**How will the "Big Beautiful Bill" change Medicaid /SNAP Benefits in Wash. State**

**By way of background**

**Washington receives over $13 billion in federal funding for Medicaid, according to fiscal year 2023 data from the state Office of Financial Management. The state chips in another $8 billion, one of the largest categories of spending in its operating budget.**

**As of last month, nearly 2 million Washington residents were enrolled in Apple Health, including over 850,000 children, according to the state**[**Health Care Authority**](https://hca-tableau.watech.wa.gov/t/51/views/ClientDashboard-Externalversion/AppleHealthClientDashboard?%3AisGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y&%3Aembed=y)**, which oversees the program.**

**Also looming is the expiration of expanded tax credits for the Affordable Care Act that allowed more people to purchase insurance. That change and others to the federal health care law could cost another 79,000 residents in Washington their coverage, according to the congressional analysis.**

**Nationwide, this would bring the total to 13.7 million people with lost coverage by 2034.**

**The bill also would stop coverage for gender-affirming care for transgender people and reproductive care through Planned Parenthood. Washington state Senate Majority Leader Jamie Pedersen, D-Seattle, was among**[**more than 500 legislators**](https://sixrepro.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/PPFA-letter-of-support-from-state-lawmakers.pdf)**across the country who called on congressional leadership this week to preserve Medicaid funding for Planned Parenthood services.**

**Meanwhile, cuts to federal food stamp benefits — known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP — would shift $300 million in annual costs to Washington, according to Ferguson’s office.**

**Stricter work requirements:**The bill extends [SNAP work requirements](https://www.propel.app/blog/snap-work-requirements-full-guide/) to more Americans than ever before. More people will need to work or volunteer at least 20 hours per week or participate in training programs to keep their benefits—and many people who were previously exempt from work requirements will now have to show they meet them or risk losing their SNAP benefits.

**States pay more:** Starting in fiscal year 2028, states may be required to pay a portion of food benefit costs for the first time in SNAP's history. Previously, states only paid administrative costs, not the actual food benefits. If the cost burdens shift more onto states, that could affect how benefits are administered in the future.

**Limitations on future benefit increases:** The bill restricts future updates to the Thrifty Food Plan, which determines how much money people get in SNAP benefits. This means SNAP benefits may increase by less over time.

**Utility allowance cuts:** About 600,000 low-income households may lose some of their monthly SNAP benefit amount because of changes in how utility expenses are calculated.

**Changes to immigrant eligibility:** The bill limits SNAP eligibility to U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents. Previously, certain [immigrant groups](https://www.propel.app/snap/can-undocumented-immigrants-get-snap/) like refugees, people seeking asylum, survivors of domestic violence, and victims of trafficking who haven't become permanent residents were eligible for benefits.

**What are the new work requirements for SNAP?**

The bill will dramatically expand the rules about who must meet work requirements to keep their SNAP benefits, which may mean that, once these rules go into effect, you’ll need to prove you meet the updated work requirements or lose your benefits.

Here's what’s changing with SNAP work requirements:

**New age limits:** Able-bodied adults ages 55 through 64 without dependent children and parents of children 14 and older must now work at least 20 hours per week or participate in training programs. Before, this only applied to people up to age 54. Roughly 900,000 adults in this age group would be affected.

**Parents with teenage children:** Parents whose youngest dependent child is 14 or older must now meet work requirements—although kids will keep getting benefits even if their caretakers lose them.

**Veterans and vulnerable groups:** Veterans, people experiencing homelessness, and former foster youth must now meet work requirements. About 270,000 people in these groups would be affected.

**Harder to get waivers:** States can only waive work requirements in areas where unemployment is above 10 percent. This makes it much harder for states to help people who can't find work. About 1.1 million people live in high-unemployment areas that wouldn't qualify for waivers under the new rules.

If you don't meet these work requirements, you can only get SNAP benefits for three months in a three-year period.

