

HOW TO APPLY FOR SNAP, TANF AND MEDICAID BENEFITS PROGRAMS WITH CHESTERFIELD-COLONIAL HEIGHTS SOCIAL SERVICES



1. What is SNAP?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition benefits to supplement the food budget of needy families so they can purchase healthy food and move towards self-sufficiency.

2. What is TANF?

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a program that provides temporary financial assistance to eligible families and children. The family will receive a monthly cash payment to meet their basic needs.

3. Am I eligible to receive SNAP and/or TANF benefits?

You may complete an online screening at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov. Scroll to the middle of the page and click “Am I Eligible?” Please remember this is a prescreening tool, you must apply for SNAP and/or TANF to get a final decision.

4. What is the application process?

Households must file an application for SNAP and/or TANF benefits with Chesterfield-Colonial Heights Social Services. Applications can be done by calling 1-855-635-4370 or online at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov. Paper applications are also accepted, but it strongly recommended that applications be done electronically. Interviews will be conducted over the phone.

5. What information is needed for the application?

- Full legal name, Date of Birth, Social Security Number, Citizenship or Immigration Status for you and anyone in your household who is applying for benefits.
 - a. Note: You may be asked to verify your Citizenship or Immigration Status after you submit your application.*
- Job and income verification for **ALL** household members.
- Information about other taxable income for members of your household such as unemployment benefits, Social Security benefits, pensions, retirement income, rental income, alimony received, etc.

6. How can I submit required documentation for my application(s)?

Required verifications, initial paper applications, and all other documents can be submitted via:

All submitted documents require your case number.

- **Email:** dssdocs@chesterfield.gov
- **After hours drop box:** At this time, the building is inaccessible to the public, so please place all documents in the after hours drop box located outside of the agency front doors.
- **Mail:** PO Box 430, Chesterfield, VA 23832
- **Fax:** (804) 717-6294



7. How long before my application is processed?

SNAP Applications can take between 7 days (expedited) and 30 days to process. TANF applications can take up to 30 days to process.

8. What is the status of my application?

Households can check the status of their application(s) by contacting Chesterfield-Colonial Heights Social Services at (804) 748-1100 or online at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov.

9. What if I need Medical Coverage?

General information about Virginia's Medicaid and FAMIS programs for children, pregnant women and adults can be found online at www.coverva.org

10. What is the application process for Medicaid?

Households must file an application for Medicaid with Chesterfield-Colonial Heights Social Services. Applications can be done by calling 1-855-242-8282 or online at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov. Paper applications are also accepted, but it strongly recommended that applications be done electronically. Interviews will be conducted over the phone.

11. What information is needed for the Medicaid application?

- Full legal name, Date of Birth, Social Security Number, Citizenship or Immigration Status for you and anyone in your household who is applying for health care coverage.
 - a. Note: You may be asked to verify your Citizenship or Immigration Status after you submit your application.*
- Most recent federal tax filing information (if available).
- Job and income information for members of your household for the month prior or the current month. Having recent pay stubs or W-2s to reference may be helpful.
- Information about other taxable income for members of your household such as unemployment benefits, Social Security benefits, pensions, retirement income, rental income, alimony received, etc.
- Policy numbers for any current health insurance

12. How can I submit required documentation for my Medicaid application?

All submitted documents require your case number.

- **Email:** dssdocs@chesterfield.gov
- **After hours drop box:** At this time, the building is inaccessible to the public, so please place all documents in the afterhours drop box located outside of the agency front doors.
- **Mail:** PO Box 430, Chesterfield, VA 23832
- **Fax:** (804) 717-6294

13. How long before my application is processed?

Medicaid applications can take up to 45 days to process.

Frequently Asked Questions - Division of Benefit Programs

Remember: New FAQs are added to the end of each section as they become available.
Please scan the Response Date column for any updates to previously published FAQs.

Public Facing FAQs

Program	Questions	Response	Response Date
SNAP	Are Emergency SNAP or Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP) benefits going to be issued?	<p>Yes. Virginia issued emergency allotments to households on March 25, April 16th and will issue them again on May 11th. The emergency benefits will allow the household's current monthly allotment to increase to the maximum allotment for a household of that size.</p> <p>Virginia is not currently operating a Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP) Program.</p>	Updated 5/7/2020
SNAP	Will there be an increase in the SNAP benefits to the current SNAP caseload during the COVID-19 public emergency?	Yes. Virginia issued emergency allotments to households on March 25, April 16th and will issue them again on May 11th. The emergency benefits will allow the household's current monthly allotment to increase to the maximum allotment for a household of that size.	Updated 5/7/2020
SNAP	Why didn't I get an emergency allotment?	The emergency allotment was calculated by the maximum allotment issuance for the household size, minus the amount that was issued for that month. If you received the maximum benefit you would not be eligible to receive the emergency allotment.	Updated 5/7/2020
SNAP	Why was my emergency allotment so small?	The emergency allotment was based on the difference between what you received for the month and the maximum of what a household your size could receive. If your amount was small, it is because you already received an amount that is close to the maximum amount allowed monthly.	Updated 5/7/2020
SNAP	When will I get my initial emergency allotment? And when will the next emergency allotment be issued?	The first emergency allotment issuance is March 25, 2020; the second emergency allotment issuance is April 16, 2020 and the next issuance is May 11th.	Updated 5/7/2020

