SNAP helps Minnesotans with low incomes to buy food.

More than 400,000 Minnesotans receive SNAP each month. Their incomes are below 165 percent of the federal poverty level, roughly $34,000 a year for a family of three.¹

SNAP does not meet all the food needs of Minnesotans with low incomes.

• The average monthly SNAP benefit for each household member is $110.
• The average SNAP benefit per person per meal is $1.22.²
• One in 10 Minnesotans, or 540,820 people, don’t have enough food for an active, healthy life.³
• In 2017, Minnesotans visited food shelves more than 3.4 million times, a record high.⁴
• Almost half of food shelf visits are by seniors and families with children.⁵

Many SNAP recipients are workers with low wages.

• 67 percent of families with children participating in SNAP are working.⁶
• Many SNAP recipients work while receiving SNAP, earning wages that are low enough to qualify for the program. Some apply for SNAP because they are unemployed. In both cases, more than half of their jobs are in health care, retail, hotel/restaurant and temporary agency industries.⁷ These jobs are often part-time, with high turnover.

SNAP pumped about $550 million into Minnesota’s economy in 2018.⁸

• More than 3,500 stores and many farmers markets have customers whose SNAP benefits help pay for groceries.
Minnesota streamlines assistance to poor children and their families.

• A provision in the farm bill allows Minnesota to integrate SNAP benefits with cash assistance in its welfare-to-work program, the Minnesota Family Investment Program, which serves roughly 30,000 families each month.
• This integration allows families and frontline workers to track only one benefit amount when income or household membership changes and have only one set of program rules with which to comply.
• The food portion of the integrated benefit can only be spent on food.

Since 2012, the number of adults without dependents receiving SNAP has fallen from 65,000 per month to fewer than 15,000 per month.9

• In November 2013, Minnesota had to re-impose time limits on adults without dependents in most counties. A statewide waiver to the time limit had been granted during the economic crisis.
• These adults have to be working or looking for a job for at least 20 hours per week in order to receive SNAP benefits beyond the time limit (typically three months in a three-year period).
• Local waivers still apply to areas of high unemployment in Minnesota including 12 American Indian reservations and tribal areas and 30 counties: Aitkin, Becker, Beltrami, Carlton, Cass, Clearwater, Cook, Cottonwood, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Isanti, Itasca, Kanabec, Kittson, Koochiching, Lake, Lake of the Woods, Mahnomen, Marshall, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Murray, Norman, Pennington, Pine, Red Lake, Roseau, St. Louis, Todd and Wadena.
• Many of these men and women struggle with low skills, poor health, and histories of incarceration.
• They often lose SNAP benefits before finding jobs and getting help to address their difficulties in finding and maintaining employment.

Services are available through SNAP Employment and Training in Minnesota.

• In Federal Fiscal Year 2018, Minnesota received $2.74 million from U.S. Department of Agriculture for SNAP Employment and Training services.
• The most common services provided include assessing individuals’ employability and helping them with job searches. A small fraction receive basic education, vocational services or social services.
• To create more options for SNAP recipients to gain skills and enter the workforce, Minnesota is working to leverage almost $12 million of state, local government, and community workforce services investments with the goal of accessing up to $6 million in a federal match.

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1 Minnesota Department of Human Services, SNAP and MFIP food portion caseload count.
7 Analysis done by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, 2011.
9 Minnesota Department of Human Services Economic Assistance and Employment Supports Division Research Unit