

Frequently Asked Questions - Division of Benefit Programs

Remember:

**New FAQs are added to the end of each section as they become available.
Please scan the Response Date column for any updates to previously published FAQs.**

Public Facing FAQs

Program	Questions	Response	Response Date
SNAP	Are Emergency SNAP or Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP) benefits going to be issued?	Yes. Virginia issued emergency allotments to households on March 25 and will issue them again on April 16. The batch is scheduled to run at 8:00 p.m. for the April 16th issuance and if successful, benefits will be available at midnight. The emergency benefits will allow the household's current monthly allotment to increase to the maximum allotment for a household of that size.	Updated 4/16/2020
SNAP	Will there be an increase in the SNAP benefits to the current SNAP caseload during the COVID-19 public emergency?	Yes. Virginia issued emergency allotments to households on March 25 and will issue them again on April 16. The batch is scheduled to run at 8:00 p.m. for the April 16th issuance and if successful, benefits will be available at midnight. The emergency benefits will allow the household's current monthly allotment to increase to the maximum allotment for a household of that size.	Updated 4/16/2020
SNAP	Why didn't I get an emergency allotment?	The emergency allotment was calculated by the maximum allotment issuance for the household size, minus the amount that was issued for March 2020. If you received the maximum benefit you would not be eligible to receive the emergency allotment.	3/25/2020
SNAP	Why was my emergency allotment so small?	The emergency allotment was based on the difference between what you received in March 2020 and the maximum of what a household your size could receive. If your amount was small, it is because you already received an amount that is close to the maximum amount allowed monthly.	3/25/2020
SNAP	When will I get my initial emergency allotment? And when will the next emergency allotment be issued?	The first emergency allotment issuance is March 25, 2020; the second emergency allotment issuance is April 16, 2020. The batch is scheduled to run at 8:00 p.m. for the April 16th issuance and if successful, benefits will be available at midnight.	Updated 4/16/2020
SNAP	Will the regular SNAP issuance for April 2020 be given?	Yes. The regular allotment will go out in accordance to the regular staggering schedule which occurs on the 1st, 4th and 7th of each month.	3/25/2020

SNAP	Am I eligible to receive SNAP benefits?	You may complete an online screening at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov. Scroll to the middle of the page and click "Am I Eligible?" Please remember this is a prescreening tool, you must apply for SNAP to get a final decision.	3/24/2020
SNAP	Has the application process changed for SNAP?	There are no policy changes to the SNAP application process. Households must file an application for SNAP benefits with the Local Department of Social Services in the locality where the household resides. Households may file applications in person, by mail, by fax, by telephone to the Enterprise Customer Service Center at 1-855-635-4370 or online at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov. Most local agencies have a drop-box that customers can utilize while they are closed or if it's outside of the agency's business hours. Please contact your local agency for their email address and fax number; this information is also available at www.dss.virginia.gov.	3/24/2020
SNAP	What are the income guidelines for SNAP during the COVID-19 crisis?	The SNAP income guidelines remain the same. We encourage you to complete an online screening at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov. Scroll to the middle of the page and click "Am I Eligible?" Please remember this is a prescreening tool, you must apply for SNAP to receive a final decision.	3/24/2020
SNAP	What is the status of my application of case?	Households can check the status of their application by contacting their Local Department of Social Services or online at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov.	3/24/2020
SNAP	Is there assistance for college students who no longer have access to meal plans?	You are encouraged to apply which allows eligibility for SNAP to be determined based on your household's individual circumstances. Applications are accepted in person, by mail, by fax, by telephone to the Enterprise Customer Service Center at 1-855-635-4370 or online at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov. Most local agencies have a drop-box that customers can utilize while they are closed or if it's outside of the agency's business hours. Please contact your local agency for their email address and fax number; this information is also available at www.dss.virginia.gov.	3/24/2020
SNAP	Will extra SNAP benefits be issued while children are out of school?	Emergency SNAP allotments were issued to some customers that receive benefits. The first emergency allotment was issued on March 25, 2020, the second emergency allotment will be issued on April 16, 2020. The batch is scheduled to run at 8:00 p.m. for the April 16th issuance and if successful, benefits will be available at midnight. The April 2020 SNAP benefits will issue according to the regular schedule, which is the 1st, 4th, and 7th of each month.	Updated 4/16/2020