SNAP	Will the regular SNAP issuance for April 2020 be given?	Yes. The regular allotment will go out in accordance to the regular staggering schedule which occurs on the 1st, 4th and 7th of each month.	3/25/2020
SNAP	Am I eligible to receive SNAP benefits?	You may complete an online screening at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov. Scroll to the middle of the page and click "Am I Eligible?" Please remember this is a prescreening tool, you must apply for SNAP to get a final decision.	3/24/2020
SNAP	Has the application process changed for SNAP?	There are no policy changes to the SNAP application process. Households must file an application for SNAP benefits with the Local Department of Social Services in the locality where the household resides. Households may file applications in person, by mail, by fax, by telephone to the Enterprise Customer Service Center at 1-855-635-4370 or online at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov. Most local agencies have a drop-box that customers can utilize while they are closed or if it's outside of the agency's business hours. Please contact your local agency for their email address and fax number; this information is also available at www.dss.virginia.gov.	3/24/2020
SNAP	What are the income guidelines for SNAP during the COVID-19 crisis?	The SNAP income guidelines remain the same. We encourage you to complete an online screening at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov. Scroll to the middle of the page and click "Am I Eligible?" Please remember this is a prescreening tool, you must apply for SNAP to receive a final decision.	3/24/2020
SNAP	What is the status of my application of case?	Households can check the status of their application by contacting their Local Department of Social Services or online at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov.	3/24/2020
SNAP	Is there assistance for college students who no longer have access to meal plans?	You are encouraged to apply which allows eligibility for SNAP to be determined based on your household's individual circumstances. Applications are accepted in person, by mail, by fax, by telephone to the Enterprise Customer Service Center at 1-855-635-4370 or online at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov. Most local agencies have a drop-box that customers can utilize while they are closed or if it's outside of the agency's business hours. Please contact your local agency for their email address and fax number; this information is also available at www.dss.virginia.gov.	3/24/2020
SNAP	Will extra SNAP benefits be issued	Yes, emergency SNAP benefits were issued for March, April and May.	Updated 5/7/2020

	while children are out of school?	<p>Virginia will also issue Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) benefits for children who are eligible for free and reduced lunch. The plan for implementation is being finalized.</p> <p>Most of the local school districts are providing meals to the children eligible for free and reduced lunch. Contact the local school division for distribution sites or visit the http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/nutrition/approved-meal-sites.xlsx for a list of locations in your area.</p>	
SNAP	What is P-SNAP and how can I get it?	P-SNAP is the same as Pandemic EBT (P-EBT). Virginia uses the term P-EBT. Virginia will issue Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) benefits for children who are eligible for free and reduced lunch. The plan for implementation is being finalized.	Updated 4/30/2020
SNAP	What should I do, I need to pick up my SNAP EBT card, but my local office is closed?	While a local agency may be closed to the public, they must have procedures in place to provide access to EBT cards to meet certain circumstances. Please contact your Local Department of Social Services. To request an EBT card, you may call your Benefit Programs Specialist or call 1-866-281-2448. Contact information for local agencies is available at www.dss.virginia.gov.	3/24/2020
SNAP	Can I go to another local department of Social Services if my agency is closed to pick up an EBT card?	While a local agency may be closed to the public, they must have procedures in place to provide access to EBT cards to meet certain circumstances. Please contact your Local Department of Social Services. To request an EBT card, you may call your Benefit Programs Specialist or call 1-866-281-2448. Contact information for local agencies is available at www.dss.virginia.gov.	3/24/2020
SNAP	Can an EBT card be used to purchase groceries online?	SNAP participants can order online if the store permits. They cannot pay online but must pay at the store. Currently, Kroger and Walmart are allowing SNAP payments curbside	Updated 4/20/2020
SNAP	I need to apply for benefits, return information, and/or report a change, but my local agency is closed?	Households can mail, fax, e-mail or drop off information. Most local agencies have a drop-box that customers can utilize while they are closed or if it's outside of the agency's business hours. Please contact your local agency for their email address and fax number; this information is also available at www.dss.virginia.gov. You may also submit an application for benefits, submit Change Report Form and/or report changes online at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov.	3/24/2020
SNAP	Am I eligible for SNAP while I'm waiting for a decision from the Virginia Employment Commission about my unemployment claim?	Yes; however, there are other eligibility criteria that will be accessed to determine your eligibility. We encourage you to complete an online screening at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov. Scroll to the middle of the page and click "Am I Eligible?" Please remember this is a prescreening tool. You will need to apply for SNAP to get a final decision.	3/24/2020

