



STATE OF MICHIGAN

GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
LANSING

ELIZABETH HERTEL  
DIRECTOR

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
May 17, 2021

**CONTACT:** Bob Wheaton  
517-241-2112  
[WheatonB@michigan.gov](mailto:WheatonB@michigan.gov)

## **More Michigan households are eligible for additional food assistance in response to COVID-19**

LANSING, Mich. – The number of Michigan families eligible for additional food assistance in response to the COVID-19 pandemic will be increasing in May with everyone who is eligible now receiving an increased amount, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) announced.

An additional 350,000 families will receive the extra food assistance under approval from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service, bringing the total in Michigan receiving extra benefits due to the pandemic to more than 700,000.

“Michigan has made great progress towards getting ‘Vacc to Normal’ thanks to the safe, effective vaccines and efforts by millions of Michiganders who have gone above and beyond through the pandemic,” said Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. “However, many families are still facing food insecurity due to the health and economic challenges of the last 14 months. No one should go hungry in Michigan, especially in the midst of a pandemic, and I am proud of this step we are taking to continue helping families put food on the table.”

Beginning this month, all households that receive food assistance benefits, will be eligible for the additional amount. Previously families already receiving the maximum monthly amount of assistance were not eligible for additional benefits, while others received an increase bringing them to the maximum monthly allotment. Now all households will receive an increase of at least \$95 monthly, even if they are already receiving the maximum payment or are close to that amount. Households that received over \$95 to bring them to the maximum payment for their group size will continue to receive that larger amount.

Michigan previously approved the additional food assistance beginning in March 2020 – and now that is being extended for May 2021 with approval from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service. Households eligible for Food Assistance Program benefits will receive additional benefits in May to bring all current SNAP cases to the maximum monthly allowance for that group size. This change only applies to customers not currently receiving the maximum benefit amount.

-MORE-

Eligible clients will see additional food assistance benefits on their Bridge Card May 15-25. Additional benefits will be loaded onto Bridge Cards as a separate payment from the assistance that is provided earlier in the month.

More than 1.3 million people in Michigan receive federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits through the state's Food Assistance Program.

"We have worked with our federal partners throughout the pandemic to provide more access to food assistance because no one should have to worry about feeding their families – especially during these challenging times, said MDHHS Director Elizabeth Hertel. "I appreciate the USDA for working with us to help families who are need."

Below are the maximum allowable benefits for SNAP customers based on their respective household size:

- One Person: \$234
- Two Persons: \$430
- Three Persons: \$616
- Four Persons: \$782
- Five Persons: \$929
- Six Persons: \$1,114
- Seven Persons: \$1,232
- Eight Persons: \$1,408

The federal government is providing additional funding to states for food assistance under House Resolution 6201, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.

Eligible families do not need to re-apply to receive the additional benefits. People who receive food assistance can check their benefits balance on their Michigan Bridge Card by going online to [www.michigan.gov/MIbridges](http://www.michigan.gov/MIbridges) or calling a consumer service representative toll-free at 888-678-8914. They can ask questions about the additional benefits by calling or emailing their caseworker.

Customer service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Spanish and Arabic service is available. If you are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing or speech-impaired, call the Michigan Relay Center at 7-1-1.

Information around the COVID-19 outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at [Michigan.gov/Coronavirus](http://Michigan.gov/Coronavirus) and [CDC.gov/Coronavirus](http://CDC.gov/Coronavirus).

###