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Contact: Belit Burke, Self-Sufficiency Program Design Administrator, (503) 947-5389

Annual changes in food assistance calculations take effect October 1, 2016

On October 1, 2016, the federal government will make changes to the calculations used to determine how much an eligible person may receive in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, formerly known as food stamps. The annual changes are cost-of living adjustments to the income requirements and allowable deductions for program eligibility, known as the SNAP standards.

The amount of benefits a SNAP participant receives is based on many factors including income and deductions for things like shelter and utilities. With the changes on October 1, some may see a very small increase in their monthly benefits. Currently, 702,930 Oregonians receive food benefits through SNAP.

SNAP participants do not need to take any action. The state will automatically recalculate cases and increase benefits for those who qualify. Any additional amount in food benefits will show in the October issuance of benefits to SNAP participants.

The change in the 2016 standards will not cause an increase in the number of people receiving SNAP. It also does not change program eligibility requirements. To be eligible for SNAP, families must earn less than 185 percent of the federal poverty level, along with other factors. For a family of four, the income limit is less than \$3,747 per month.

The SNAP standards are directed by the United States Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Services. 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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