DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

News stories

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Minnesotans with low incomes now able to purchase food online using SNAP benefits

May 28, 2020

Almost 400,000 people who use the federally funded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in Minnesota now have more options to buy food safely. Starting May 28, 2020, they can purchase groceries online using their Electronic Benefit Transfer cards.

For now, Walmart and Amazon are the only online retailers (https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fns.usda.gov%2Fsnap%2Fonline-purchasing-pilot&data=02%7C01%7Camy.barrett%40state.mn.us%7Ceac62f1ee34e41d2eff808d801b5df2a%7Ceb14b04624c445198f26b89c2159828c%7C0%7C0%7C63726122792 approved by the United States Department of Agriculture for SNAP purchases and available in Minnesota. The Minnesota Department of Human Services is encouraging other retailers to seek approval from the USDA so that SNAP recipients have more options. DHS oversees SNAP, which counties and tribal governments administer.

“Safe access to healthy food is important for all of us,” said Human Services Commissioner Jodi Harpstead. “By enabling SNAP recipients to purchase food online, we are increasing access to food and enabling safe purchasing. This is vital to maintain social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic while helping Minnesotans put healthy food on their tables.”

SNAP helps Minnesotans meet their food needs and avoid hunger. The average monthly SNAP benefit for each household member is $109 in Minnesota.

To be eligible to receive SNAP benefits, Minnesotans have to have an annual income below 165% of the federal poverty level. In fiscal year 2019, that was about $34,000 a year for a family of three. Of SNAP recipients in that year:

- 45% were children.
- 44% were in Greater Minnesota.
- 13% were people with disabilities.
- 13% were older adults.

For more information, see the SNAP fact sheet (https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-5738-ENG). To apply for SNAP benefits, contact your county or tribal human services office (PDF) (https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-0005-ENG), or go to ApplyMN (https://applymn.dhs.mn.gov/online-app-web/spring/public/process-login?execution=e2s1) (applymn.dhs.mn.gov) or call the Minnesota Food helpline at 651-486-9860 in the Twin Cities metropolitan area or 888-711-1151 in Greater Minnesota.

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5/28/2020 8:57:30 AM

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