



IN CONJUNCTION WITH



Tips,  
Tools and  
Resources for  
Individuals

Help Someone  
Get the Food  
They Need –  
It's a SNAP!

**In this economy, chances are you know someone who needs help paying for food.**

We all have ups and downs in life. The good news: There's aid money out there for folks who need it, and you can help them get that money!

**SNAP FOOD ASSISTANCE**

- 1** Overview
- 2** Basic Steps: 1, 2, 3...
- 8** SNAP Flyer
- 9** Key Resources & Tools

Revised 9-22-10

Help Someone  
Get the Food  
They Need - It's  
a SNAP!

create the  
**good**  
-AARP

# Overview

## The Problem

An estimated 3.6 million people aged 65 and over live in poverty in the United States. Most of these people could be receiving food assistance. But only 34 percent of eligible older Americans get that food assistance. That leaves millions of food-aid dollars untouched. The most common reason? People don't realize they're eligible!

## The Solution

Help someone to sign up for food assistance programs like SNAP (formerly the Food Stamp Program). By helping a friend or neighbor access these benefits, you'll help to improve their health – by easing the anxiety that comes with financial stress and helping them get the money they need to buy food.

To help someone apply for SNAP, visit AARP Benefits QuickLINK, a webpage sponsored by the AARP Foundation. This FREE, confidential online tool helps people determine if they are eligible for programs that help cover the costs for groceries, medicine, utilities and health care without ever entering a bank account or Social Security number. The Food Benefits section of the website focuses just on food assistance, and provides all the forms and information you need to apply for SNAP in your state. **Note: The Benefits QuickLINK website is in English but you can also print out Spanish copies of most of the SNAP applications from the website.**

## Time Commitment

From 15 minutes to a few hours.

## Special Considerations

None.

## Who Can Do This

Everyone can do this, as long as you have Internet access.

## Great Reasons To Do This Project

You'll be helping someone who really needs it. This is a chance to be a great neighbor and a trusted friend, and it doesn't require much time.



Eligible for SNAP? If someone has monthly income of around \$1,000/month or less, and/or struggles to make ends meet, there's a chance they might be eligible.

# Basic Steps: 1, 2, 3...

## Step 1: Start the Conversation

Personal finances can be a touchy subject. Many people who are in need, especially those who have recently hit hard times, may be uncomfortable discussing this. Some suggestions to open the conversation may include:

- “I saw an ad from AARP saying they have resources to help us get through this tough economy – for example, helping to pay for food. Have you ever heard of this?”
- “I don’t know if you’re interested, but there’s a program that my mother-in-law used to get money to buy groceries. It really helped us too, because we were helping to cover those costs out of our own pocket.”
- Share a copy of “Your Guide to Public Benefits in Your State.” To access the guide and print it out, visit [www.aarp.org/quicklink](http://www.aarp.org/quicklink), click on “Help in my State” tab and select your state.



Please be sensitive if you are initiating the conversation with friends and neighbors.

## Step 2: Log on to AARP Benefits QuickLINK to screen someone for SNAP

Offer to help your friend use the Benefits QuickLINK website. The site will guide you through a short list of questions, and will compare answers given to the eligibility requirements in your state.

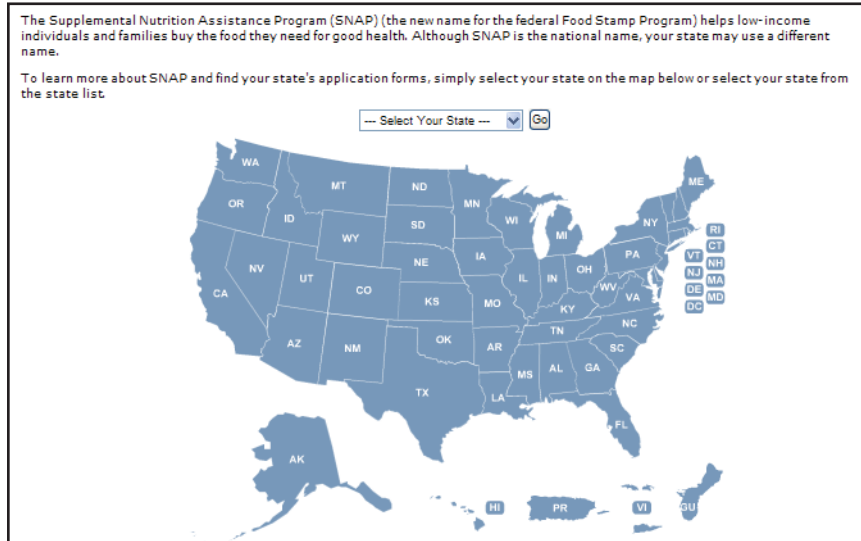
Explain that you will not ask for any identifying information, such as their name, Social Security number, or bank account number. Once you start the screening, you will find a list of information needed, which does include some basic information about income and expenses.

