

Overview of SNAP Policy: Washington’s adoption of flexibilities under Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) for SNAP receipt has expanded eligibility for food stamps to more families. Importantly, the state has **increased the gross income limit to 200% FPL**. Since Washington has **removed its asset test** for BBCE-eligible households applying for SNAP, families applying for SNAP can retain their savings and still receive nutritional assistance – an important determinant for economic mobility.

Treating child support payments to non-household members as income exclusions rather than deductions expands eligibility to more families. By **providing families that are losing access to TANF cash assistance with transitional SNAP benefits for several months**, Washington offers more consistent support to low-income families through a challenging period.

The state **extends 12-month recertification period to all households**; enables parents to **report income changes only when income rises above eligibility limits**; and **offers online services for its initial application, change reporting, and renewal processes**. These services ease the administrative burdens that can limit families from accessing nutritional support even when they are eligible.

Washington has **fully lifted the lifetime ban on eligibility for parents convicted of drug-related felonies** and **extended federal work requirement guidelines for student parents** by exempting those who are enrolled at least half time in any accredited school or in training. In addition, Washington uses state funds to **provide supplemental food assistance through SNAP to some immigrant families who are currently not eligible for nutritional support under federal guidelines**.

Assessment of SNAP Policy: Washington’s **extension of income eligibility to 200% FPL** effectively reduces benefit cliffs for working parents as they earn higher incomes. In addition, **providing nutritional assistance to some federally ineligible immigrant households with children by using state funds through the Food Assistance Plan** benefits children’s development and supports economic security, particularly for newly-arrived families.¹

¹ For research detailing effects of some state-level policies and administrative practices on children and families, see <https://www.nccp.org/ec-profiles-pes-policies-related-research-and-resources/#parenting>.

Washington's Food Stamps (SNAP) Policy		
WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR FOOD STAMPS?		
Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
Gross income limit How much can family members earn while being eligible?	\$4,303/month (200% FPL for a Washington family of three in 2024).	N/A
Asset Limit How many assets can families retain in savings while still being eligible for food stamps?	There is no limit on savings for families who are BBCE-eligible.	N/A
Transitional Benefit Alternative Does Washington provide families who are losing TANF cash assistance with automatic SNAP eligibility for a few months?	Yes.	N/A
* Current administrative guidelines may present different income amounts depending on when updates to the current federal poverty guidelines are implemented.		
ADDITIONAL RULES AND RESTRICTIONS		
Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
Treatment of child support payments to non-household members Does Washington treat child support payments made to non-household members as an income exclusion rather than a deduction?	Yes.	N/A
Lifting drug felony bans Are persons convicted of drug-related felonies eligible for nutritional assistance?	Yes.	N/A

<p>Extending eligibility to some federally ineligible noncitizens using state assistance programs</p> <p>Has Washington extended SNAP eligibility to immigrants who are ineligible for SNAP under federal guidelines?</p>	<p>Yes. Some immigrant families who are ineligible under federal guidelines can qualify for the state’s Food Assistance Plan.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS</p>		
<p>Flexibility</p>	<p>Current policy</p>	<p>Potential improvement</p>
<p>Less frequent recertification periods</p> <p>Has Washington extended the recertification period to 12 months for all recipients?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Online services for all application processes</p> <p>Does Washington offer online services for its initial benefit application, reporting of changes, and renewal?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>	<p>N/A</p>