Applying for Food Stamps as a College Student
What is SNAP?
The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), a.k.a. Food Stamps. SNAP provides nutrition benefits to supplement the food budget of needy families so they can purchase healthy food and move towards self-sufficiency.

How does SNAP work?
If you are found eligible, you will receive SNAP benefits on an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card, which works like a debit card. Benefits are automatically loaded into your account each month. You can use your EBT card to buy groceries at authorized food stores and retailers.

What can you buy with SNAP?
Fruit, vegetables, meat, poultry, fish, dairy products, bread, cereal, snacks, non alcoholic beverages, seeds and plants which produce food for the household to eat.
Where can I use my EBT Card?

EBT is accepted at lots of retailers near campus including but not limited to Safeway, Metropolitan Market, Walgreens, Stadium Thriftway, Walmart, Fred Meyer, Tacoma Farmers Market, Bartell’s, Hong Kong Super Market, and Marlene’s Natural Foods.
Eligibility

General Washington Eligibility
You must be a resident of the state of WA and have an annual household income (before taxes) that is less than or equal to the following amounts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Size</th>
<th>Annual Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$20,609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$27,902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$35,195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$42,488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$49,781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$57,074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>$64,367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$71,660</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eligibility as a College Student
Most able-bodied students ages 18 through 49 who are enrolled in college or other institutions of higher education at least half time are not eligible for SNAP benefits.
Students who live in dorms and receive more than half their meals from a meal plan are **not** eligible for benefits.

However, there are some exceptions. Students may be able to get SNAP benefits if otherwise eligible and they meet one of these conditions. They:

- Get public assistance benefits under a Title IV-A program of the Social Security Act;

- Take part in a state or federally financed work study program;

- Work at least 20 hours a week;

- Are taking care of a dependent household member under the age of 6;
- Are taking care of a dependent household member over the age of 5 but under 12 and do not have adequate child care to enable them to attend school and work a minimum of 20 hours, or to take part in a state or federally financed work study program;

- Are a single parent enrolled full time in college and taking care of a dependent household member under the age of 12;

- Are assigned to or placed in a college through certain government programs including those under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, Section 236 of the Trade Act of 1974, the Food Stamp Act, or a program operated by a state or local government.
What counts as a "household"?
- A SNAP household is a group of people who live together and buy and prepare meals together. If roommates buy and prepare at least half their meals together, they count as a SNAP household and must apply together.

- However, if an ineligible student is in a household with other individuals, the other members can still receive SNAP benefits and the student’s income and resources are not counted.

Do students need to report their parent’s income?
- Income and assets of parents who do not live with the student are not counted. But if parents or others provide students with ongoing support, that support may need to be reported as income for the student, unless it is clearly a loan.
- Young adults ages 18-21 who live with their parents can only apply as part of their parents’ household.

- If students live with their parents, are at least 22 years old, and buy and prepare at least half of their meals independently, they can apply as a separate household.
SNAP, Financial Aid, and Work-Study

- Students who live in dorms and receive more than half their meals from a meal plan are not eligible for benefits.

- Federal financial aid (Title IV of HEA or Bureau of Indian Affairs aid) never counts as income or assets when applying for SNAP benefits. This includes Pell grants, Perkins loans and Stafford loans.

- Non-federal financial aid used for anything other than living expenses is not counted as income.

- Other financial aid, including deferred payment loans and veterans’ educational benefits, are not counted as income as long as it is used to pay for educational expenses, including tuition, books, and required fees.
- Income received from Federal & State Work-Study positions is not counted towards SNAP income limits. University Work-Study positions are different, and count as normal income.

- Ask your supervisor which kind of work-study position you hold, if you don't know.

**Does Receiving SNAP affect Financial Aid?**

SNAP benefits are not treated as income when calculating expected family contribution (EFC) for financial aid.

When students complete the FAFSA and report that they are receiving SNAP or other benefits, they are eligible for a simplified needs analysis that does not require them to report family assets.

If students receive SNAP and have family income under $24,000, they qualify for an automatic zero EFC and more financial aid.
Application

Visit this website to start your application:
www.washingtonconnection.org

You may need the following information for your application:
Name, Date of Birth, Citizenship or Alien Status, Social Security Number, Income, Assets and Resources, Housing Costs, Utilities, Childcare Costs

Applications generally take about 30 days to process. Providing accurate and complete information ensures that your application process will not be delayed. You can be eligible for food assistance within 7 days under certain extenuating circumstances.

For assistance determining if you qualify and applying for SNAP benefits, email:
yellowhouse@pugetsound.edu.