Help Someone  
Get the Food  
They Need - It's  
a SNAP!

create the  
**good**  
AARP

**BASIC STEPS: 1, 2, 3... continued**

- Log on to a computer and go to [www.aarp.org/snap](http://www.aarp.org/snap).
- Click on your state, or select your state from the drop-down box.

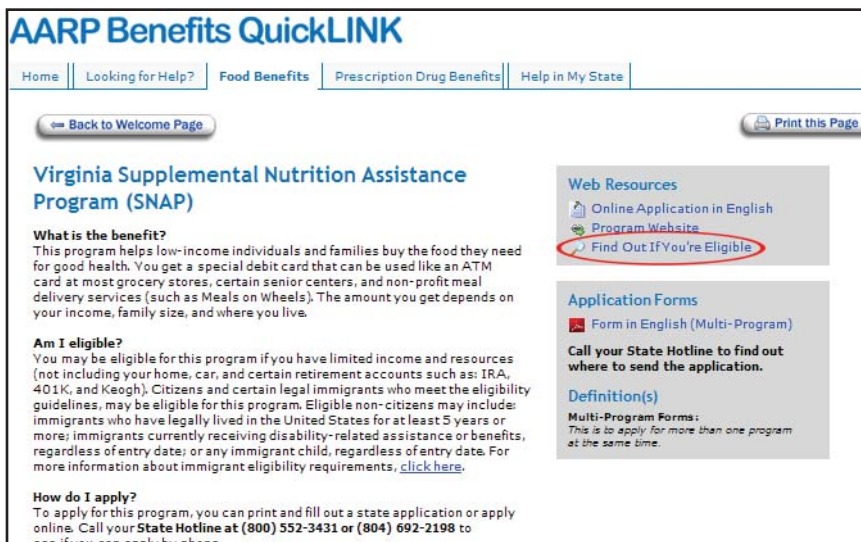


✓ If you think that a person is eligible for SNAP and they don't want to complete the questionnaire online, go straight to the state application form. Access that form on the right of the screen. (Some states have pdfs, or online applications; many states offer Spanish or other language versions too.)

Note: Every state has different eligibility requirements and processes to apply.

**Step 3: Begin Eligibility Screening**

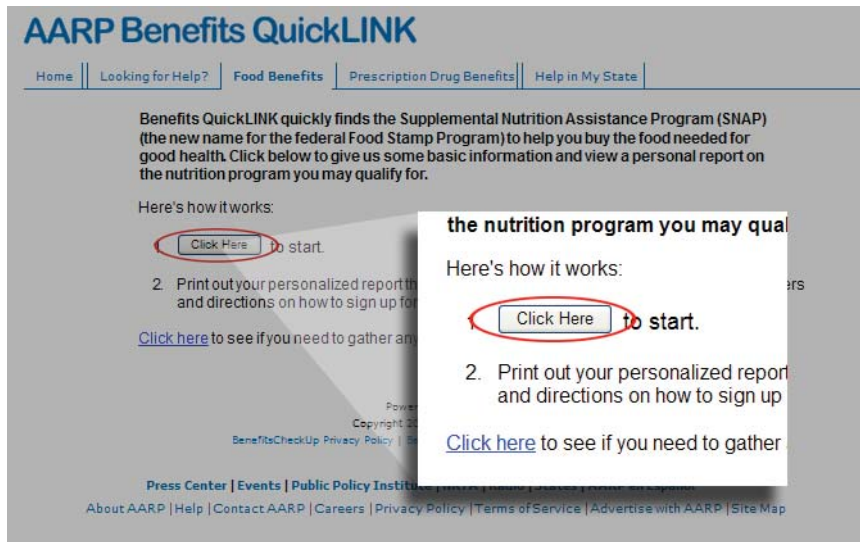
On the right hand side of the screen, under "Web Resources," click on "Find Out If You're Eligible."



Help Someone  
Get the Food  
They Need - It's  
a SNAP!