Over 5 million people— [roughly 1 in 8 SNAP recipients](https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/by-the-numbers-senate-republican-leaderships-reconciliation-bill-takes)—including 800,000 children and more than half a million adults who are 65 or older or have disabilities, live in households that face the risk of losing some or all food assistance due to these work requirement expansions.

**How big are the SNAP cuts?**

The bill cuts federal funding for SNAP by $186 billion through 2034, according to the Congressional Budget Office. This is the largest cut to food assistance in history.

The cuts could be even bigger if states decide to reduce or change their SNAP programs rather than pay the new costs.

But how much your monthly benefit amount will be affected will vary depending on your situation, and in the immediate future, your benefits will continue to arrive as usual.

**Work requirement impacts:**If someone in your household loses SNAP due to work requirements, your family's benefit could change significantly. For instance, a single mother with one child who loses benefits for herself would see their food assistance drop from a maximum of $536 monthly to $292 monthly.

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**Utility allowance cuts:** About 600,000 households would lose some of their monthly food benefit amount because of changes in utility expense calculations.

**Reduction of future increases:** All SNAP participants will likely see their benefits grow less than they might have over time because of restrictions on future benefit updates.

**When will these changes to SNAP happen?**

If you currently receive SNAP benefits, they are unlikely to change immediately. Expect your deposits to continue as usual for now. The bill passed in July, but changes to SNAP will happen at different times.

New work requirements and utility allowance cuts could go into effect right away, but states will need time to update their systems. Other changes will be phased in over the next few years.

SNAP benefits issued on your [EBT card](https://www.propel.app/snap/what-is-an-ebt-card/) don’t last forever, and depending on your state, you need to spend them on [SNAP-eligible food](https://www.propel.app/snap/snap-eligible-food/) before they expire.

And then there’s the question of how long you’ll get SNAP benefits once you’re approved—most people need to [recertify every 6 to 12 months](https://www.propel.app/snap/food-stamp-recertification-how-does-it-work/) or risk losing benefits. Here’s everything you need to know about how long SNAP benefits last.

A screenshot of a phone

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**Propel is the #1-rated EBT balance checking app**

[Download](https://joinproviders.onelink.me/5wpY/i27g9dsr?af_ad=top-app-cta&af_sub3=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.propel.app%2Fsnap%2Fhow-long-do-snap-benefits-last%2F)

**Do SNAP benefits expire if you don’t use them right away?**

Yes, unused SNAP benefits expire eventually, but **not**at the end of the month. Any unused money from your monthly SNAP deposit [will roll over to the next month](https://www.propel.app/snap/yes-food-stamps-roll-over-to-the-next-month/).

But eventually, unused SNAP benefits on inactive accounts will expire, and they can do so in two ways: Offline storage at three months and benefit expungement at nine months.

**What does it mean if your SNAP benefits are moved “offline”?**

If you don’t use your EBT card or spend benefits for three months (91 days), some states will move your account to offline storage.

If your benefits are offline that means you won’t be able to use your EBT card anymore.

If you notice you are missing benefits or can’t use your card, you may be able to [contact your local SNAP office](https://www.propel.app/state-contact-information/) to get your benefits back.

Just let the SNAP office know you think your benefits were moved offline and you want them restored. Once you contact the SNAP office, they are required to return your benefits within 48 hours.

**What does it mean for your SNAP benefits to be “expunged”?**

If you don’t use your EBT card or spend your benefits for nine months (274 days), your state will permanently remove unused SNAP benefits from your account.

You can’t get SNAP benefits back once they expire so it’s important to prevent them from expiring in the first place.

