



Acting as an authorized representative for a SNAP recipient

Whether you are shopping for a family member or a trusted friend or neighbor, you are helping to protect vulnerable Minnesotans. Acting as an authorized representative for a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipient comes with an obligation to use these benefits responsibly. Now that you have been designated to shop, here are a few things you need to know.

I volunteered to shop for my neighbor, how do we get started?

- The primary SNAP recipient will need to call their county or tribal social services office to add you as an authorized representative for shopping only. They will need your full name, current address and date of birth.
- The county or tribal office will speak with you to authorize you as a shopping-only representative. This can be done in-person or over the phone.

Shopping-only authorized representatives do not have access to the primary recipient's account information, and the primary recipient can cancel the authorization at any time by calling their county or tribal office.

How do I get a card?

- You will receive an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card in the mail to use on behalf of the primary SNAP recipient.
- Sign your name in ink on the white stripe on the back.
- Call or visit your county or tribal office to receive a temporary code, then log onto www.ebtedge.com to select a PIN. (If you live in the same home as the primary recipient, you can create a PIN at www.ebtedge.com or by calling 888-997-2227)

While you are waiting for your new EBT card to arrive, you can use the primary recipient's card.

Where can I use the card?

Most grocery stores accept EBT cards, which are used just like a debit card and will only allow you to purchase food within the value stored on the card.

How should I care for the card?

- Call customer service right away if your card is lost or stolen. Your neighbor or loved one's lost or stolen benefits will not be replaced if your card is stolen and/or misused.
- Do not let others use your card.
- Do not leave your card lying around, even at home.

What can I buy with a SNAP EBT card?

- These cards can be used **only** to purchase food that you will deliver to the primary SNAP recipient for their preparation and consumption.
- These cards **cannot** be used to purchase prepared hot foods.
- These cards **cannot** be used to purchase tobacco, alcohol or other non-food items (such as toilet paper, vitamins/supplements and pet food).

What are the consequences for card misuse?

- It is a crime to defraud the system, misuse these benefits or sell these benefits to others. You are entrusted to use these benefits properly to provide for the food needs of vulnerable people.
- It is illegal to use your EBT card to buy or attempt to buy tobacco or alcoholic beverages.
- Any criminal consequences for misuse may affect both you and the person receiving SNAP.

How do I know how much I can buy?

- Ideally, the person you are purchasing for will be able to tell you the value currently available on their card.
- Once you have set up your PIN, you can call the number on the back of the card to get a current balance. However, you should always consult with the primary recipient before shopping.

Remember, these benefits are how your loved one or neighbor ensures that they can access nutritious food. Your help in getting that food to their door is greatly appreciated, but is also a great responsibility. If or when the primary recipient is able to go to the grocery store again, they can remove you as an authorized representative by calling their county or tribal SNAP office. If you or the primary recipient have any questions, please call your county or tribal office.