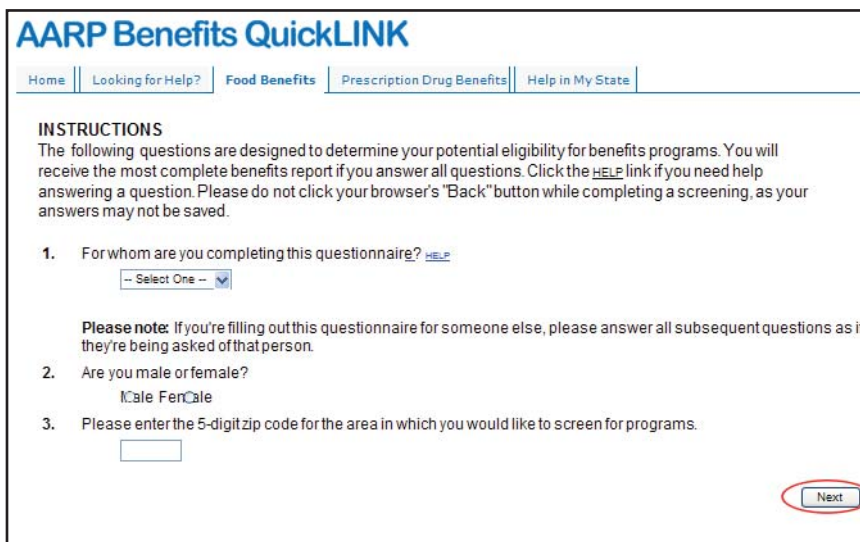
## BASIC STEPS: 1, 2, 3... continued



It's easy to launch the screening. Click on the "Click Here" button to start. Then just ask your friend to answer the fifteen questions and fill in the answers. Remember, you don't need to enter ANY sensitive information – like a name, Social Security number or bank account number. No one will ever know who is completing the survey. It's private and secure!

## Step 4: View Results

Once you've completed all of the questions, the final screen will determine whether your friend may be eligible or not.

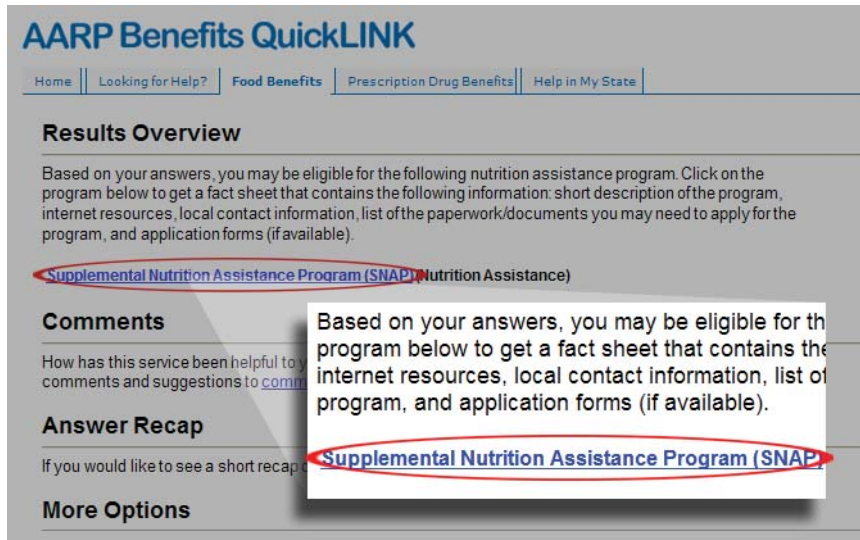


Help Someone  
Get the Food  
They Need - It's  
a SNAP!

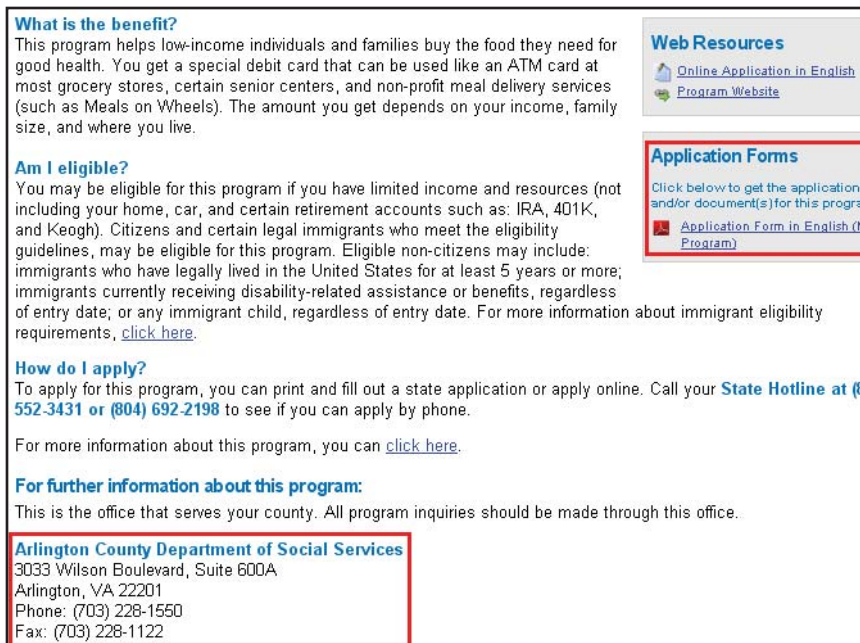


**BASIC STEPS: 1, 2, 3... continued**

If the person you are helping to screen may be eligible for food benefits, the results page will look like this with a link to information specific to the state. Click on the link.



