



Updates and Frequently Asked Questions about District of Columbia Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Online Purchasing Program

Effective Wednesday, May 13, 2020, the District of Columbia (District) launched the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Online Purchasing Program. Below is the most current information on the program. This guidance will be updated as needed. If you have additional questions, please contact the Call Center at (202) 727-5355 or TTY: 711.

Q: *What retailers are participating in the SNAP Online Purchasing Program?*

A: Currently, District residents participating in SNAP may only use their benefits to make online purchases of authorized food using their Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card through Amazon.com.

Retailers participating in the District SNAP Online Purchasing Program are selected and approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The District is assisting local retailers and farmers markets interested in participating in the SNAP Online Purchasing Program to submit applications for review and approval by the USDA. Retailers authorized to accept SNAP benefits must meet additional USDA requirements to receive approval to accept online payments completed with SNAP benefits.

Q: *When can District residents participating in SNAP begin using their benefits on Amazon.com?*

A: Wednesday, May 13, 2020.

Q: *Is there a minimum purchase amount?*

A: DHS is not aware of any minimum purchase requirements. However, Amazon.com, the District's only current retailer serving District SNAP customers through online purchasing, does have a minimum purchase amount to qualify for free shipping. Customers who purchase less than that minimum purchase amount will have to pay shipping fees with funds other than SNAP benefits.

Q: *How do SNAP participants sign up to use their benefits on Amazon.com?*

A: To use SNAP benefits on Amazon.com, visit [Amazon.com/SNAP/Register](https://www.amazon.com/SNAP/Register) and follow the instructions on the screen. If you are not already an Amazon customer, you will



need to create an account and add your SNAP EBT card plus zip code to make sure that you are eligible. There are also opportunities to add an EBT card during checkout.

Q: *How will SNAP participants know which items are eligible for purchase with SNAP benefits?*

A: SNAP-eligible food items have a special label “SNAP EBT eligible.” This label appears after a SNAP participant adds their SNAP EBT card to their Amazon account.

USDA requires all SNAP authorized retailers, including authorized online retailers, to ensure SNAP benefits are used to purchase eligible food items. A list of eligible food items that can be purchased using SNAP benefits is available [here](#).

Q: *What form of payment is accepted to make purchases using SNAP benefits? Are EBT cards accepted?*

A: District residents participating in SNAP may use their EBT card to complete purchases of eligible food items with their SNAP benefits. At Amazon.com, customers will need to register their EBT card with an existing account or create a new Amazon account. To learn more about using an EBT card on Amazon.com, visit, [Amazon.com/SNAP/Register](https://www.amazon.com/SNAP/Register) and follow the on-screen instructions.

- o If an order contains non-SNAP eligible food items, customers are required to pay with another form of payment such as a credit or debit card, a gift card, or another acceptable form of payment.

Q: *Can SNAP participants use benefits to pay for shipping or delivery?*

A: No. USDA requirements prohibit using your SNAP benefits to cover shipping or delivery fees. However, it is possible to earn free shipping by adding enough qualifying items to your order. For more information on Amazon.com delivery fees visit [amazon.com/snap-ebt](https://www.amazon.com/snap-ebt). Below are the minimum purchase amounts to qualify for free shipping/delivery for Amazon Grocery, Amazon Fresh and Amazon Pantry.

Amazon Grocery	Amazon Fresh	Amazon Pantry
\$25 minimum	\$35 minimum	\$35 minimum

Q: *What are the differences between Amazon Fresh, Amazon Pantry and Amazon Grocery?*



A: Customers can use their SNAP benefits on Amazon.com groceries, Amazon Pantry, and Amazon Fresh to purchase authorized food items. The following is an overview of the Amazon Grocery, Fresh and Pantry “stores.”

Amazon Fresh:

Amazon Fresh is similar to your typical grocery store, delivering perishable, shelf-stable and household products in everyday package sizes. Amazon Fresh is typically available only to Prime members. However, Amazon is making Amazon Fresh selection available to customers who shop with a SNAP EBT card in eligible regions without Prime membership fees. To receive free delivery on Amazon Fresh orders, purchase \$35 or more (\$50 in select regions) – or place a smaller order and pay a shipping fee. Customers can schedule their preferred delivery time within a 1 or 2-hour delivery window, as early as the same day. Please visit [About Amazon Fresh Delivery](#) for more information. For more information on Amazon Fresh, including lower free shipping thresholds, visit [About Amazon Fresh](#).

Amazon Pantry:

Amazon Pantry features food items and household products in everyday package sizes. To receive free delivery on Amazon Pantry orders, purchase \$35 or more – or place a smaller order and pay for shipping. Please visit [About Amazon Pantry Delivery](#) for more information. For more information on Amazon Pantry memberships, including lower free shipping thresholds, visit [About Amazon Pantry](#).

Amazon Grocery:

The Grocery and Gourmet Food category on Amazon features shelf-stable food and household items in multi-pack sizes. Prime orders receive free 2-day Prime shipping. Orders of \$25 or more of eligible items receive FREE shipping in 5-8 business days – or you can place a smaller order and pay a shipping fee.

The minimum order size for free shipping is calculated separately for Amazon Fresh, Amazon Pantry and Amazon Grocery. To receive free shipping for any one of these programs, simply meet order minimums for that program and shipping fees will be waived.

Q: *Can District households participating in the SNAP program purchase eligible food from Whole Foods using their SNAP benefits?*

A: No. However, some Whole Foods brands are available on the Amazon Grocery, Fresh, and Pantry “stores.”

Q: *Where may District residents participating in the SNAP program learn more about using their benefits on Amazon.com?*



A: To learn more about using SNAP benefits for purchasing authorized food on Amazon.com, visit the [Amazon.com FAQ](#).

Q: *Where can interested retailers find more information about how to become authorized to accept SNAP benefits online?*

A: Retailers may visit the USDA website to learn more about participating in the SNAP Online Purchasing Program at fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer-requirements-provide-online-purchasing.

Any retailer approved to accept SNAP benefits is eligible but must meet additional USDA requirements and have an online ecommerce platform. The District is working with interested local and small retailers, farmers markets and technology partners interested in participating in the SNAP Online Purchasing Program and assisting them meet USDA requirements. Retailers may contact the District at DCSNAP.Retailer@dc.gov to learn more about program requirements.