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Annual changes in SNAP standards affect few Oregon participants

Every year the federal government makes changes to the calculations used to determine who is eligible and how much an eligible person may receive in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) food assistance. The annual changes take place at the beginning of each federal fiscal year on October 1. This year's adjustments will not change the amount of food assistance the vast majority of SNAP participants receive each month.

The annual changes usually are adjustments to the income requirements and allowable deductions for SNAP eligibility, known as the SNAP standards. Currently, about 756,000 Oregonians receive food assistance through SNAP.

This year's annual adjustments are focused on deductions in the eligibility and assistance determination process. They do not change program eligibility requirements and won't result in changes for the vast majority of SNAP participants in Oregon.

To be eligible for SNAP, families must earn less than 185 percent of the federal poverty level, along with other factors. The amount of assistance a SNAP participant receives is based on many factors including income and deductions for things like shelter and utilities. For a family of four, the income limit is less than \$3,739 per month.

SNAP participants do not need to take any action. The state will automatically recalculate cases and adjust food assistance in the few cases where it's needed. Any changes will show in the October issuance of food assistance to SNAP participants and would be slight.

The SNAP standards are directed by the United States Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Services and based on the utility rates in each state. SNAP clients with questions about the changes can contact their local Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) office for assistance.

To find the closest DHS office, go to www.oregon.gov/dhs or contact 211Info for help. You can contact 211Info by dialing 2-1-1, visiting 211info.org online, texting your zip code to 898211, or e-mailing to help@211info.org.

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