

Do You Qualify for FoodShare?

FoodShare Wisconsin is a nutrition assistance program funded by the federal government, but run by the state of Wisconsin. It provides extra funds for lower income people to purchase food that they would otherwise be unable to afford. This program is also referred to as SNAP.

Generally, anyone whose gross income is less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level may be eligible for FoodShare. For a single person, this is income of \$1946 per month; for a couple, the income limit is \$2622. However, some senior citizens with higher incomes but assets less than \$3,250, may be allowed to deduct some household expenses, as well as some medical expenses in order to try to qualify for a benefit. For example, a percentage of your rent or mortgage and utility costs may be deducted from your income. In addition, a percentage of unpaid medical bills and medical costs that you yourself have paid may also be deducted from your income. **With these deductions, you may be eligible even if your income seems too high.** The amount of the benefit is based on income; people with the lowest income get the highest allowable benefit. The lowest monthly benefit is \$15.

The FoodShare benefit comes in the form of a Quest card. The Quest Card is basically a debit card that can be swiped at the same grocery checkout terminal that is used for other debit and credit cards. Every participant will be able to choose an easy to remember PIN (personal identification number) which they will need to enter into the machine to pay for their food purchases. There is no fee for using a Quest Card. Your monthly benefit amount will be loaded onto your card each month.

The Quest Card is accepted at many grocery stores throughout the state. Participating stores will display a sign indicating that they accept Quest Cards. A Quest Card can be used to buy foods like fruits, vegetables, meat, dairy products, breads, and cereals. In some parts of the state, a Quest Card can be used at Farmer's Markets. It can also be used to buy seeds and plants to grow food for personal use.

FoodShare benefits cannot be used to buy non-food items. This means that things like alcoholic beverages, pet food, paper or cleaning products, vitamins or medicines cannot be purchased with your Quest card.

You can apply for FoodShare online at www.access.wisconsin.gov or you can call 1-800-362-3002. Spanish speakers can call 1-800-845-6136. WKRP 888-794-5820.

Food Programs Confusion

People often talk about receiving Food Stamps. In Wisconsin, the name of the program that issues funds for low-income people and families to purchase food is called FoodShare. People receiving this benefit use a Quest card (like a credit card) to make their purchases. The federal government also uses the acronym SNAP for the same program. If possible, please use the FoodShare name when requesting this benefit, or simply ask for help with paying for food.

Wisconsin FoodShare:

<http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/foodshare/>

Racine County Information:

<http://racinecounty.com/government/human-services/division-of-economic-support/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program>

SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance) program website:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/>