list of enrolled providers for MA patients.
- There is also a fee-for-service [provider physician directory](#) available.

Please note that the directory contains physicians enrolled in the MA program. Patients who need a physician and are using this directory should contact the physician's office to determine: 1) if they will accept Pennsylvania MA fee-for-service, known as ACCESS; and 2) if the physician is accepting new patients before making an appointment.

- If you are enrolled in a [managed care organization \(MCO\)](#), you will need to contact your specific plan.

4. CASH ASSISTANCE

If you have low income and limited resources, you may be able to receive cash assistance through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or General Assistance.

How to Apply

You can apply for or renew your cash assistance benefits [online by using COMPASS](#). The COMPASS website is the online DHS tool where you can apply for and renew services that can help you make ends meet.

Learn more about cash assistance programs below:

- [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families \(TANF\)](#) | [TANF infographic](#)
- [General Assistance](#)
- [Diversion Program](#)
- [State Blind Pension Program](#)
- [Refugee Cash Assistance Program](#)

Do you have questions about cash assistance?

If you are having trouble finding the information you need, you can call your local [county assistance office](#) or the HelpLine at 1-800-692-7462. You can also contact the DHS directly through our feedback form or by calling 1-800-451-5886.

- [Frequently Asked Questions about Cash Assistance Programs](#)

General Information

- [Cash Assistance Policy Handbook](#)
- [Supplemental Policy Handbook](#)
- [OIM Statistical Reports](#)

5. Dental Information for Recipients and Families

The Department of Human Services (DHS) is committed to providing recipients with access to quality dental services. This dental section is designed to give recipients helpful information about getting dental services in the Medical Assistance (MA) program, which is also referred to as Medicaid. Listed below are answers to common questions about eligibility, enrollment, MA dental providers, appointments, dental care and emergency services.

Eligibility

The dental services you may get are based on your eligibility category, age and need. Medical Assistance covers all medically necessary dental services for enrolled children. This includes teeth cleaning, x-rays, cavity fillings, crowns and other services. Adults enrolled in MA are eligible at a minimum for surgical procedures and emergency services related to treatment for symptoms and pain. Some adults may be eligible for other dental services. To find out if you are covered for dental care, call your county assistance office or, if you are in the HealthChoices/Managed Care program, call your managed care organization (MCO).

You must apply for Medical Assistance to see if you are eligible. Your eligibility for MA depends on your income, assets and other factors. There are a few ways you can apply for MA.

- **Apply online using COMPASS**, a quick, safe and easy way to apply for benefits;
- Visit or call your local [County Assistance Office](#) (CAO); or
- Call the DHS Helpline at (800) 692-7462; TDD (800) 451-5886.

MA Fee-for-Service Program

You can see any dentist that is enrolled with Medical Assistance and will accept your MA Access card. If you need help finding a dentist that accepts Medical Assistance, please visit [www.enrollnow.net](#)^{Opens In A New Window} or contact the Medical Assistance Call Center (Monday-Friday: 8 a.m-4:30 p.m.) at 1-800-537-8862.

HealthChoices/Managed Care program

You can visit any dentist that signs up with your MCO. For help finding a dentist, please visit [www.enrollnow.net](#)^{Opens In A New Window} or call your MCO's member services department or ask to speak to a special needs representative in your MCO's Special Needs Unit.

Scheduling an Appointment

If you need to see your dentist, call your dentist's office. When you call the office, tell the receptionist that you would like to make an appointment.

What should I do after I schedule an appointment?

Be sure to write down the date, time and place of the appointment. If needed, ask the receptionist how to get to the office using public transportation. Contact your local [County Assistance Office](#) to ask about the [Medical Assistance Transportation Program](#) (MATP). MATP provides transportation to and from medical or dental appointments. If you have children, remember to try to get someone to watch your children during the visit. This will make the visit easier for you and the dentist. If you find out that you will not be able to go to your appointment, call and tell the dentist's office right away.

How often should I go to the dentist?

Recipients eligible for primary dental care should see the dentist twice a year. Visit the Web sites listed below for more information about caring for your teeth and visiting the dentist:

- [Academy of General Dentistry](#)[Opens In A New Window](#)
- [American Dental Hygienists' Association](#)[Opens In A New Window](#)

What should I do if I have a dental emergency?

Call your dentist right away. The dentist will ask you questions about how much pain you are in and the problem you are having. Depending on the type of emergency, the dentist's office will do its best to see you as soon as possible. If the dentist cannot see you right away, ask the dentist if anything can be done to help with the pain until you are treated.

6. WIC (WOMEN. INFANTS. CHILDREN)

<https://www.pawic.com/>

Choose Healthy. Choose WIC!

The Pennsylvania Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) has improved the nutrition and health of families in Pennsylvania since 1974 by providing nutrition services, breastfeeding support, health care and social service referrals, and healthy

foods. Through WIC, pregnant women, mothers, and caregivers of infants and young children learn about good nutrition to keep themselves and their families healthy!

Are you wondering who is eligible for WIC? [Click here for a 30 second video!](#)

How do I Apply?

To apply for WIC, [call the toll-free WIC Hotline 1-800-WIC-WINS](#) to be connected to WIC office staff that will answer your questions and schedule your appointment, or [get started online!](#) Once your appointment is scheduled, please take time to review the [list of required items](#) needed for your initial visit to the WIC office.

WIC in the future:

All WIC agencies will move from providing checks to using electronic benefits transfer (EBT) to deliver WIC food benefits. The transition to EBT, referred to as eWIC, will create an easier shopping experience. WIC families will be able to purchase products over multiple trips to the store rather than purchasing everything at one time during the month. This year, Pennsylvania will be implementing eWIC across the state. Stay tuned for information about the project rollout in your county!

Who is Eligible for WIC?

- WIC serves the following Pennsylvania residents:
- Pregnant women
- Breastfeeding women, for up to one year postpartum
- Women up to six months postpartum, who are not breastfeeding
- Infants and children under 5 years old, including foster children



7. ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

<https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/Home-and-Community-Based%20Services.aspx>

8. COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES

Website: <https://www.thecaap.org>

Agencies serving all counties

Agency locator: <https://www.thecaap.org/agency-info/pa-community-action-agencies.html>

Services:

Financial self-sufficiency programs

Case management

Housing/rental assistance

Early childhood education

Employment programs

Search agencies for list of services and contact information

Services Matrix: <https://www.thecaap.org/agency-info/caap-matrix.html>