

Do You Need Emergency Food Assistance?

Do I qualify for emergency food assistance?

You qualify if

- You're otherwise eligible for either federal food stamps or the state food assistance program. (For more information visit the [Basic Food](#) web site. More publications on food assistance are available on-line at www.washingtonlawhelp.org, by calling CLEAR at 1-888-201-1014 or contacting your local legal services office.)

AND

- You have less than \$150 in gross income for the month and \$100 or less in liquid resources. (Examples: cash on hand, money in a checking or savings account, or a lump sum payment from a tax refund, retroactive Social Security or SSI)

OR

- Your combined gross income and liquid resources are less than your current monthly rent (or mortgage) and actual utility costs.

OR

- Your household includes migrant or seasonal farm workers whose liquid resources are no more than \$100 and who

are in need of immediate help to get food at the time of applying for food stamps.

If you qualify, DSHS must give you food stamps within 5 days following the day you turn in an application. (Example: if you apply on the 1st, you should receive them by the 6th.) Emergency food stamps are not limited to once a year. (This is different than emergency cash benefits.)

How do I get a food stamp application?

1. Go to any DSHS office.
2. Call your local DSHS office. Ask them to send you a food stamp application. DSHS must send it the same day you call.
3. Apply on-line at <https://fortress.wa.gov/dshs/f2ws03esaapps/onlinecso/cover.asp>.

What if I'm denied emergency food stamps?

If you're denied emergency food stamps and you think the denial is wrong, you may appeal it by asking for a *fair hearing*. You ask for a fair hearing by writing to the Office of Administrative Hearings, P.O. Box 42489, Olympia, WA 98504 or by calling your local welfare office and asking for the Fair Hearing Coordinator. If it's an emergency, ask to have your hearing held as soon as possible by calling the Office of Administrative Hearings at (360) 664-8717 or 1-800-583-8271. This is called an "expedited" hearing. See our publication [Representing Yourself at a Fair Hearing](#).

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