



DIVERSE ELDERS COALITION

Food Assistance

SNAP Factsheet on House Reconciliation Bill

House Republicans recently passed a sweeping budget reconciliation bill, enacting major portions of President Trump's agenda, including tax cuts, border security, and lifting the borrowing limit. The bill also makes substantial changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) program by reducing federal funding, altering eligibility, and imperiling access for millions of older Americans and those with disabilities. This factsheet highlights the most impactful changes.

Topline Takeaways

- The bill would enact the **largest SNAP cut in history**. The package aims to cut \$290 billion (nearly 30 percent) from the program, largely by shifting benefit costs to states for the first time, linking a new cost-sharing formula to state error rates. This means states will have to begin paying the cost of food assistance that was traditionally covered by the federal government.
- SNAP provides food assistance for more than 40 million people, including some 16 million children, 8 million older adults, and 4 million non-elderly adults with disabilities, all of whom would be affected by the cuts in the bill.
- The Congressional Budget Office estimates **that more than 7 million people** would see their food assistance terminated or cut substantially.

Funding Changes

- If a state cannot offset these massive federal cuts with tax increases or spending cuts elsewhere in its budget, it would have to reduce eligibility or make enrollment harder for SNAP benefits, **or it could opt out of the program altogether**, terminating food assistance entirely in the state. This would be the first time in the modern history of SNAP that the federal government would no longer ensure that the lowest-income families with children, older adults, and people with disabilities in every state have access to the food assistance they need.
- The bill would cut food benefits **by an average of \$100 per month** for about 600,000 low-income households by eliminating an administrative simplification for calculating utility expenses for many households.

Eligibility Changes

- The bill would also **expand burdensome paperwork requirements**, requiring frequent reporting and documentation, to older Americans and families with children and freeze future benefit increases that would help households adjust to rising food costs.
- Under current law, most older adults non-disabled adults without children in their homes can't receive benefits for more than three months out of every three years if they don't document they are working at least 20 hours per week or prove they qualify for an exemption. **The bill would expand this restriction to older adults aged 55-64 and to parents with children over the age of 6**, while also significantly limiting waivers for areas with poor economic conditions.
- The bill would also deny food assistance to **almost all immigrants** except those who are lawful permanent residents.
 - Those affected would include people with immigration statuses that prioritize humanitarian need, like those granted refugee or asylee status and victims of trafficking or domestic violence.
 - CBO estimates that the provision would take food assistance away from between 120,000 and 250,000 people with a lawful immigration status. Program data suggest this includes roughly 50,000 children.

Community Impact Snapshot

- In total, **14 million households received SNAP benefits** during 2018 (the most recent data available):
 - Black and African American (27%)
 - Hispanic and LatinX (22%)
 - Asian American, Pacific Islander, and Native Hawaiian (3.1%)
 - American Indian and Alaska Native (1.5%)
- According to the Williams Institute, **27 percent of all LGBTQ+ adults** – 2.2 million people – are food insecure and rely on SNAP, between 7 and 10 percent higher than straight and cisgender adults.
- Nationally, SNAP reached **5.3 million low-income households** with individuals age 60 or older, on average each month in fiscal year 2019.
- According to Food Research & Action Center estimates, approximately **3.9 million households with adults age 60+ were food insecure** on average each year from 2018–2020.
- In fiscal year 2019, less than half (48 percent) of the nation's approximately 10 million eligible older adults participated in SNAP on average each month.