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# FOOD STAMPS FOR NON-PUBLIC ASSISTANCE APPLICANTS

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## HOW DO I GET A FOOD STAMP APPLICATION?

If you reside in Nassau County DSS is located at the HHS building at 60 Charles Lindbergh Blvd. in Uniondale. Go there to ask for an application for Non-Public Assistance Food Stamps, or telephone the office at (516) 227-8523 and ask them to mail one to you.

If you reside in Suffolk County, there are four Department of Social Services Centers where you can apply - Riverhead (893 E. Main St, 631-852-3560), Smithtown (2000 Wireless Blvd, 631-853-8714), Coram (80 Middle Country Rd, 631-854-2300), and South West Center (2 South Second St, Deer Park, 631-854-6600). You should apply at the Center closest to where you reside.

The worker should give you an application to fill out. You will have to prove:

1. your identity, by producing a driver's license, birth certificate, or Social Security card, etc.;
2. the number and identity of persons in your household (bring birth certificates or Social Security cards of your children);
3. your income (if any);
4. your liquid resources (bring bank books or bank statements).

You should ask the case worker if you are eligible for expedited food stamps. You should not be denied Expedited Food Stamps because you cannot provide written proof of the items listed above, but the more written proof you have, the better your chances will be.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

You will be interviewed. Your interview must be conducted on the same day you request Expedited Food Stamps. You should be notified at the end of the interview if you are eligible or not.

## HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE FOR ME TO GET MY FOOD STAMPS?

You can usually get Expedited Food Stamps within a day or two. If you get to DSS by 8:30 a.m., you may be able to get them within 24 hours, but you should know that the law permits DSS to take up to 5 days to issue Expedited Food Stamps. If you have no food, ask for an immediate referral to a food pantry.

## IF I AM APPROVED FOR EXPEDITED FOOD STAMPS, WILL I CONTINUE TO RECEIVE FOOD STAMPS FROM MONTH-TO-MONTH?

Not automatically. In order to continue receiving Food Stamps, you must complete the regular application process. This means that you will be called back for another interview and asked to submit certain documents. If you do not follow through, you will not continue to receive Food Stamps.

## WHAT IF I CANNOT GO TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES TO APPLY FOR EXPEDITED FOOD STAMPS?

The form should be mailed to you on the day you ask for it. However, processing time for the application does not begin until the completed form has been returned to the Department of Social Services (DSS).

## WHAT DO I DO NEXT?

When you get the application, fill it out completely and truthfully. If you reside in Nassau County mail or take the application to the Non-Public Assistance Food Stamp Office, Nassau County Department of Social Services building, 60 Charles Lindbergh Blvd, Uniondale, NY 11553-3656.

If you reside in Suffolk County mail or take the application to the Food Stamp Office of the Center closest to where you reside - Riverhead (893 E. Main St, 631-852-3560), Smithtown (2000 Wireless Blvd, 631-853-8714), Coram (80 Middle Country

Rd, 631-854-2300), and South West Center (2 South Second St, Deer Park, 631-854-6600).

When that office gets your application, they will call you in for a face-to-face interview. This interview should happen within 5 business days of the DSS receiving the application.

### WHAT HAPPENS AT THE FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW?

During this interview, the number of persons in your Food Stamp Household and your Food Stamp Household's income and resources (e.g., bank accounts, IRA's) will be determined. The amount of Food Stamps you receive, if you qualify, will depend on this information. You will have to provide the Social Security numbers of everyone in the household, even if they are not applying for Food Stamps.

As a general rule, a Food Stamp Household is made up only of household members who usually buy and prepare food together. However, special rules apply when household members are related.

### HOW DOES THE FOOD STAMP OFFICE MAKE ITS DECISION?

The Food Stamp Office must decide your application within 30 days of the date you submit it. They will usually issue Food Stamps going back to the date of your application.

However, if you or someone in your household causes a delay, your application can be held open another 30 days. In this case, you will not get back benefits. If you delay completing the application for more than 60 days, your application can be denied. Recent class action litigation addresses food stamp application delays. If you believe your application decision is delayed, call the Empire Justice Center at (631) 650-2305.

### WHAT CAN I EXPECT IF MY APPLICATION IS APPROVED?

If your application is approved, you will receive an identification card and a personal identification number (PIN) which acts much like an ATM bank card. To get your Food Stamps, take the card to an authorized retail store and they will tell you how to get your stamps.

### WHAT CAN I DO IF MY APPLICATION IS DENIED?

Call our office immediately. We will review the decision with you. If it appears wrong, we will tell you how to challenge it, or we may agree to take your case. You must ask for a Fair Hearing to challenge the denial within 90 days. To request a Fair Hearing, notify the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) by telephone, fax, or mail that you want a Fair Hearing. You can write on the back of the notice the reason for requesting the hearing. If you phone, get the name of the person you speak to.

If you write, send your letter by certified mail and keep a copy.

The correct address is:

(you must have

Fax No. (518) 473-6735

Albany, New York 12201-1930

Office of Administrative Hearings from Albany)

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## CONTACT US

Appointments are necessary. Call the Law Services office closest to you.



#### **Nassau County Hempstead Office**

1 Helen Keller Way – 5th Floor  
Hempstead, NY 11550  
Phone: (516) 292-8100  
Fax: (516) 292-6529

#### **Senior Citizen Law Project**

Phone: (516) 292-8088

#### **Suffolk County Islandia Office**

(serves Suffolk West of Route 112)  
1757 Veterans Highway  
Suite 50  
Islandia, NY 11749  
Phone: (631) 232-2400  
Fax: (631) 232-2489

#### **Suffolk County Riverhead Office**

(serves Suffolk East of Route 112)  
400 West Main Street  
Suite 301  
Riverhead, NY 11901  
Phone: (631) 369-1112  
Fax: (631) 369-1612

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Nassau Suffolk Law Services Committee, serving Long Island since 1966.

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