The final screen shows local contact information, application forms, and items needed to apply.



✓ SNAP/Food Stamps provide the average senior participant with \$70 each month toward their grocery bill.

Once you return to the screen with all state-specific application information, view the right hand side to see whether the person can apply online or will need to print an application to send to the appropriate agency.

Help Someone  
Get the Food  
They Need - It's  
a SNAP!

create the  
**good**  
AARP

## BASIC STEPS: 1, 2, 3... continued

In some states, other benefits can be applied for at the same time when you complete the SNAP application.

## Step 5: Submit SNAP Application

Determining eligibility is only the first step. Now you can help your friend complete the SNAP application process.

In this section, your friend will need to share personal identifying information such as Social Security number, name, copies of financial documents that prove income, bank account and/or citizenship.

Here are other ways you can help:

- Offer to call the local department of social services to set up an appointment.
- If the program accepts applications over the phone, give your friend that information.
- Drive them to an application appointment, or help to arrange transportation.
- Find the local office that provides food benefits in your area.
- Simplify mailing of the application by addressing and stamping envelopes.



Determine if you are the right person to help here. Your friend may also want to ask a relative, friend or case worker to help them complete this application.

## Step 6: Inspire others on CreateTheGood.org!

### TELL US WHAT YOU DID!

We want to hear stories about how you helped give back to your community. [www.CreateTheGood.org/stories](http://www.CreateTheGood.org/stories). You just might inspire others to do the same.

Help Someone  
Get the Food  
They Need - It's  
a SNAP!

create the  
**good**  
AARP

**BASIC STEPS: 1, 2, 3...** continued

## SHARE FEEDBACK

We are always looking for feedback on our materials, so please let us know how this guide was helpful or request additional information you wish we could have included. Share lessons learned and other tips for others who are helping someone with this tool. [www.aarp.org/CreateTheGoodgroup](http://www.aarp.org/CreateTheGoodgroup)

## KEEP UP THE GOOD!

Remember: Whether you've got five minutes, five hours or five days, you can make a positive impact in your community. And if you have more time, consider organizing another service activity, finding local opportunities and posting your events at [www.CreateTheGood.org/how-to](http://www.CreateTheGood.org/how-to).

Many older adults often refuse help or hand-outs. Please emphasize that AARP believes that people who are eligible for these programs should enroll in them. Remind them that they (and/or their spouse) worked hard for decades, and that assistance programs are just one way the government recognizes that effort. Connecting people to programs or helping with the legwork to ensure that they get enrolled can put real money back in their pockets.

## It's Worth The Time...



*"It gives me money to go and buy meat..."*

*"...I had more money to buy food -  
and with the money  
I had leftover, I paid bills."*

*"I can buy things that I WANT to eat..."*

**...to get help paying for groceries.**

Go to [www.aarp.org/snap](http://www.aarp.org/snap) to  
learn how easy it is to apply  
for the new **S**upplemental  
**N**utritional **A**ssistance **P**rogram .

**It's a SNAP.**

**AARP and AARP Foundation believe that no one  
of any age should go hungry.**

Learn more about AARP's Hunger Campaign at

[www.aarp.org/hunger](http://www.aarp.org/hunger)

Help Someone  
Get the Food  
They Need - It's  
a SNAP!



# KEY RESOURCES & TOOLS

## More Information

### **Benefits QuickLINK**

[www.aarp.org/quicklink](http://www.aarp.org/quicklink)

### **SNAP Page on Benefits QuickLINK**

[www.aarp.org/snap](http://www.aarp.org/snap)

### **SNAP information in Spanish:**

[www.fns.usda.gov/snap/sp-default.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/sp-default.htm)

### **Benefits QuickLINK explained**

[www.aarp.org/makeadifference/gettinghelp/articles/benefits\\_quicklink.html](http://www.aarp.org/makeadifference/gettinghelp/articles/benefits_quicklink.html)

### **Finding relief in tough times**

[www.aarp.org/money/personal/real\\_relief\\_aarp/](http://www.aarp.org/money/personal/real_relief_aarp/)

### **Benefits for raising other people's children**

[www.aarp.org/family/grandparenting/articles/benefits\\_quicklink\\_for\\_grandfamilies.html](http://www.aarp.org/family/grandparenting/articles/benefits_quicklink_for_grandfamilies.html)

### **Your Guide to Public Benefits in Your State: Easy-to-read 4 page handout**

[www.aarp.org/quicklink](http://www.aarp.org/quicklink) (Click on the "Help in My State" tab)

### **Find a Food Pantry**

[www.feedingamerica.org](http://www.feedingamerica.org)

Visit [CreateTheGood.org](http://CreateTheGood.org) to let us know how your involvement made a difference to people you care about, or to offer suggestions for future ideas.