

Anchorage Reentry Coalition

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SNAP Update: What Changes Oct. 1, 2026 for Justice-Involved Alaska

Federal SNAP updates take effect October 1, 2026, with slightly higher benefits and new income limits for Alaska. For people leaving prison or jail, the bigger issues are the work rules and Alaska's state waiver, which ends October 31, 2026.

Source: [AK Department of Public Benefits/DOH](#)

What Changed Today

- **New maximum benefits (family of four), in effect through September 30, 2027**
 - Urban Alaska: \$1,306 (was \$1,285)
 - Rural 1: \$1,666 (was \$1,639)
 - Rural 2: \$2,027 (was \$1,995)
- **Income limits**
 - Single adult: \$2,162 gross / \$1,663 net per month
 - Family of four: \$4,469 gross / \$3,438 net per month
- **Minimum benefit:** \$31 urban, \$40 Rural 1, \$49 Rural 2.
- **Asset limit:** will stay the same at \$3,000. It's \$4,750 for households with someone 60 or older or a person with a disability.
- **State cost shift:** Alaska now pays 75% of SNAP administrative costs, up from 50%. Processing could slow down.

How This Affects People Leaving Prison or Jail

- **Work requirements now cover adults 18–64** (it was 18–54)
 - Adults without dependents who aren't exempt get only 3 months of SNAP in 36 months unless they work or train at least 80 hours a month.

- **Where someone lives matters**
 - Outside Anchorage, the Good Faith Exemption waiver means the time limit doesn't apply through October 31, 2026.
 - In the Municipality of Anchorage, the time limit already applies.
- **Groups the waiver keeps exempt for now**
 - Adults ages 56–64
 - Households with children ages 14–17
 - Veterans
 - People experiencing homelessness (this matters a lot for people released without stable housing)
 - Youth ages 18–24 leaving foster care
- **Ongoing federal exemption:** Alaska Native and American Indian people are exempt from the time limit no matter what the waiver says.
- **Drug felony rule:** People with drug felony convictions can get SNAP if they are meeting court-ordered treatment and parole or probation conditions.

What's Coming Next

- **October 31, 2026:** The waiver expires. No public renewal notice had been found as of today.
- **Possible renewal:** Federal guidance lets Alaska keep using good-faith exemptions until December 31, 2028 at the latest. Area waivers are also allowed where unemployment is 1.5 times the national rate.
- **If the waiver isn't renewed**
 - The time limit could reach people releasing to any Alaska community.
 - The extra exemptions above (veterans, people experiencing homelessness, foster youth, ages 56–64) may end.
- **2027:** States with SNAP error rates above 6% will have to pay part of benefit costs.

Tips for Reentry Staff and Partners

- Help people apply as close to release as possible. *(file SNAP application on or right after release day. People in jail or prison can't get SNAP while they're inside, and Alaska doesn't have a pre-release application. The one exception is people who are applying for SSI. SNAP benefits start the day the DPA receives page 7 of the application with your legal name, address and signature. The rest of the application can come later.)*

- Write down any homelessness, medical or other exemption at intake.
- Connect anyone living in Anchorage to SNAP Employment & Training so they can meet the 80-hour requirement, where the work time limit already applies.
- REQUIRED: Make sure there is access to a state ID. Release or parole papers, a Social Security number, and an address. A shelter address can work.
- For drug felony convictions, proof of probation or parole compliance, treatment, or a reentry plan. Alaska's application asks about each of these, be prepared to provide documentation if asked.

Resources and Contact

- [Alaska Division of Public Assistance – SNAP](#)
Online at myalaska.state.ak.us, or in person at a local Division of Public Assistance office. Call 1-800-478-7778 for help with the form.
- [DPA Public Assistance Application: Here's the Application!](#)
- [Food Bank of Alaska](#) has free SNAP Outreach Team that helps Alaskans apply for SNAP, renew it, or check on a case. The team doesn't decide who qualifies, the Division of Public Assistance (DPA) does.

SNAP team contacts:

Phone: 907-222-3119 or toll-free 844-222-3119

Text the word "SNAP" to 907-891-8913. You'll get a few quick questions to check if you might qualify.

Email: snap@foodbankofalaska.org

In person at monthly outreach events. The schedule is on their website.

main office: 2192 Viking Dr., Anchorage. It's open Monday–Friday, 8am–4pm, at 907-272-3663

Phone lines get busy, so the Food Bank says texting or emailing usually gets a faster answer.