

SNAP for Retailers

Store Eligibility

See requirements at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer/eligible>.

Application process

1. **Create USDA account:** <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/apply-to-accept>.
2. **Apply with USDA FNS:** <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/apply-to-accept>.

Note: You can save your application and return to finish it up to 30 days after you start. FNS deletes all saved applications that are not completed within 30 days.

FNS has up to 45 days from the date a completed application is received to make a determination.

STEP ONE

Before you begin, gather the following information:

- Date the store opened under the current ownership.
- Corporate name and address if you are a private or public corporation or nonprofit organization.
- Name, home address, social security number, and date of birth for all owners, partners, and officers of corporations or nonprofit organizations.
- Actual sales data from your store's most recent IRS business tax return, if it has been open under current ownership longer than one year. If not, an estimate of the store's annual sales.
- Store hours of operation.
- Copies of Photo ID and Social Security Number verification for all owners, partners, and officers of corporations or nonprofit organizations.
- Business license held by the store.

STEP TWO

- Answer online application questions.
- Submit application and save for your records.
- Submit your supporting documents to FNS. Instructions regarding your supporting documents are provided on-screen AFTER you submit your application and are specific to your application (e.g. government-issued ID, business license, social security card). Supporting documents are only being accepted electronically during the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Copy of a current license in your name required to operate your business. For example, a health permit, food inspection permit, sales tax permit, sellers permit, business license, lottery license, or beer or wine license, etc. If you do not have a license, please contact the SNAP Retailer Service Center.
 - Photo Identification for all owners, partners, corporate officers, and shareholders. For example, a driver's license (front), passport, or military ID.
 - Copy of Social Security card or acceptable verification of Social Security Number for all owners, partners, corporate officers, and shareholders. For example, tax forms, an insurance card, etc.

Application process (continued)

3. Site visit from FNS representative.

During a site visit, photos are taken inside and outside of store, and the store layout is sketched (aisles, shelves, countertops, bins, fridge, freezer, storage area, current inventory).

A site visit is not always required to receive authorization.

4. Check your application status at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer/application-status>.

5. Decision.

Applicant receives notice explaining decision. If denied, can apply again after 60 days.

If authorized, FNS issues a permit and 7-digit FNS number. Keep this safe!

FNS will provide you with [Training Resources](#).

Common stumbling blocks

- List ALL owners of the store in the application. Not doing so will hold up the process. You must provide information for all officers, owners, partners, and members, if the store is owned by one or more people, a nonprofit organization, or a private corporation.
- The authorization waiting period is 45 days, but this timeline begins only after FNS has received ALL supporting documentation.

Equipment

- You do not need to have EBT equipment at the time you submit your application. After getting authorized to accept SNAP, you will be given more information about equipment options.
- All SNAP-authorized retailers work with a third-party processor to complete EBT transactions. It is up to the retailer to select an EBT processor, consider their options, pricing structures, etc. If you're already accepting credit and debit cards, you could start by calling your credit/debit processors to see if they have an EBT processing option.
- If you plan on accepting WIC, be sure before purchasing anything that your Point of Sale system is WIC-certified.

Questions for the SNAP Retailer Service Center

- Call 1-877-823-4369
- Open 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) Monday – Friday
- <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/RSC>

Additional training resources

- <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer/training>