

## October 1, 2017 – September 30, 2018

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has released the new Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) maximum and minimum monthly allotments, and income eligibility standards effective for October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018. ([See USDA Memo](#))

The SNAP maximum and minimum monthly allotments have decreased slightly, income eligibility limits have increased, standard and shelter deductions have increased, and the resource limit remains unchanged.

- The SNAP maximum monthly allotments have decreased slightly: ranging from 1–1.4 percent. For example, the maximum allotment for a family of one decreased by \$2, to \$192, and for a family of four, by \$9 a month, to \$640.
- The minimum monthly SNAP allotment decreased by \$1, from \$16 to \$15.
- The net income limits for households increased by a range of 1.1–1.5 percent. For example, the net monthly income limit for a family of one increased by \$15, to \$1,005, and for a family of four, it increased by \$25 a month, to \$2,050.
- The monthly gross income limits for households increased by a range of 1.1–1.6 percent. For example, the gross income limit for a family of one increased by \$20, to \$1,307, and for a family of four, it increased by \$32 a month, to \$2,665.
- The monthly gross income limits for households where elderly disabled persons are a separate household increased by a range of 1–1.5 percent. For example, the gross income limit for a family of one increased by \$25, to \$1,659, and for a family of four, it increased by \$41 a month, to \$3,383.

- The monthly standard deduction increased by a range of \$2 to \$3. For example, the standard deduction for a family of one increased by \$3, to \$160 a month, and for a family of four, it increased by \$2, to \$170.
- The shelter cap value increased by \$18, to \$535.

Please refer to FRAC’s table, [Changes in Income Limits and Maximum and Minimum Benefits for SNAP](#), for a comparison between fiscal years 2017 and 2018.

## SNAP Benefit Formula Leaves Families Short

USDA adjusts the SNAP monthly food allotments for the cost of living by using a selected basket of food costs from the “food-at-home” series of the Consumer Price Index. The “food-at-home” series and the food basket costs both decreased slightly this year.

The basket of foods is selected based on USDA’s Thrifty Food Plan, which is inadequate. Research has shown that the current SNAP monthly allotments do not accurately reflect the real costs of affording a healthy diet. The annual adjustments will continue to leave most SNAP households short of the food purchasing power needed to get them through a month. USDA’s “Low-Cost Food Plan,” with its more adequate budget, better reflects the actual cost of purchasing a healthy diet. [H.R. 1276](#) would improve SNAP benefit adequacy by replacing the Thrifty Food Plan with the more adequate Low Cost Food Plan, increase the minimum benefit and the cap on the shelter deduction, and provide states with a path to standardizing the excess medical deduction.

The SNAP income limits and deductions increased at the same time the food allotments decreased. The SNAP income limits and deductions are adjusted using the inflation rate for the Consumer Price Index for all items (not only food items) and that overall index increased this year.