Public Assistance Information for Montana AmeriCorps Members

Updated 8/2021
You **may or may not** be eligible for public assistance in Montana.

**Eligibility** is determined on a case-by-case basis.

Eligibility can be dependent on things like...

- Age & ability
- Assets (car, home, etc.)
- $$ in bank accounts
- Additional Income (like a part-time job outside of your service)

Eligibility is impacted by your stream of service

- **Example:** AmeriCorps State & National members may apply for SNAP *after* their term of service has begun, but VISTA members must apply *before* their service start date
## Montana DPHHS Public Assistance Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>SNAP</strong> – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Provides food &amp; nutrition assistance to eligible people</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Funds delivered to an assigned Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) debit card</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>LIEAP</strong> – Low-Income Energy Assistance Program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Offers energy bill &amp; weatherization assistance for eligible renters &amp; homeowners</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Energy bill assistance available October 1 – April 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Weatherization assistance available anytime</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>TANF</strong> – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families</th>
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<td>• Provides temporary financial assistance to eligible families/individuals</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>WIC</strong> – Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, &amp; Children</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Offers healthy food, breastfeeding support, nutrition tips, and connection to community resources for eligible parents and pregnant women</td>
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SNAP

Information:
• [dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/SNAP](dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/SNAP)

• Benefits **can** be used for:
  - Groceries
  - Plants/seeds to grow food

• Benefits **cannot** be used for:
  - Nonfood items (cosmetics, paper products, etc.)
  - Alcohol or tobacco
  - Vitamins or medicines
  - Hot foods

How to Apply:
• Apply Online: [apply.mt.gov](apply.mt.gov)
• Call the Public Assistance Helpline: **1-888-706-1535**
• Visit your local Office of Public Assistance
  See locations here: [dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/OfficeofPublicAssistance](dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/OfficeofPublicAssistance)
• **Email** for a PDF application
• Need more assistance? Visit [https://www.montanalawhelp.org/issues/public-benefits](https://www.montanalawhelp.org/issues/public-benefits)
LIEAP

Information:
• dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/energyassistance

• If you receive benefits from SNAP, TANF, or Supplemental Security Income, you may automatically qualify for LIEAP

How to Apply:
• Call LIEAP Number:
  1-833-317-1080

• Contact an Eligibility Office
  See locations here:
  dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/energyassistance/lieapoffices

• Need more assistance? Visit
  https://www.montanalawhelp.org/issues/public-benefits
Applying as an AmeriCorps Member

• Your Living Allowance/any payments from your program are **not considered income** for SNAP or LIEAP eligibility

• Ask your program staff for a **Proof of Service letter** to bring when you apply

• Need more assistance? Visit [https://www.montanalawhelp.org/issues/public-benefits](https://www.montanalawhelp.org/issues/public-benefits)
Medicaid – healthcare benefits for income-eligible Montanans

- **Montana Medicaid**
  - Apply here: [apply.mt.gov/](https://apply.mt.gov/)
  - General Information: [dphhs.mt.gov/MontanaHealthcarePrograms/welcome/memberservices/index](https://dphhs.mt.gov/MontanaHealthcarePrograms/welcome/memberservices/index)
  - For more information and to determine eligibility, contact:
    - Public Assistance Help Line: 1-888-706-1535

- **Federal Medicaid**
  - Medicaid is a federal-state partnership. State-specific information will be most useful
  - General Information: [www.medicaid.gov](http://www.medicaid.gov)
Child Care for AmeriCorps Members

- AmeriCorps offers childcare benefits to active, full-time members who qualify

- More information: https://americorpschildcare.com/index.cfm

- Montana Childcare Providers: https://dphhs.mt.gov/childcareprovidersdashboard
  - Not all providers at this link qualify as AmeriCorps Childcare providers
Community Resources

• Community Gardens
  ➢ Some have public plots that community members can harvest food from, or offer volunteers food in exchange for service

• Thrift stores
  ➢ Some local thrift stores offer financial or in-store assistance to eligible individuals (E.g., vouchers to purchase winter clothes at the thrift store)

• Farmers Markets
  ➢ Many accept SNAP benefits

• Local Food Banks
  ➢ Food and sometimes toiletries available

• Local libraries
  ➢ Provide free internet, community gatherings, & more
  ➢ Must prove residency to obtain free library card (Lease or utility bill in your name is common documentation; ask library for guidance)

• Local Credit Unions
  ➢ Many offer free financial literacy education/programs

• Local United Way
  ➢ Works to advance the common good in communities across the world
Questions?

THANK YOU!