

LOUISIANA COMBINED APPLICATION PROJECT (LaCAP)

Program Information and Rights and Responsibilities Keep This For Future Reference

What is LaCAP?

LaCAP is a food assistance program for Louisiana residents who are at least 60 years of age and receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI). You can buy food that meets your nutritional needs and helps you have better health through LaCAP. It is a simplified version of the Food Stamp Program. If you are eligible for LaCAP, you will receive a Louisiana Purchase Card and Food Stamp benefits will be automatically deposited into your account every month. There are four standard allotment amounts in LaCAP. Depending on shelter costs, LaCAP participants will receive \$59, \$69, \$103 or \$141. LaCAP cases are certified for 36 months.

Who is eligible?

You may be eligible for LaCAP if you are receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and you:

- Are age 60 or older,
- Are not institutionalized or otherwise ineligible for Food Stamps due to immigration status, an Intentional Program Violation, or drug conviction,
- Live alone or buy and prepare your food separately or agree to buy and prepare your food separately from the other people who live with you, and
- Are not living with your spouse or your own child who is under 22 years of age.

How do you apply for LaCAP?

- Complete the Louisiana Combined Application Project Enrollment Form.
- Return the completed form to any parish/district Office of Family Support, Family Assistance office.
 - There are no telephone or face-to-face interviews required.
 - There are no verification requirements.

What happens after we receive your enrollment form?

- You will be assigned a worker.
- Your worker will determine your eligibility.
- We will send you a letter within 30 days of the date we receive your enrollment form to let you know if you are eligible or not. If you are eligible, the letter will also tell you the amount of your benefits and when they will begin.
- If you are not currently certified for the regular Food Stamp Program, we will send a Louisiana Purchase Card to you within 7 days from the date we received your enrollment form or when your case is certified, whichever comes first. Receipt of the card does not necessarily mean that you have been determined eligible for benefits. If you are certified, you will be able to activate your card and your benefits will be deposited into an account each month. When you activate your card, you will select a Personal Identification Number (PIN). You will use your Louisiana Purchase Card and PIN to access your benefits to help pay for your groceries. It will be your responsibility to keep your card and PIN safe. Anyone who knows your PIN can access your benefits with your card.

Do you have to get assistance for food through LaCAP?

No, it is your choice. You can get food assistance through LaCAP or through the regular Food Stamp Program. If you receive benefits through LaCAP and you want to change to the regular Food Stamp Program, you can do so at any time. You may qualify for more benefits through the regular Food Stamp Program if you:

- Pay more than \$35 per month in out-of-pocket medical expenses, or
- Pay more than \$491 per month for shelter costs.

What if your circumstances change?

You can report changes in your circumstances, but you are not required to do so. If your shelter costs increase, you may want to report this since it could mean that your LaCAP benefits would increase. The Social Security Administration will let us know if you become ineligible for SSI, move out of the state or become institutionalized. These changes in your circumstances may cause you to become ineligible for benefits through LaCAP.

What are your rights and responsibilities?

When you receive benefits from the Louisiana Department of Social Services, you have certain rights and responsibilities that are explained below.

- **Non-Discrimination** - In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion or political belief. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

To file a discrimination complaint, contact USDA.

Write:

USDA, Director
Office of Civil Rights
Room 326-W, Whitten Building
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

or Call:

202-720-5964 (voice and TDD)

- **Fair Hearing** - If you do not agree with any decision made on your case, you have the right to ask that your case be reviewed. You can tell us that you want a fair hearing in writing, in person, or by calling this office. You have the right to look at your case record before the hearing.
- **Confidentiality** - All the information you give us is confidential. This means that we cannot give information about your case to other people except under special conditions. Examples of those conditions include official review by other State and Federal agencies or Federal, State and private collection agencies for the collection of claims against Food Stamp benefits. Information from your case may also be given to law enforcement officials for the purpose of catching persons fleeing to avoid the law and for investigation of a felony or probation/parole violation.
- **Cooperation** - You have to cooperate by providing the information we need to determine your eligibility for benefits. You will be expected to cooperate if a home visit is necessary to determine your eligibility. If your case is selected for a quality control review by state or federal reviewers, you have to cooperate with them.

Are there penalties in LaCAP?

If you knowingly report incorrect information, your benefits may be denied, reduced, or ended and you may be subject to criminal prosecution.

If you do the following:	You will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Hide information or give false information● Trade or sell Food Stamp benefits or EBT cards (Louisiana Purchase Cards)● Use Food Stamp benefits to buy ineligible items, such as alcohol or tobacco● Use someone else's Food Stamp benefits	Lose your Food Stamp benefits for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● 1 year for the first violation● 2 years for the second violation● Permanently for the third violation You may also be fined up to \$20,000 or imprisoned for up to 5 years or both.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Trade Food Stamp benefits for illegal drugs	Lose your Food Stamp benefits for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● 2 years for the first violation● Permanently for the second violation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Trade Food Stamp benefits for firearms, ammunition, or explosives● Trade, buy, or sell Food Stamp benefits of \$500 or more	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Lose your Food Stamp benefits permanently
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Give false information about who you are or where you live in order to receive benefits in more than one case at the same time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Lose your Food Stamp benefits for 10 years.