New York's Combined Application Project (NYSCAP):
Automatically Enrolling Eligible SSI Recipients into SNAP

For more than two decades, New York has operated a Combined Application Project (CAP) called the New York State Combined Application Project (NYSCAP), which automatically enrolls single Supplemental Security Income (SSI) live-alone recipients in SNAP.

This guide provides information about how NYSCAP works, who is eligible, and how to maximize the NYSCAP benefit for those enrolled.

What Is a CAP?

CAPs are a partnership between the Social Security Administration (SSA), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), and state and local agencies to streamline SNAP application procedures for individuals receiving SSI benefits. The projects are designed to strengthen access to nutrition benefits for this vulnerable population.

NYS uses the standard CAP model, which includes simplified joint SNAP/SSI application processing by SSA as individuals apply for or are recertified for SSI. CAPs use standard benefit amounts and/or standard shelter expenses in the benefit calculation and require evaluations to ensure cost neutrality is maintained.

Automatic Enrollment into NYSCAP

CAPs automatically enroll single Supplemental Security Income (SSI) live-alone recipients into SNAP. Separate SNAP applications, interviews, or verifications are not needed to be automatically enrolled.

The SNAP office/HRA center uses monthly data matching to find eligible NYSCAP participants from the list of newly approved SSI recipients in New York State.

NYSCAP is available only to:

- SSI live-alone recipients—those classified as "living alone" by the Social Security Administration (SSA) (i.e., live by themselves and pay their food, shelter, and clothing expenses).
- This code, called an "A/A," designates a federal SSI living code of 'A' and a State Supplement code of 'A.'

Adapted from information provided by the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance
Prepared by Hunger Solutions New York
Updated January 2025

SSA sets these codes, not the SNAP office/HRA center. Only SSA can code SSI recipients as live-alone.

OTDA clarified the following in 24-ADM-09:

- SSI recipients who live in a dwelling with a spouse but are coded A/A can participate in NYSCAP as their own separate SNAP household unless their spouse applies for SNAP, in which case they would need to be on a SNAP case together and would not be eligible for NYSCAP.
- If a married couple has two NYSCAP cases opened automatically, they can both have a separate case in the same dwelling based on each being coded A/A. However, if these two married individuals were to apply outside of the NYSCAP auto-enrollment process, the normal mandatory household composition rules would apply, and they would need to be on the same SNAP case together and would not be eligible for NYSCAP.
- SSI couples and recipients in other living arrangement categories cannot participate in NYSCAP, but they may be eligible for SNAP through the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP)—another senior/disabled SNAP initiative in NYS—or through the regular SNAP application process.

18- to 21-year-old SSI Recipients Coded A/A by SSA

SSI participants ages 18 to 21 can be coded A/A, designating them as SSI live-alone, even if they reside with their parents. These SSI recipients can participate in NYSCAP as a separate SNAP household if the parents do not receive SNAP benefits. If both the parents and the 18- to 21-year-old SSI live-alone are either current SNAP participants or are applying for SNAP, then this family must apply together as one household under regular SNAP eligibility rules.

NYSCAP Enrollees Must Use Benefits Within 90 Days

A person enrolled in NYSCAP must redeem their SNAP benefits within the first 90 days of the auto-enrollment. This means they must use their EBT card at a local SNAP vendor to purchase food. By doing this, the enrollee agrees to participate in SNAP and provides an electronic application signature allowing them to receive monthly SNAP benefits. If benefits are not accessed within 90 days, the NYSCAP case will be automatically closed by the SNAP office, and benefits will be removed and will not be restored.

SNAP Benefits and Budgeting Under NYSCAP

Enrollees in NYSCAP will initially receive a minimum benefit level that can be as low as $23. However, by filling out and returning the NYSCAP Statewide SNAP Case Information Collection Sheet (LDSS-4841) included with their NYSCAP opening notice (includes questions about shelter and utility costs), benefits may be adjusted up to the maximum SNAP benefit level—as high as $292.

There are no negative actions for not returning the LDSS-4841. The Information Collection Sheet gives enrollees the opportunity to provide and, if necessary, verify information that may qualify the household for a higher SNAP benefit.

