



Need Food Stamps Right Away?

Ask for Expedited (Fast) Food Stamps!



What do you mean by “fast”?

If you have very little money, you may be able to get your first Food Stamps within 7 days after you apply. This is called an expedited [“fast”] issuance. If your stamps aren’t expedited, it may take up to 30 days for you to receive them.

Will I qualify for “expedited” Food Stamps?

Does one of the following describe you? If yes, you should get your first Food Stamps within 7 days after you apply:

- ✓ I have very little money – My monthly gross income [the total before all withholding] is \$150 or less and my cash or savings are less than \$100 – OR
- ✓ I don’t have enough money to pay my housing and utility bills – My monthly gross income plus all my cash and savings are less than my monthly housing and utility bills -- OR
- ✓ I am a migrant or seasonal farmworker who is between jobs My income stopped before I applied for Food Stamps --- OR I won’t receive more than \$25 from a new job in the 10 days since I applied ---AND I have less than \$100 cash or savings

How do I get expedited Food Stamps?



1. Apply at DHS and show ID **If you apply at the Department of Human Services (DHS):**
 DHS must help you fill out the application and verify information, if you ask. You must also be interviewed. If you make it clear you want fast (“expedited”) Food Stamps, DHS must interview you the same day you apply.

If you cannot go to the DHS office:
 - You can apply by mail** . If you cannot get to the DHS office for an interview, tell DHS. Someone must interview you at your home or by telephone.
 - You can appoint someone else to apply for you.** Call your DHS office to find out how to appoint a representative.
2. Be Eligible for Stamps **If your application shows you will not qualify for Food Stamps,** you will be denied, even if your income and assets are low.

If your application alone shows you are eligible for expedited Food Stamps, DHS must give you Food Stamps within 7 days even if you don’t have all the papers and proof of income that DHS wants. You will have to provide DHS with all this information in order to receive Food Stamps after your first issuance.



What if I don't get my Food Stamps in 7 days?

If you think you qualify for expedited Food Stamps and it has been more than 7 days since you applied,

1. Call your DHS caseworker or the caseworker's supervisor
2. Seek legal advice.

To locate the legal services or legal aid office in your area, look under "attorneys" in the yellow pages, or call the State Bar lawyer referral service at (800) 968- 0738.



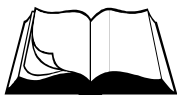
What if I am denied Food Stamps?

If you are denied expedited issuance or are denied Food Stamps, you should receive a notice from DHS. If you think the denial is wrong, you may want to do the following:

1. Request a hearing if you think the denial was wrong.
2. Seek legal advice.

To locate the legal services or legal aid office in your area, look under "attorneys" in the yellow pages, or call the State Bar lawyer referral service at (800) 968- 0738.

3. Reapply if your circumstances have changed since you were denied.



How can I find out more about Food Stamps?

Contact your local DHS office, your local legal services or legal aid office. If you cannot get the information you need, contact the Center for Civil Justice at (517) 755-3120 or (800)724-7441. Or e-mail us at info@ccj-mi.org.

How do I find my local Department of Human Services (DHS) office?

Look under the State of Michigan listing in your telephone book, or ask other helping agencies in your community (United Way, community Action agency, food pantries or soup kitchens, health department, senior center, etc.).

This information was prepared by the Center for Civil Justice in August 2000 and is a summary only. Food Stamp policies are complex and change frequently. If you have specific questions or problems about your situation, seek legal advice. The Center for Civil Justice may be able to provide information or a referral if you are unable to find legal help in your local community.