

## One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA)

### Frequently Asked Questions on SNAP

July 2025

#### What is the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA)?

On July 4, President Trump signed the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), a large budget reconciliation bill, into law. The Senate and House of Representatives narrowly passed this version of [HR 1](#) on July 1 and July 3, respectively.

The OBBBA makes sweeping changes across the U.S. immigration system on enforcement, work authorization, fees, and access to services like Medicaid and SNAP.

#### What is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly called food stamps, helps low-income households purchase food and groceries. Eligible recipients are issued a debit card that they can use to make food purchases for their household.

#### Who has been eligible for SNAP?

Prior to the enactment of the OBBBA, U.S. citizens and certain lawfully present non-citizens have been eligible for SNAP benefits if they meet other income and non-financial requirements for the program. Lawfully present non-citizen groups eligible for SNAP included **refugees, asylees, victims of trafficking, Amerasians, Cuban and Haitian entrants, Iraqi and Afghan special immigrant visa (SIV) holders, and Compact of Free Association (COFA) citizens from the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, and Palau.**

SNAP “is not and has never been available to undocumented non-citizens,” according to the [U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food and Nutrition Service](#), which administers SNAP at the federal level.

#### How was SNAP eligibility changed for immigrants under the OBBBA?

Under Section 10108 titled “Alien SNAP eligibility,” the OBBBA amends federal law to shorten the list of eligible populations for SNAP. The only groups who remain eligible for SNAP are:

- U.S. citizens
- Certain U.S. lawful permanent residents
- Cuban and Haitian entrants
- Compact of Free Association citizens from the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, and Palau

Section 10108 eliminates text in the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 that made refugees eligible for SNAP, thus rendering refugees now ineligible for SNAP. The rewritten text also excludes other immigrant groups from SNAP eligibility, such as asylees, victims of trafficking, people granted a withholding of removal, survivors of domestic violence who have filed a self-petition under the Violence Against Women Act, and persons granted humanitarian parole for a period of at least one year.

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**When do the SNAP changes take effect?**

There is no provision in Section 10108 that delays the implementation of the SNAP eligibility changes for a later fiscal or calendar year. So, we expect eligibility changes to be made official soon. However, the pace of SNAP changes taking effect at the individual household level may depend on a variety of factors.

We expect the U.S. Department of Agriculture to issue updated guidance based on the enactment of the OBBBA. U.S. states, territories, and the District of Columbia – which certify household eligibility and issue benefits for SNAP – would then need to implement the new eligibility requirements.

[Federal regulations](#) allow up to four months for states to implement SNAP eligibility changes and that “non-income eligibility factors shall be deferred until the household’s scheduled recertification.” In other words, current SNAP recipients [could](#) see the impact of the change at their next recertification with their respective state agency.

**What about when refugees or asylees get a green card? Will they become eligible for SNAP then?**

Lawful permanent residents (LPRs) or green card holders remain a SNAP-eligible population– and refugees and asylees regularly apply to adjust their status to LPR or green card status. LPRs who meet other SNAP requirements have traditionally been eligible after a five-year waiting period, although that period can be waived if they meet [another requirement](#) like being a child under 18, being blind or disabled, or having a U.S. military connection.

We expect more clarity on this point from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s implementing guidance.

**What is the expected impact of the SNAP changes?**

The SNAP provisions of the OBBBA will increase food and economic insecurity among refugees and other humanitarian entrants. This change did not occur in isolation. Rather, assistance to lawfully admitted refugees in their initial months and years in the United States is under threat by recent policy changes, such as [reduced Refugee Cash and Medical Assistance \(RCA/RMA\) eligibility](#) or a proposed end to federal funding in Fiscal Year 2026 for Refugee Support Services (RSS) and Transition and Medical Services (TAMS) in the Office of Refugee Resettlement.

**What are ways I can support those impacted?**

Donate to food pantries, refugee resettlement agencies, and other mutual aid groups that will need to meet the rising community needs. Join Global Refuge’s advocacy in support of Refugee and Entrant Assistance (REA) funding by using [this script](#) with your Senators and Representative.

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