Here’s how to keep your benefits from expiring:

* **Spend your benefits within nine months of deposit on your EBT card**. When you use your EBT card, benefits are used on a first-in-first-out basis, which means the oldest SNAP benefits are used first. As long as you regularly use your EBT card on [eligible items](https://www.propel.app/snap/snap-eligible-food/), your benefits won’t expire.
* **Use your EBT card at least once every few months**. State agencies can’t remove unused benefits from active accounts. The best way to keep your benefits from expiring is to keep your account active, even with a small purchase. If you stopped spending your SNAP benefits because you [lost your EBT card or need a new one](https://www.propel.app/snap/replacing-your-lost-ebt-card/), make sure to report it to your state office.
* **Don’t ignore letters or messages from your SNAP office**. State agencies are required to provide notice 10 days before benefits go offline, and 30 days before benefits expire permanently to give you a chance to use the benefits. Make sure to keep your contact information up to date on your SNAP case so you don’t miss any important updates.

**How long will you keep getting SNAP benefits?**

You should have received a [SNAP approval letter](https://www.propel.app/snap/what-is-a-snap-approval-letter/) when you were first approved for food stamps.

The approval letter has important information about your benefits, like how long you’ll get benefits before you need to recertify or renew your application (that’s called a certification period).

Most people get approved for SNAP for 6 to 12 months at a time. But, depending on your situation, your certification period could be shorter or longer:

* If you’re above a certain age or have a disability, your certification period may be up to 24 months
* If you have no income or recently lost work, your initial benefit period may be just 4 to 6 months
* If you’re a [college student getting SNAP](https://www.propel.app/snap/snap-ebt-for-college-students/), your eligibility may align with your school schedule

Once it is time to renew your SNAP benefits, your SNAP office will send you a notice. If you miss the deadline or don’t turn in the renewal paperwork, your benefits will stop, even if your circumstances haven’t changed.

Make sure to check your mail regularly and keep your contact information up to date with your SNAP office so you don’t risk losing your benefits.

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AI-generated content may be incorrect.

**Help keep your EBT card safe from theft with Propel**

[Get the app](https://joinproviders.onelink.me/5wpY/i27g9dsr?af_ad=security-cta&af_sub3=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.propel.app%2Fsnap%2Fhow-long-do-snap-benefits-last%2F)

**How to avoid losing your SNAP benefits**

Whether through expiration, [benefits theft](https://www.propel.app/snap/ebt-theft-how-it-happens-and-replacing-stolen-benefits/), failure to renew, or [food stamp fraud](https://www.propel.app/snap/food-stamp-fraud-explained-what-counts-as-fraud/), it’s possible to accidentally lose your SNAP benefits, even when you still qualify.

Here are simple steps to stay on top of your account:

1. Report any changes to your contact information immediately to your SNAP office, especially if you move addresses or change phone numbers
2. Always open letters from your SNAP office—they may include important deadlines or notices about recertification or expiring benefits
3. Make an account on your state’s benefits web portal and keep in contact with your case manager at least every three to six months
4. Use your EBT card at least once every few months
5. Respond to recertification paperwork before the deadline
6. Avoid accidental [food stamp fraud](https://www.propel.app/snap/food-stamp-fraud-explained-what-counts-as-fraud/), like letting someone else use your benefits, forgetting to report changes in income, or using benefits incorrectly
7. Protect yourself from EBT theft by using the [Propel app](https://www.propel.app/snap/propel-ebt-security-features/) to monitor your EBT balance and transaction history, track deposits, and access other security features

Keeping your SNAP benefits active is all about staying informed, using your EBT card regularly, and following up on any paperwork from your local SNAP office.

If you’re ever unsure about the status of your benefits, reach out to your state’s [SNAP hotline](https://www.propel.app/state-contact-information/) or speak with your case manager.

**Is Medicaid also getting cut because of the ‘Big Beautiful Bill’?**

Yes, the bill cuts health care programs, particularly Medicaid, which could affect your access to health care.

There are also new work requirements for Medicaid, which, just like with SNAP work requirements, could mean a harder time qualifying for or keeping your Medicaid benefits.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, an additional 11.8 million people could be uninsured by 2034 because of this legislation.

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