

BENEFITS SERVICES NEWS

June 2017



1. PROPOSED SNAP PURCHASE RESTRICTIONS

Please Note:

As a resident of Illinois, you shouldn't be concerned with proposed restrictions at this time. There are **no** imminent changes.

For years, there has been an ongoing debate concerning what can be purchased with SNAP. Most recently the debate concerns sodas, sweets, and even shellfish being eliminated from the list of eligible food items that can be purchased with SNAP Benefits. The current restrictions for SNAP purchases include alcoholic beverages, tobacco and hot prepared meals.

2. SNAP IN THE NEWS: The SNAP App

There is a free app that gives the 45 million recipients of SNAP a way to check their balances from their smartphone. The App is called **FRESH EBT**. When you open up the app, you see not just your balance and transaction history, but also a map showing stores and farmers markets that accept SNAP, as well as those offering coupons or weekly specials.

3. EXPLANATION OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT LETTER- REFRESHER

When an Explanation is Needed:

- If your income is less than your expenses.
- When you have recently lost your job, and won't continue receiving your prior income.

What the Explanation Should Include:

- *If you are currently responsible for paying expenses*
 - Options for Explanation:
 - You are using savings: You need to include the amount you have in savings and how long you expect it to last.
 - You are receiving money from a source outside of your SNAP household: You should include the amount of money you are receiving each month and if it is a loan (expected to be paid back) or a gift.
- *If you are not currently able to pay for your expenses.*
 - Options for Explanation:
 - You have an agreement with the Landlord
 - You are currently facing eviction/foreclosure

**** Make sure the Letter is signed and dated ****

IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome to the Benefits Services News! Our goal for the newsletter is to share any news relating to public benefits including but not limited to: SNAP, Benefits Access, TANF, Medicaid Unemployment, etc.

In this issue:

1. **Proposed SNAP purchase restrictions**
2. **SNAP App – FRESH EBT**
3. **Explanation of financial management refresher**