SNAP	Are Emergency SNAP or Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP) benefits going to be issued?	Yes. Virginia issued emergency allotments to households on March 25, April 16th and will issue them again on May 11th. The emergency benefits will allow the household's current monthly allotment to increase to the maximum allotment for a household of that size. Virginia is not currently operating a Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP) Program.	Updated 5/7/2020
Medicaid	How can I get health coverage?	You can apply for Medicaid at any time at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov. Medicaid covers a variety of services, including testing and treatment for COVID-19.	3/20/2020
Medicaid	I am sick, but cannot afford my co-pay to see the doctor. What should I do?	All Medicaid and FAMIS co-pays are eliminated. You do not need to pay anything to see a doctor.	3/20/2020
Medicaid	I am worried my prescriptions will run out. How can I prepare?	Medicaid is allowing members to fill a 90-day supply of many routine prescriptions. Check with your pharmacist or doctor.	3/20/2020
Medicaid	Will my current coverage be canceled if I experience a change in circumstances and/or I was late mailing in my renewal documents?	No, Virginia Medicaid will not cancel coverage for eligible individuals due to a change in circumstances or paperwork issues. Our priority is to maintain your coverage during this time. If you experience issues, please contact http://www.dmas.virginia.gov/contactforms/#/general so that we might assist you.	3/20/2020
Medicaid	I had to move out of Virginia temporarily because of the coronavirus, but I am still a resident of Virginia. Can I keep my Medicaid coverage?	Yes, you will continue to be eligible for Medicaid coverage.	3/20/2020
Medicaid	Can I receive behavioral health services through	Virginia Medicaid has issued guidance to providers allowing the following Medicaid services to be offered through telehealth and by telephone: care coordination, case	3/20/2020

	telehealth or by telephone?	management, peer services, needs assessments, and psychiatric services, including medication management and individual, group, and family therapy.	
Medicaid	Will Medicaid make changes in the appeals procedures because of COVID-19?	<p>Yes. DMAS is making the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DMAS is seeking federal authority to accept client/member appeals filed during the COVID-19 emergency that miss the normal filing deadlines. If the authority is granted, those appeals will move forward as if the deadlines were met. This policy will apply retroactively for the length of the Governor’s emergency declaration, which began on March 12, as soon as approval is received. • For all appeals filed during the state of emergency, Medicaid members will automatically keep their health coverage and have access to Medicaid-covered medical services without any financial impact while the appeal is proceeding. Medicaid managed health plans will also approve continued coverage while their internal appeal process is underway. • All DMAS State Fair Hearings will be conducted by telephone. • DMAS will grant requests to reschedule hearings. • Appeals may be submitted to DMAS via e-mail at Appeals@DMAS.Virginia.gov <p>State Fair Hearing decisions may not be issued within the normal timeframe, depending on the length of the emergency.</p>	3/20/2020
Medicaid	Do I still have to report changes to my circumstances?	Yes. Customer should report all changes within 10 days - customer reporting requirements have not changed.	4/7/2020
Medicaid	Is it necessary that I respond to mail I receive regarding my Medicaid renewal?	Yes. When possible you must return the requested information to your local department of social services. Information can be returned by calling the CoverVA Call Center at 855-242-8282, online at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov or by utilizing the exterior drop boxes at local departments that are closed to the public because of the COVID-19 emergency.	4/7/2020
Medicaid	What am I to do if my care provider is no longer able to come to my home?	Customers whose care providers are no longer able to come to the home must use the back-up plan for waiver services. If your attendant does not report, please call your care coordinator for your Managed Care Organization (MCO).	Updated 4/16/2020



HOW TO FILE FOR UNEMPLOYMENT WWW.VEC.VIRGINIA.GOV

Q&A on Claims Related to Coronavirus

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROCEDURES IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Q. When should I file a claim for unemployment compensation benefits?

A. You should file your claim on-line (**preferred method) through our Website at www.vec.virginia.gov after you have been out of work at least 1 full day. If you do not have access to a computer, you can file your claim through our Customer Contact Center by calling 866- 832-2363 Monday through Friday 8:15am – 4:30pm. Your claim will be effective Sunday of the week in which you submit your on-line application or file through our Customer Contact Center.

