



Intersections Between Food Stamps and Other Programs

Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger

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*VTCECH is funded in part by the Food Stamp Program of the
U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

Fuel Assistance: The FSP gives people who get fuel assistance the highest deduction for shelter costs. This can increase monthly food stamp amounts for people who do not otherwise get the highest deduction. Applications available at Community Action.

Free School Meals: Kids in food stamp households can get free school meals if their school participates in the federal school breakfast or lunch program. Applications available at schools and on the web at vermontfoodhelp.com.

Lifeline and Link Up: People who are eligible for food stamps are also eligible for Lifeline, a monthly credit of at least \$13 to help households maintain phone service, and Link Up, which provides credit up to \$30 to pay half the cost of installing a phone line. Applications available from Department for Children and Families.

VHAP Premiums: Out of pocket medical expenses paid by people 60 and older and people with disabilities can be deducted from food stamp income. This may help some people qualify for food stamps and help others get more in food stamps each month.

TANF, Vermont Earned Income Tax Credit, SSI: People who receive any of these benefits are *categorically eligible* for food stamps. Even if they get \$0 in food stamps, they are still considered “eligible” and therefore qualify for free school meals, lifeline, etc.

- If a household is categorically eligible, it is eligible for food stamps no matter how much income or resources it has. The Department for Children and Families will look at the household’s net income (income after expenses) to determine the monthly food stamp benefit. Net income is only used to determine monthly benefits; it does not determine eligibility. If the net income is too high, the household will not get a monthly food stamp allotment, but is still considered eligible for food stamps.