Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services

LOUISIANA COMBINED APPLICATION PROJECT (LaCAP)

Program Information and Rights and Responsibilities
Keep This For Future Reference

What is LaCAP?

LaCAP is a food assistance program for Louisiana residents who are at least 60 years of age and receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI). You can buy food that meets your nutritional needs and helps you have better health through LaCAP. It is a simplified version of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). If you are eligible for LaCAP, you will receive a Louisiana Purchase Card and SNAP benefits will be automatically deposited into your account every month. There are three standard allotment amounts in LaCAP. Depending on shelter costs, LaCAP participants will receive $35, $82 or $173. In order to receive the most benefits possible, you need to tell us about your housing expenses. Failure to report any of the expenses listed below will be seen as a statement by your household that you do not want to receive credit for the unreported expense. LaCAP cases are certified for 36 months.

Who is eligible?

You may be eligible for LaCAP if you are receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and you:

- Are age 60 or older,
- Are not institutionalized or otherwise ineligible for SNAP benefits due to immigration status, or an Intentional Program Violation,
- Live alone or buy and prepare your food separately or agree to buy and prepare your food separately from the other people who live with you, and
- Are not living with your spouse or your own child who is under 22 years of age.

How do you apply for LaCAP?

- Complete the Louisiana Combined Application Project Enrollment Form.
- Return the completed form to any parish/district Department of Children and Family Services, Economic Stability office.
    - There are no telephone or face-to-face interviews required.
    - There are no verification requirements.

What happens after we receive your enrollment form?

- You will be assigned a worker.
- Your worker will determine your eligibility.
- We will send you a letter within 30 days of the date we receive your enrollment form to let you know if you are eligible or not. If you are eligible, the letter will also tell you the amount of your benefits and when they will begin.
- If you are not currently certified for regular SNAP benefits, we will send a Louisiana Purchase Card to you within 7 days from the date we received your enrollment form or when your case is certified, whichever comes first. Receipt of the card does not necessarily mean that you have been determined eligible for benefits. If you are certified, you will be able to activate your card and your benefits will be deposited into an account each month. When you activate your card, you will select a Personal Identification Number (PIN). You will use your Louisiana Purchase Card and PIN to access your benefits to help pay for your groceries. It will be your responsibility to keep your card and PIN safe. Anyone who knows your PIN can access your benefits with your card.

Do you have to get assistance for food through LaCAP?

No, it is your choice. You can get food assistance through LaCAP or through regular SNAP. If you receive benefits through LaCAP and you want to change to regular SNAP, you can do so at any time. You may qualify for more benefits through regular SNAP if you:

- Pay more than $35 per month in out-of-pocket medical expenses, or
- Pay more than $552 per month for shelter costs.

What if your circumstances change?

You may report changes in your circumstances, but you are not required to do so. If your shelter costs increase, you may want to report this since it could mean that your LaCAP benefits would increase. You may report this by calling 1-888-LA HELPU (1-888-524-3578). The Social Security Administration will let us know if you become ineligible for SSI, move out of the state or become institutionalized. These changes in your circumstances may cause you to become ineligible for benefits through LaCAP.

What are your rights and responsibilities?

When you receive benefits from the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, you have certain rights and responsibilities that are explained below.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992.

Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

You may file a civil rights complaint with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) by completing the Civil Rights Complaint Form. Turn the form in to a local office; mail it to DCFS Civil Rights Section, P O Box 1887, Baton Rouge, LA 70821; email DCFS.BureauofCivilRights@LA.GOV, or; call (225) 342-0309. You may file a civil rights complaint with DCFS and USDA or only DCFS.

A program complaint may be filed with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) by emailing DCFS.Webmaster.DCFS@LA.GOV or by calling 225-342-2342.

- **Fair Hearing** - If you do not agree with any decision made on your case, you have the right to ask that your case be reviewed. You can tell us that you want a fair hearing in writing, in person, or by calling this office. You have the right to look at your case record before the hearing.

- **Confidentiality** - All the information you give us is confidential. This means that we cannot give information about your case to other people except under special conditions. Examples of those conditions include official review by other State and Federal agencies or Federal, State and private collection agencies for the collection of claims against SNAP benefits. Information from your case may also be given to law enforcement officials for the purpose of catching persons fleeing to avoid the law and for investigation of a felony or probation/parole violation.

- **Voter Registration** – If you are not registered to vote where you live now, you may indicate that you would like to apply to register to vote on the LaCAP Enrollment Form. Please note that the information you give to the agency will remain confidential and will be used only for voter registration purposes. Applying to register or refusing to register to vote will not affect the amount of assistance or services that you may receive from the Department of Children and Family Services. DCFS will assist you with completing a Louisiana Voter Registration Application unless assistance is refused.

  You may fill out the application form in private.

- **Cooperation** - You have to cooperate by providing the information we need to determine your eligibility for benefits. You will be expected to cooperate if a home visit is necessary to determine your eligibility. If your case is selected for a quality control review by state or federal reviewers, you have to cooperate with them.

Are there penalties in LaCAP?

If you knowingly report incorrect information, your benefits may be denied, reduced, or ended and you may be subject to criminal prosecution.

If you do the following:	**You will:**
● Hide information or give false information ● Trade or sell SNAP benefits or EBT cards (Louisiana Purchase Cards) ● Use SNAP benefits to buy ineligible items, which includes alcohol, tobacco, hot food, and any food sold for on-premises consumption. Nonfood items are also not allowed ● Use someone else's SNAP benefits ● Pay for food purchased on credit with SNAP benefits	Lose your SNAP benefits for: ● 1 year for the first violation ● 2 years for the second violation ● Permanently for the third violation You may also be fined up to $250,000 or imprisoned for up to 20 years or both
● Trade SNAP benefits for illegal drugs	Lose your SNAP benefits for: ● 2 years for the first violation ● Permanently for the second violation
● Trade SNAP benefits for firearms, ammunition, or explosives ● Trade, buy, or sell SNAP benefits of $500 or more	● Lose your SNAP benefits permanently
● Give false information about who you are or where you live in order to receive benefits in more than one case at the same time	● Lose your SNAP benefits for 10 years