Q. My hours have been reduced. Can I apply for unemployment compensation benefits?

A. You can file due to a reduction in hours. If your gross earnings are less than your weekly benefit amount. Currently, the maximum weekly benefit amount in Virginia is \$378.

Q. What happens after I complete my unemployment insurance application?

A. Once your claim is processed by the VEC, you will receive three important documents. The Benefit Rights document explains eligibility requirements and what you need to do each week to claim your benefits. The Monetary Determination document shows how much money you maybe eligible to receive. You will also receive a PIN. You need the PIN to claim weekly benefits and to make inquiries about your claim.

Q. How much money will I qualify to receive?

A. Depending on your earnings, your benefit amount may range from a minimum of \$60 per week for 12 weeks to a maximum of \$378 a week for 26 weeks. (Refer to your Monetary Determination)

Q. How soon before I can expect a benefit payment?

A. Beginning with claims effective March 15, 2020, Governor Northam has directed that the one week waiting period and the requirement to conduct a weekly job search both be suspended for those receiving unemployment insurance benefits. If you are eligible for benefits, a payment should be processed shortly after you claim your first full week. You will need to refer to the Benefit Rights document for instructions on claiming weekly benefits.

Q. How soon before I can expect a benefit payment?

A. Beginning with claims effective March 15, 2020, Governor Northam has directed that the one week waiting period and the requirement to conduct a weekly job search both be suspended for those receiving unemployment insurance benefits. If you are eligible for benefits, a payment should be processed shortly after you claim your first full week. You will need to refer to the Benefit Rights document for instructions on claiming weekly benefits.

Q. How will the CARES Act affect my unemployment?

A. The CARES Act provides increased benefits for workers collecting unemployment insurance by \$600 for claims effective March 29th until July 31st. Increased benefits for eligible claimants under traditional unemployment insurance will start to be paid as soon as next week. The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) recently received guidance from the United States Department of Labor and is working to implement needed system changes to make this happen as soon as possible. Payments to eligible claimants will be retroactive and will be made automatically in conjunction with their weekly claim.

New Benefits for Previously Uncovered Workers: Affected workers, like the self-employed, who are not eligible under traditional unemployment insurance may be eligible under a brand new federal program called Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). To be eligible for this new program, workers must first apply through traditional unemployment by visiting www.vec.virginia.gov or www.vawc.virginia.gov. The state is required to verify eligibility under traditional unemployment before allowing claimants to be considered for the new PUA program. You received (or will receive) a Monetary Determination from the Virginia Employment Commission that indicates that you do not qualify for unemployment benefits (UI).

[APPLY HERE FOR PANDEMIC UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE](#)

Response to COVID-19 is rapidly changing from day to day across the Commonwealth and the Nation. Please check the VEC website regularly for updates on any changes that may occur in how claims are being processed.



In order to file for Unemployment Insurance (UI) you must have been separated from your employer or have had your hours reduced.

You should not attempt to file a Virginia claim if:

1. Your last employer was a federal civilian employer in a state other than Virginia (you must file your claim against the state in which you last worked). **The only exception is if you worked as a federal civilian overseas.**
2. Your employment within the last 18 months was performed in **a state or states** other than Virginia.

View the "Out-of-State" telephone list

You will need the following information to file your claim:

- Your Social Security Number
- The accurate employer names, addresses, telephone numbers and dates of employment within the last 18 months.
- The name and local number of your local union hall, if you obtain work through a union.
- Your Alien Registration Number if you are not a US citizen.
- If you have any Non-Virginia employers you must have an accurate mailing address, phone number, and dates of employment for them.
- You will be asked to select a method of payment: **VA Debit Card** or **Direct Deposit**. If you select Direct Deposit, you will need to have your Routing Number (First 9 digits located at the bottom of your checks) and your Account Number (5-17 digits, its exact location and number of digits varies from bank to bank).
- If you do not have this information available, please gather it before you begin to file your claim. This site is available seven days a week. The filing process takes approximately 45 minutes to complete. Please allow enough time to complete this process.

INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE PROCESSED!

There are five sections to this application:

- **Personal Information:** This section includes things like your name and address and will help determine whether it is possible for you to file online.
- **Employment Information:** This section includes all of your employment information for the last 18 months, including the reason you are no longer employed by the company(s).
- **Eligibility Information:** This section includes information regarding your current availability for employment.
- **Unemployment Instructions:** This section details the information and instructions that keep your unemployment claim active. Please read this information.
- **Preferred method of payment:** This section will allow you to select your payment method. You must select either Debit card or Direct Deposit.

The information you provide when filing your claim is kept confidential. This confidential Unemployment Compensation (UC) information may be requested and utilized for other governmental purposes, including, but not limited to, verification of eligibility for other governmental programs. The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) will only contact you on matters that directly concern your unemployment insurance claim. You are entering a secure site.