



Food Supplement Program (SNAP) Medical Deduction

Helping Seniors and People with Disabilities Get the Food they Need to Stay Healthy

Congress created the Food Supplement Program (formerly known as “Food Stamps”) to help Americans with limited income get the food they need to stay healthy.

Seniors and people with disabilities often need special diets, but medical expenses make it hard for them to buy the food they need. That is why Congress created a special “medical deduction” in the Food Supplement Program (FSP).

Who can get a FSP medical deduction?

If you are a “senior” or have a “disability” you may get a medical deduction. This means the more medical costs you have, the more FSP benefits you will get.

A “senior” is any person 60 years old or older.

A “person with a disability” is anyone who:

- Gets Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability (SSDI); or any other federal, state or local public disability pension;
- Gets a State SSI supplement check;
- Gets MaineCare based on disability;
- Gets Railroad Retirement Disability benefits;
- Is a veteran who is totally disabled, permanently housebound, or needs aid and attendance; OR
- Is a surviving spouse of a veteran who is getting VA benefits or is a child of a veteran who is permanently disabled.

How much is allowed for a “medical deduction”?

You can only count medical costs that are more than \$35 a month. For example, if you and your spouse are both seniors and have total medical costs of \$100 a month, your household’s medical deduction is \$65 in that month.

There is no limit on the medical deduction. You can deduct all allowable medical costs over \$35 even if you haven’t paid them yet.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Medical costs that will be paid by a health insurer or someone outside of your household **cannot** count as a medical deduction.

How do I claim my medical expenses?

You can claim medical expenses when you apply for or recertify for the FSP. You can also ask your case worker *at any time* to give you a medical deduction.

You must show proof of your medical expenses. "Proof" can be receipts, cancelled checks, a print out from your pharmacy, your own written record of medical-related transportation, or other similar records and statements.

You do not need to give proof of your medical expenses each month. You can ask your worker to estimate your expenses over your FSP certification period if you don't expect them to change.

What expenses count towards a medical deduction?

Allowable medical costs are:

1. Dental and medical care. Also, psychotherapy and rehabilitation services by qualified health professionals.
2. Hospitalization, outpatient treatment, nursing care and nursing home care (including payments for persons who were household members immediately prior to entering a hospital or nursing home) recognized by the State.
3. Prescription drugs when prescribed by a licensed practitioner and other over the counter medication (including insulin) when approved by a licensed practitioner or other qualified health professional;
4. Medical supplies, sick room equipment (including rented) or other prescribed equipment.
5. Medicare premiums, health and hospitalization insurance policy premiums.