Take Action: INCREASE SNAP for Seniors & People with Disabilities

Spring 2022 Advocacy Toolkit
TOOLKIT PURPOSE

A guide for taking collective action around Pennsylvania's proposed increase to the minimum SNAP benefit for seniors and people with disabilities, including advocating to legislators and engaging supporters.

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The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the nation’s first line of defense against hunger. For every one meal that food banks provide, SNAP provides nine. SNAP helps millions of low-income Americans put food on the table by providing a monthly benefit that is based on household size, income, and other factors such as housing and heating costs. SNAP is targeted to help our most vulnerable neighbors, largely serving households that include children, seniors, and people with disabilities. While SNAP is a highly effective program, the minimum benefit (just $20 per month) does not stretch far enough.

**WHAT IS SNAP?**

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the nation’s first line of defense against hunger. For every one meal that food banks provide, SNAP provides nine. SNAP helps millions of low-income Americans put food on the table by providing a monthly benefit that is based on household size, income, and other factors such as housing and heating costs. SNAP is targeted to help our most vulnerable neighbors, largely serving households that include children, seniors, and people with disabilities. While SNAP is a highly effective program, the minimum benefit (just $20 per month) does not stretch far enough.

**THE PROPOSAL**

While SNAP is federally funded, Governor Wolf has proposed utilizing $14.333 million in state dollars to increase the minimum SNAP benefit for households with elderly or disabled members by $15 per month. This would bring the federally funded minimum benefit of $20 per month up to $35 per month. We hope to see this proposal included in the final FY22-23 state budget passed by the General Assembly.

**WHY IT MATTERS**

SNAP reduces the probability of food insecurity among older adults and individuals with disabilities with low incomes, improves mental health, frees up income for expenses like housing and medications, and is associated with lower health care costs. However, particularly as we face record inflation, the minimum SNAP benefit of $20 per month is simply too low to help those on a limited budget afford adequate nutrition. To limit the depth and duration of hardship, and to help close the SNAP participation gap among older adults, Pennsylvania should increase the minimum SNAP benefit for seniors and those with disabilities to $35/month.
TALKING POINTS

Investing state dollars to increase the minimum SNAP benefit for these vulnerable populations is a good policy because:

1) Pennsylvania seniors and those with disabilities living on fixed incomes simply cannot make ends meet

2) Providing a more adequate benefit can increase SNAP participation and draw down additional federal dollars to support food security

3) Access to SNAP is associated with reduced health care costs

4) SNAP is good for the local economy

Check out our FACT SHEET & share with your legislators, fellow advocates, and others who want to learn more

CLICK HERE FOR FACT SHEET
HOW TO TAKE ACTION

Sign and share the Organizational Sign-On Letter

Join our Social Media Storm May 25

Raise Awareness on Social Media

Keep an eye out for future actions! We'll be sure to keep you informed
ORG. SIGN-ON LETTER

We are circulating an organizational sign-on letter to the PA Senate and House Appropriations Committee chairs. Please add your organization's support, and invite others to sign-on as well! **Sign on by May 20th**

![Sign-on Letter Document]( HERE)

**View the sign-on letter document HERE**

**Fill out this GOOGLE FORM to sign on**

SNAP Increase Advocacy Toolkit
SOCIAL MEDIA STORM

ON MAY 25TH
11AM-2PM

Take to Twitter and Facebook to share why you support raising the minimum SNAP benefit!

What You Can Do:

- Post on behalf of your organization, or as an individual constituent

- **Tag your elected officials** and tell them why Pennsylvania should increase the minimum SNAP benefit for seniors and people with disabilities. Include a call to action

- Make it personal! Use real-life examples to explain how the current minimum benefit affects you and/or the people you serve, and how raising it would make a difference

- Add the hashtag #raiseSNAPminimumPA

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**EXAMPLE**

@Philabundance supports raising the minimum SNAP benefit for seniors and people with disabilities from $20 to $35/month because no one should have to choose whether to "eat, treat, or heat." @[ElectedOfficial] please urge appropriators to include this proposal in the final state budget #raiseSNAPminimumPA
SAMPLE SOCIAL POSTS

Social media is a powerful tool for community-building and advocacy, helping people engage with others, share resources, and stay informed.

Many people (including legislators) are not aware of the proposed SNAP minimum increase, nor how it could benefit vulnerable populations.

We need to make some noise! In addition to the Social Media Storm, use social media throughout the month to spread the word about this proposal and why it should pass!

SNAP reduces the probability of food insecurity among low-income seniors, improves mental health, frees up income for expenses like housing and medication, and reduces nursing home and hospitalization admissions and costs. It’s a wise investment to #raiseSNAPminimumPA

PA's seniors and people with disabilities living on fixed incomes simply cannot make ends meet. With soaring inflation, the minimum SNAP benefit (just $20/month) is not enough to cover rising food costs. It's time to #raiseSNAPminimumPA Learn more - bit.ly/SNAPIncreasePA

CLICK TO TWEET

CLICK FOR MORE SAMPLE SOCIAL POSTS