		<p>Most of the local school districts are providing meals to the children eligible for free and reduced lunch. Contact the local school division for distribution sites or visit the http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/nutrition/approved-meal-sites.xlsx for a list of locations in your area.</p>	
SNAP	What is P-SNAP and how can I get it?	<p>P-SNAP is the term for benefits that may be available for households with children who receive free or reduced school lunch. At this time, the program is not operating P-SNAP. Please continue to view the news and check our website for updates.</p>	3/24/2020
SNAP	What should I do, I need to pick up my SNAP EBT card, but my local office is closed?	<p>While a local agency may be closed to the public, they must have procedures in place to provide access to EBT cards to meet certain circumstances. Please contact your Local Department of Social Services. To request an EBT card, you may call your Benefit Programs Specialist or call 1-866-281-2448. Contact information for local agencies is available at www.dss.virginia.gov.</p>	3/24/2020
SNAP	Can I go to another local department of Social Services if my agency is closed to pick up an EBT card?	<p>While a local agency may be closed to the public, they must have procedures in place to provide access to EBT cards to meet certain circumstances. Please contact your Local Department of Social Services. To request an EBT card, you may call your Benefit Programs Specialist or call 1-866-281-2448. Contact information for local agencies is available at www.dss.virginia.gov.</p>	3/24/2020
SNAP	Can an EBT card be used to purchase groceries online?	<p>SNAP participants can order online if the store permits. They cannot pay online but must pay at the store. Currently, Kroger and Walmart are allowing SNAP payments curbside</p>	Updated 4/20/2020
SNAP	I need to apply for benefits, return information, and/or report a change, but my local agency is closed?	<p>Households can mail, fax, e-mail or drop off information. Most local agencies have a drop-box that customers can utilize while they are closed or if it's outside of the agency's business hours. Please contact your local agency for their email address and fax number; this information is also available at www.dss.virginia.gov. You may also submit an application for benefits, submit Change Report Form and/or report changes online at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov.</p>	3/24/2020
SNAP	Am I eligible for SNAP while I'm waiting for a decision from the Virginia Employment Commission about my unemployment claim?	<p>Yes; however, there are other eligibility criteria that will be accessed to determine your eligibility. We encourage you to complete an online screening at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov. Scroll to the middle of the page and click "Am I Eligible?" Please remember this is a prescreening tool. You will need to apply for SNAP to get a final decision.</p>	3/24/2020
SNAP	Are Emergency SNAP or Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP)	<p>Yes. Virginia issued emergency allotments to households on March 25 and will issue them again on April 16. The batch is scheduled to run at 8:00 p.m. for the April 16th issuance and if successful, benefits will be available at midnight.</p>	Updated 4/16/2020

	benefits going to be issued?	The emergency benefits will allow the household's current monthly allotment to increase to the maximum allotment for a household of that size. Virginia is not currently operating a Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP) Program.	
Medicaid	How can I get health coverage?	You can apply for Medicaid at any time at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov. Medicaid covers a variety of services, including testing and treatment for COVID-19.	3/20/2020
Medicaid	I am sick, but cannot afford my co-pay to see the doctor. What should I do?	All Medicaid and FAMIS co-pays are eliminated. You do not need to pay anything to see a doctor.	3/20/2020
Medicaid	I am worried my prescriptions will run out. How can I prepare?	Medicaid is allowing members to fill a 90-day supply of many routine prescriptions. Check with your pharmacist or doctor.	3/20/2020
Medicaid	Will my current coverage be canceled if I experience a change in circumstances and/or I was late mailing in my renewal documents?	No, Virginia Medicaid will not cancel coverage for eligible individuals due to a change in circumstances or paperwork issues. Our priority is to maintain your coverage during this time. If you experience issues, please contact http://www.dmas.virginia.gov/contactforms/#/general so that we might assist you.	3/20/2020
Medicaid	I had to move out of Virginia temporarily because of the coronavirus, but I am still a resident of Virginia. Can I keep my Medicaid coverage?	Yes, you will continue to be eligible for Medicaid coverage.	3/20/2020
Medicaid	Can I receive behavioral health services through telehealth or by telephone?	Virginia Medicaid has issued guidance to providers allowing the following Medicaid services to be offered through telehealth and by telephone: care coordination, case management, peer services, needs assessments, and psychiatric services, including medication management and individual, group, and family therapy.	3/20/2020
Medicaid	Will Medicaid make changes in the appeals	Yes. DMAS is making the following changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DMAS is seeking federal authority to accept client/member appeals filed during the COVID-19 emergency that miss the normal filing deadlines. If the authority is 	3/20/2020

	procedures because of COVID-19?	<p>granted, those appeals will move forward as if the deadlines were met. This policy will apply retroactively for the length of the Governor’s emergency declaration, which began on March 12, as soon as approval is received.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For all appeals filed during the state of emergency, Medicaid members will automatically keep their health coverage and have access to Medicaid-covered medical services without any financial impact while the appeal is proceeding. Medicaid managed health plans will also approve continued coverage while their internal appeal process is underway. • All DMAS State Fair Hearings will be conducted by telephone. • DMAS will grant requests to reschedule hearings. • Appeals may be submitted to DMAS via e-mail at Appeals@DMAS.Virginia.gov <p>State Fair Hearing decisions may not be issued within the normal timeframe, depending on the length of the emergency.</p>	
Medicaid	Do I still have to report changes to my circumstances?	Yes. Customer should report all changes within 10 days - customer reporting requirements have not changed.	4/7/2020
Medicaid	Is it necessary that I respond to mail I receive regarding my Medicaid renewal?	Yes. When possible you must return the requested information to your local department of social services. Information can be returned by calling the CoverVA Call Center at 855-242-8282, online at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov or by utilizing the exterior drop boxes at local departments that are closed to the public because of the COVID-19 emergency.	4/7/2020
Medicaid	What am I to do if my care provider is no longer able to come to my home?	Customers whose care providers are no longer able to come to the home must use the back-up plan for waiver services. If your attendant does not report, please call your care coordinator for your Managed Care Organization (MCO).	Updated 4/16/2020