



# News Release

SOCIAL SECURITY

## **USDA and Social Security Administration Collaborate to Improve Nutrition Security through SNAP**

### **Cross-enrollment improves customer service, eliminates administrative burdens, and gets more people the services they need**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and the Social Security Administration (SSA) today announced a strengthened partnership to help connect Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. USDA and SSA's new joint agreement, or memorandum of understanding, will improve efficiency, helping to advance food and nutrition security and reduce the hurdles families face to obtain the government assistance they need. SSA continues its commitment to help people access SNAP benefits in two critical ways. SSA employees notify SSI applicants and recipients of their eligibility for SNAP. And, when everyone in a household is applying for or receiving SSI, SSA will help them apply for SNAP. Under federal law, FNS reimburses SSA for time and resources spent on SNAP screenings and applications.

The updated memorandum of understanding, which is renegotiated every five years, prioritizes efficiency by piloting alternatives to outdated paper-based application processes and collecting data to inform future improvements. Expanding the use of electronic applications and telephonic signatures will make it easier for SSI recipients to complete their SNAP application. SSA will also provide additional data to USDA on the number of SSI applicants not receiving SNAP and at what point they drop out of the application process.

"Social Security is committed to reducing barriers and ensuring people who are eligible for benefits receive them," said Acting Commissioner Kilolo Kijakazi. "Partnering with USDA to test more efficient ways to apply, share information, and help SSI families apply for SNAP assistance makes it easier for people to obtain the services they need."

"USDA is dedicated to working collaboratively with our federal partners to improve access to our nutrition assistance programs," said Stacy Dean, deputy under secretary for USDA's Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services. "Allowing SSI applicants and recipients to apply for SNAP with SSA prevents applicants from having to provide the

same paperwork to multiple offices and reduces burden on state and local administrators. We're continually working to make it easier for all people, but especially vulnerable populations — like adults and children with a disability or blindness and people age 65 or older — to access the nutrition assistance they need and deserve.”

This partnership supports Executive Order 13571 on Streamlining Service Delivery and Improving Customer Service and underscores the Biden-Harris Administration’s commitment to delivering better results for the American people by modernizing government programs and expanding equity in federal assistance programs. It also supports Pillar 1 of the Administration’s recently released [National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health](#), improving food access and affordability.

USDA’s FNS works to end hunger and improve food and [nutrition security](#) through a suite of more than [15 nutrition assistance programs](#), such as the school breakfast and lunch programs, WIC and SNAP. Together, these programs serve 1 in 4 Americans over the course of a year, promoting consistent and equitable access to healthy, safe, and affordable food essential to optimal health and well-being. FNS also provides science-based nutrition recommendations through the co-development of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. FNS’s report, “[Leveraging the White House Conference to Promote and Elevate Nutrition Security: The Role of the USDA Food and Nutrition Service](#),” highlights ways the agency will support the Administration’s [National Strategy](#), released in conjunction with the historic White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health in September 2022. To learn more about FNS, visit [www.fns.usda.gov](http://www.fns.usda.gov) and follow [@USDANutrition](#).

SSA has provided financial protection for our nation's people for over 85 years. With retirement, disability, and survivors benefits, Social Security is one of the most successful anti-poverty programs in our nation's history. The SSI program is a Federal income supplement program funded by general tax revenues (not Social Security taxes). SSI provides monthly payments to adults and children with a disability or blindness who have income and resources below specific financial limits. SSI payments are also made to people age 65 and older without disabilities who meet the financial qualifications. To learn more about the SSI program, visit [www.ssa.gov/benefits/ssi](http://www.ssa.gov/benefits/ssi). Visit [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) to learn more about SSA programs and services and visit [www.ssa.gov/socialmedia](http://www.ssa.gov/socialmedia) for options to follow SSA on social media.

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