

## ***Your food stamp application***

Information reported at your food stamp application is used to determine if you are eligible for food stamps and the amount of benefits you will receive.

Your caseworker will look at the amount of income in your household along with expenses you incur. Expenses can include rent, utilities, house payments, child care costs, medical expenses, and child support.

With this information your caseworker will determine the amount of benefits you will receive. These benefits will be frozen at this amount for six months and will only change under certain circumstances.

You will receive a letter informing you of the amount of benefits you will receive, how long you will receive them, and what changes you need to report.



## ***What changes do I have to report for my food stamp case?***

You must report when:

- your household's total income, before deductions, goes over the maximum amount of income allowed for the size of your family; and
- the number of hours worked by a household member falls below 20 hours per week, and that member is age 18 – 49 and able bodied without dependents. Only participants in certain counties must report this. Your worker will let you know if you must report this.

Change reporting is simplified for the Food Stamp Program to eliminate the need for frequent office visits or contact.

Change reporting requirements are different depending on the type of assistance you receive.

The things you report for Child Care or Medical Assistance Programs are different than what you report for the Food Stamp Program.

## ***When do changes have to be reported?***

Tell your worker about changes you have to report by the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) day of the month following the month the change occurred. All other changes can be reported at your next Food Stamp application.

## ***How will I know when my income goes over the maximum for my household size?***

When your food stamp application is approved, you will receive a **“CLAIMANT ACTION NOTICE”**.

This notice informs you of:

- the amount of food stamp benefits you will receive;
- the length of time for which your food stamp application is approved; and
- the maximum amount of income your household can have before changes must be reported.

In addition to the **“CLAIMANT ACTION NOTICE”**, a **“CHANGE REPORT”** form will be sent to you. This **“CHANGE REPORT”** form will have the reporting requirements and the income maximum for your household.

***What happens if I report something I don't need to report?***

Changes that are reported by a household or learned by your caseworker are tracked in your case record.

When changes are reported, we look at all of the changes we know about, to decide if we need to change the amount of food stamp benefits you receive.

Once benefits are “frozen” they will not be reduced except under certain circumstances.

Your food stamp benefits may not decrease when changes are reported. If you should be eligible to receive more food stamp benefits, we will increase the benefit amount.

At your next application your current circumstances will be taken into consideration and your benefit allotment may change.

**CIVIL RIGHTS LAW**

In accordance with Federal Law and U. S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs, or disability.

Any person who believes s/he may have been the object of such discrimination may file a written complaint with the County office, the Family Support Division, or with the United States Department of Agriculture, giving the specific details as to how and when the discrimination took place. Send complaints to the Office of Civil Rights, P. O. Box 1527, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102.

For more information, contact your local Family Support Division office.

Missouri Department of Social Services  
P. O. Box 1527

Jefferson City, MO 65102

*To file a complaint of discrimination write:*

USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights  
Room 326-W, Whitten Building  
1400 Independence Avenue, S. W.  
Washington, DC 20250-9410  
or call (voice and TDD): (202) 720-5964

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**Reporting Changes  
for the  
Food Stamp Program**

