

## **Frequently Asked Questions- Disaster Nutrition Assistance Program (DSNAP) Relief for Specific Counties Impacted by Hurricane Helene**

On November 6, 2024, the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) announced **28** counties eligible to receive Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (DSNAP) Assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.

### **Are all counties in South Carolina eligible for this program?**

As of November 1, 2024, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has approved only the following counties for DSNAP as a result of Hurricane Helene: **Abbeville, Aiken, Allendale, Anderson, Bamberg, Barnwell, Beaufort, Cherokee, Chester, Edgefield, Fairfield, Greenville, Greenwood, Hampton, Jasper, Kershaw, Laurens, Lexington, McCormick, Newberry, Oconee, Orangeburg, Pickens, Richland, Saluda, Spartanburg, Union, and York.**

### **What will the process look like for households who need assistance?**

DSNAP will be implemented in two phases due to the sheer volume of eligible households. Residents are only eligible for pre-registration and telephone interviews during their assigned period.

Those who pre-register will be sent instructions on how to complete their eligibility interview by phone and if approved, the applicant will have their EBT card mailed to them. Delivery time for DSNAP EBT cards is estimated to be three days from the date DSNAP is approved.

**Phase One** includes **Aiken, Allendale, Anderson, Bamberg, Barnwell, Beaufort, Cherokee, Hampton, Laurens, McCormick, Saluda, Spartanburg, Union, and York counties.** Pre-Registration opens on Monday, November 11, 2024, and closes on Friday, November 15, 2024.

**Phase Two** includes **Abbeville, Chester, Edgefield, Fairfield, Greenville, Greenwood, Jasper, Kershaw, Lexington, Newberry, Oconee, Orangeburg, Pickens, and Richland counties.** Pre-Registration opens on Sunday, November 17, 2024, and closes on Thursday, November 21, 2024.

### **What will I need to provide during the online pre-registration process?**

Applicants are encouraged to provide as much information as possible on the online pre-registration form. Failure to provide your county of residence, date of birth, current contact information, and a photo of your South Carolina Driver's License/ID card may result in you having to wait to apply in-person when your county's DSNAP onsite event is scheduled.

### **I've completed the online pre-registration. What happens next?**

Telephone interviews for pre-registered households in Aiken, Allendale, Anderson, Bamberg, Barnwell, Beaufort, Cherokee, Hampton, Laurens, McCormick, Saluda, Spartanburg, Union, and York counties will be held November 12<sup>th</sup> – November 15<sup>th</sup>.

Telephone interviews for pre-registered households in Abbeville, Chester, Edgefield, Fairfield, Greenville, Greenwood, Jasper, Kershaw, Lexington, Newberry, Oconee, Orangeburg, Pickens and Richland counties will be held November 18<sup>th</sup> – November 21<sup>st</sup>.

Residents are only eligible for telephone interviews during their assigned period.

### **What if I am unable or do not want to pre-register online and complete the phone interview?**

In-person DSNAP events will be held between December 2<sup>nd</sup> and December 13<sup>th</sup> for residents who are unable to pre-register and complete the telephone interview. Expect higher traffic and potentially longer

wait times if you wait to attend the in-person DSNAP event in your county of residence. DSS professionals are unable to pre-register you online on your behalf. Information, including days, locations and times for in-person events, will be announced after Thanksgiving.

### **Can I call or visit my local county or regional DSS office to apply for DSNAP?**

Online pre-registration and interviews cannot be completed at your local county DSS office. Calling or visiting your local DSS office will not expedite the application and verification process for DSNAP.

### **What will be considered as a 'loss' related to Hurricane Helene?**

Applicants must have suffered a loss related to Hurricane Helene to be eligible for DSNAP benefits. Households applying for Disaster SNAP must have lived in the disaster area at the time of the storms **and** must have suffered loss or damages. **Food loss alone is not a qualifying factor for DSNAP assistance.** Applicants should be prepared to provide the following:

- Proof of Identity
- Proof of Address
- Proof of Income
- Proof of the value of unreimbursed damages incurred as a direct result of the storms
- Proof of loss or inaccessibility of income

Any household that resided within one of the designated counties at the time of Hurricane Helene **AND** suffered unreimbursed disaster losses may be eligible to receive temporary DSNAP assistance.

Residents in any of the designated counties who meet the DSNAP income guidelines may be eligible if the household experienced at least one of the following conditions as a direct result of the September 27<sup>th</sup> storms:

- Damage to or destruction of the home.
- Loss or inaccessibility of income including a reduction or termination of income or a significant delay in receiving income due to disaster related problems.
- Disaster-related expenses (home or business repairs, temporary shelter, evacuation, etc.) that are not expected to be reimbursed during the disaster benefit period.

All applications are subject to review. If it is determined that an applicant received benefits that he/she was not entitled to, the applicant will be required to pay them back.

### **How will I receive my DSNAP benefits if approved?**

DSNAP benefits, if approved, will be provided via an electronic debit-like card and can be used to purchase food items at authorized SNAP retailers. Households that complete the online pre-registration process and complete the telephone interview can expect to have the benefits mailed to their home address on file with their application. Delivery time for DSNAP EBT cards is estimated to be three days from the date DSNAP is approved.

For approved items that can be purchased with DSNAP benefits, please visit: [What Can SNAP Buy? | Food and Nutrition Service](#)

### **My household already receives traditional SNAP benefits each month. Is my household also eligible for DSNAP?**

**No. Per federal rules and guidelines, current SNAP recipients are not eligible for DSNAP.** SNAP recipients who reside in a county approved for DSNAP may be eligible for a disaster supplement if their monthly SNAP benefit is less than the maximum monthly allotment for their household size.

Current SNAP recipients residing in Abbeville, Aiken, Allendale, Anderson, Bamberg, Barnwell, Beaufort, Cherokee, Chester, Edgefield, Fairfield, Greenville, Greenwood, Hampton, Jasper, Laurens, Lexington, McCormick, Newberry, Oconee, Orangeburg, Pickens, Richland, Saluda, Spartanburg, Union, and York counties who qualify will automatically receive a disaster supplement on their EBT cards on or before November 13, 2024.

Current SNAP recipients residing in Kershaw County who qualify for a disaster supplement **who suffered a disaster loss** may go to the designated site in Kershaw County December 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> and file an Affidavit of Loss to request a supplement of their October SNAP benefits.

**If approved, when will my household’s DSNAP benefits expire?**

Unused DSNAP benefits will be expunged after 9 months (274 days) of inactivity.

**Is there an income limit for DSNAP? How much is the benefit?**

To qualify for DSNAP, a household’s net income plus its accessible liquid resources minus any disaster-related expenses must not exceed the Disaster Gross Income Limit.

The Disaster Gross Income Limits and DSNAP allotment amounts are included below:

Household Size	Disaster Gross Income Limit	DSNAP Allotment
1	\$2,171	<b>\$292</b>
2	\$2,620	<b>\$536</b>
3	\$3,068	<b>\$768</b>
4	\$3,529	<b>\$975</b>
5	\$4,015	<b>\$1,158</b>
6	\$4,500	<b>\$1,390</b>
7	\$4,948	<b>\$1,536</b>
8	\$5,397	<b>\$1,756</b>

**Where can I go to get additional information on the DSNAP process? Should I believe everything I read on social media?**

DSS reminds the public to be sure you are obtaining information from official sources and trusted news organizations to avoid confusion and misinformation. Additional updates will be posted to [dss.sc.gov](https://dss.sc.gov) as they become available, including information about the next round of online pre-registration and screening interviews and in-person events in December.

###