



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Governor Whitmer, MDHHS announce partnership with Michigan restaurants to provide hot meals to food assistance recipients**  
*Eligible restaurants can now enroll in program*

**LANSING, Mich.** – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is launching a new program that will give eligible food assistance recipients the opportunity to use their benefits to purchase restaurant meals.

Older adults over 60, people with a disability including those who receive Social Security Income (SSI) or other disability program benefits, and people experiencing homelessness are among those who are eligible.

“No Michigander should worry about how to put food on the table for themselves and their families, especially during a pandemic,” said Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. “This partnership with our restaurants will ensure people across the state have the support they need this winter. I am grateful for the restaurants that participate in this program and will continue to work around the clock to ensure support for every family. Remember, Michiganders: mask up, practice social distancing, and wash your hands frequently. We will get through this together.”

The goal of the Restaurant Meal Program (RMP) is to serve residents who face difficulty preparing their own food due to disability, age, or lack of kitchen access. MDHHS is opening the program for restaurants to enroll with the aim of providing diverse and affordable options for eligible participants across the state.

Restaurants can enroll beginning Dec. 22. MDHHS will announce at a later date when eligible food assistance recipients can start redeeming their benefits at participating restaurants.

Across Michigan, more than 180,000 seniors, 134,000 residents with disabilities and 1,200 residents experiencing homelessness will soon be able to use their Bridge Card to buy discounted meals at participating restaurants.

“MDHHS is always working to make it easier for residents to put food on the table for themselves and their families,” said Director Robert Gordon. “The Restaurant Meal Program provides an option for Michiganders who – for no fault of their own – find it difficult to prepare hot meals.”

Restaurants must first enroll in the program and be approved before eligible participants can make purchases. MDHHS will [publish a list of participating restaurants on its website](#) and encourages restaurants to advertise this benefit to their patrons directly.

Restaurants interested in partnering with MDHHS in this program are asked to [visit the MDHHS website](#), where they can learn more about program requirements and how to enroll. Participating restaurants must offer meals at concessional prices.

Eligible participants can buy meals at participating restaurants with their Bridge Card in a manner similar to purchasing groceries. As restaurants enroll in the program and are approved to provide this service, more information about food assistance recipient eligibility will be forthcoming. If a food assistance recipient feels they meet the criteria of being disabled or homeless, MDHHS encourages them to [contact their local MDHHS office](#).

RMP expands the list of options available to eligible participants who need hot prepared meals. MDHHS offers several options for providers to service prepared meals to food assistance recipients such as Meals on Wheels, meals at senior citizen centers/residential settings, drug/alcohol treatment programs, shelters for battered women and children, communal dining facilities (for the elderly and disabled only), group living arrangements, and homeless meal providers.

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