

Published on *VirginiaNavigator* (<https://virginiannavigator.org>)

Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP) for SNAP

What is SNAP ESAP?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP) is a SNAP demonstration project that seeks to increase participation among the older adult (60 and older) low-income population by streamlining the application and recertification process for SNAP benefits.

Specifically, ESAP uses a simplified application, waives the recertification interview requirement, makes use of data matches to reduce the amount of client-provided verification, and extends the certification period to 36 months.

Is Virginia Participating?

Yes! Virginia's ESAP launched on March 1, 2022.

In Virginia, ESAP will reduce the burden of paperwork for SNAP households that consist of all older adult members (age 60 and older) and streamline the process for local department of social services (LDSS) eligibility workers.

The Virginia Department of Social Services (DSS) has created a stand alone ESAP application that excludes some questions, such as those related to pregnancy and education. Those questions will also be removed from the "drive flow" in [CommonHelp](#) for older adults applying online and in the VaCMS Rapid Data Entry (RDE) for older adults applying via the call center.

Rather than the usual 12-month certification, ESAP households will have a 36-month certification. ESAP households will not be subject to interim reporting.

ESAP households will be subject, however, to a simplified reporting process. Simplified reporting includes a requirement for notification to the LDSS if there is a change in the household composition, if the household receives earned income, or

lottery and gambling winnings of \$3,750 or more.

In addition, ESAP does not require recertification interviews for ESAP households unless:

- 1) requested by the household,
- 2) the recertification form is questionable, or
- 3) the recertification may be potentially denied.

What Can I Do?

Anecdotally, the aging network has reported a perception for many years that the administrative burden for accessing SNAP benefits is not always worth it for older adults. ESAP reduces that burden and makes SNAP more accessible.

If you think an older Virginian may be eligible for, but not receiving SNAP benefits, encourage them to:

- ☐ **Option 1:** [Screen for eligibility and/or apply online through CommonHelp](#)
- ☐ **Option 2:** Bypass eligibility screening and submit an application manually. Fill out an "Application for Benefits" from the forms section on this page and return it to the appropriate [local department of social services](#).
- ☐ **Option 3:** Apply via phone by calling the Enterprise Call Center 1-855-635-4370.

You can learn more about SNAP on the DSS website [here](#).

Author: Charlotte Arbogast, MS, Policy Analyst, DARS

Article Source

DARS Office for Aging Services, Division of Community Living

Source URL

<https://vda.virginia.gov>

Last Reviewed

Tuesday, January 16, 2024