Under NYSCAP, the SNAP budgeting/benefit is individualized. NYSCAP enrollees will have their SNAP case opened with their actual SSI and any other income already budgeted but with no shelter, medical, or other deductions other than the standard deduction.

The NYSCAP Statewide SNAP Case Information Collection Sheet (LDSS-4841) is provided to notify the SNAP office of the enrollee's circumstances. Once the SNAP office receives a completed LDSS-4841 and any needed documents, the enrollee's SNAP budget and benefit amount must be updated using standard SNAP budgeting.

Under NYSCAP rules, enrollees will automatically receive a reminder notice six months after the opening of their NYSCAP case if they have not returned the LDSS-4841.

- This notice provides the enrollee with another opportunity to share information on their shelter and utility costs with the SNAP office to maximize the household's SNAP benefit.
- Households that do not respond to this notice will not be subject to negative action. However, the household will continue to receive $23 in monthly SNAP benefits instead of getting a benefit that could be as high as $292.

Upon receiving a completed LDSS-4841, the SNAP office must update the SNAP budget using standard SNAP budgeting rules, including:

- Adding the actual shelter expense,
- Determining the Heating/Cooling Standard Utility Allowance, and
- Adding in any medical expenses eligible under SNAP rules.
- **Adjusting the benefit amount based on the above additions.**

Adapted from information provided by the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance
Prepared by Hunger Solutions New York
Updated January 2025

NYSCAP enrollees must meet the same SNAP verification requirements as all other SNAP cases, except:

- They **may self-declare all shelter-related expenses** (e.g., rent, mortgage, taxes, and insurance on the dwelling) unless questionable.

Interim Report

Households participating in NYSCAP will receive an interim report called the NYSCAP SNAP Case Interim Report (LDSS-4836, LDSS-4836 NYC) at the midpoint of their certification period.

The interim report is sent at the **18-month point of their 36-month certification period.**

The following **interim reporting** rules apply:

- The NYSCAP SNAP Case Interim Report (LDSS-4836), which collects information about the households needed to complete a SNAP budget using standard SNAP budgeting procedures, ***must be responded to or the SNAP case will be closed****. This can include mailing a completed form back to the SNAP office or calling the SNAP office and having a caseworker document the responses in the case record.*
- If the interim report is returned but there is not enough information to complete a SNAP budget, the SNAP office must contact the household to clarify or request needed documentation.

NYSCAP Recertification

Under SNAP rules a household is only authorized eligible for SNAP benefits for a specified, limited period of time, called the certification period. At the end of that period, the SNAP case is automatically closed unless the SNAP Office authorizes a new certification period. This process is called a recertification.

The **NYSCAP** certification period lasts up to **36 months**.

At the end of a certification period, **NYSCAP households must**:

- Follow the recertification process in place for all SNAP recipients in order to continue to receive SNAP benefits.
- Complete and return a SNAP application/recertification form that will be sent in a notice of expiration.
- Follow regular SNAP documentation requirements.

NYSCAP households who are found eligible when recertifying will be given a new 36-month certification period for SNAP.

Participants who lose SSI live-alone status will be removed from NYSCAP; however, they can still receive regular SNAP benefits if they apply and are found eligible.

Find Out More:

OTDA policy memos concerning NYSCAP:

- 24-ADM-09 The New York State Combined Application Project (NYSCAP)
- 21TA/DC080—Preliminary Guidance Regarding the New York State Combined Application Project (NYSCAP)

NYSCAP forms and resources:

- NYSCAP Statewide Information Collection Sheet
  - LDSS-4841 English and Spanish
- NYSCAP Interim Report
  - LDSS-4836 English and Spanish
  - LDSS-4836 NYC English and Spanish

The Nutrition Outreach and Education Program (NOEP) offers free and confidential services to connect potentially eligible individuals and families with SNAP benefits. NOEP Coordinators provide pre-screening, application, and recertification assistance and help resolve issues with SNAP cases. Visit FoodHelpNY.org to find a NOEP near you.

For More Information

If you have any questions about this article or any other SNAP-related question, please contact Dawn Secor at (518) 436-8757, ext. 142, or dawn.secor@hungersolutionsny.org

Adapted from information provided by the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance
Prepared by Hunger Solutions New York
Updated January 2025