

Telephone Bills

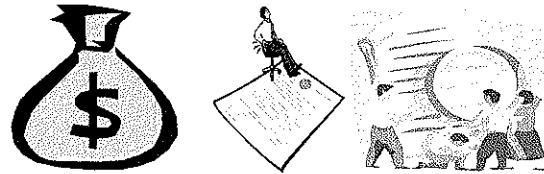
Groceries

Vegetable Plants and Seeds

Share Program

Money doesn't go as far as it used to. It's hard to make a fixed income cover the increasing costs of housing, health care, food and other needs. There are a variety of programs funded through your tax dollars that are designed to assist the senior citizen and others during difficult times. One such program is the **Food Stamp Program**.

Food Stamps work like a debit card that can buy food, Meals on Wheels, and seed and plants for food. Food stamps may also make you eligible for discounts on telephone installation and your monthly telephone bill.



HOW DO I QUALIFY?

The Food Stamp Office will decide if you can get stamps by looking at the following information:

- **Your income** — you must meet certain income guidelines to be eligible for food stamps. Even if you think your income might be too high you should **still apply**, because things like high medical bills and housing costs might help you be eligible.
- **Your resources** — as a senior citizen you can have up to \$3,000 in assets. The cash value of burial plots and most life insurance policies do **not** count as resources. Your car (up to a certain value) and the home you live in also do not count.

If you have questions about these rules, call the **Food Stamp Hotline (800) 342-1784**.

HOW DO I APPLY?

The first thing you need to do is get an application at your local Department of Human Services. You can call the Food Stamp Hotline (800)342-1784 to find out which DHS is closest to you. If you can't go to DHS, ask them to mail you an application.

If you are over 60 or disabled you can apply by mail, be interviewed over the phone and get your food stamps by mail. **You never need to go to DHS.** Most seniors will only need to be interviewed once every year.

Once you have turned in the application you will be interviewed by a case manager. Your case manager must complete your application and decide on your case no longer than **30 days** from the day you turned in your application.



WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW?

- You **NEVER** have to pay for food stamps.
- You **DO NOT** pay sales tax on food that you buy with food stamps. In Tennessee, this adds nearly 9% to the food you can buy.
- You **CAN WORK** and may be eligible for food stamps.
- You **MUST REPORT** all changes in household size and income immediately to your local food stamp office.
- You have the right to appeal if your stamps are denied, reduced or stopped.

PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER TO END HUNGER

This Fact Sheet is intended for general information only. The circumstances of every case are different and need to be dealt with on a case by case basis. This is not a substitute for advice of a lawyer. Also, the law may change.

OFFICE HOURS AND LOCATION

Legal Aid of East Tennessee offices are open from 8:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday.

Executive Director, David Yoder

Associate Director, Eric Miller

311 W. Walnut Street Johnson City, TN 37604 (423)928-8311 1(800)821-1312 Fax (423)928-9488	1001 W 2nd North St. Morristown, TN 37814 (423)587-4850 1(800)821-1309 Fax (423)587-4857
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Associate Director, Debra House

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Linea Gratis en Español 1-866-408-6573

No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color or national origin, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

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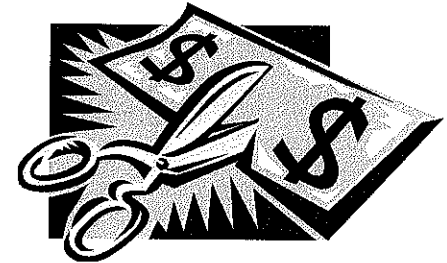


LEGAL AID OF EAST TENNESSEE

SENIORS



FOOD STAMPS WILL CUT COSTS



**Serving Bledsoe, Bradley, Blount,
Carter, Cocke, Grainger, Greene,
Hamblen, Hamilton, Hancock, Hawkins,
Jefferson, Johnson, Knox, Loudon,
Marion, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk,
Rhea, Sequatchie, Sevier, Sullivan,
Unicoi and Washington Counties.**