



Helping people navigate public assistance recertifications

Recertification is the official process to review a household's information every six, 12 or 24 months to make sure they are still eligible for cash assistance or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)¹ benefits. The amount of time between recertifications depends on the program and the person's circumstances.

In the spring of 2020, any household scheduled for a recertification was automatically rescheduled for six months later as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In July, the U.S. Department of Agriculture indicated that it was not going to allow Minnesota to delay recertifications for SNAP. To keep recertification dates aligned across public assistance programs, recertifications are also beginning again for all the state's cash programs, including:

- General Assistance (GA)
- Housing Support (which used to be called GRH)
- the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)
- Minnesota Supplemental Aid.

Minnesota mailed notices at the end of July to more than 27,000 households who were due for recertification by Sept. 1. Similar mailings will go out each month to households due for recertification at that time. A special one-time notice alerted all households receiving cash assistance or SNAP that recertifications are starting again, and that they will get a notice when their recertification is due.

With recertifications occurring again, Six-Month Reports are also required again for some households receiving SNAP or Housing Support.

How does someone know if they have to be recertified?

They will know that they need to recertify if they receive in the mail a recertification packet that includes:

- The Six-Month Report Form or Combined Application Form
- Information about the process
- An envelope to mail the form and other documents to the county or tribe approving their benefits.

That packet tells them they must submit that information by the 8th of the month. This gives the county or tribal human services office enough time to process the information without having to send a warning about ending the benefits.

On the 15th of the month, a notice is mailed to all households who have not yet recertified or been scheduled for an interview, telling them that their benefits will end on the last day of the month if they have not completed their recertification.

¹ This program used to be called food stamps or Food Support.

What does someone have to do to be recertified?

To be recertified, they must:

- Complete the Combined Application Form or the Six-Month Reporting Form
- Gather any documents needed to verify certain information (*see table on last page*)
- Complete an interview (*not needed for a Six-Month Report*).

What if people cannot make an in-person appointment or cannot get the documentation needed?

There are some existing policies and some special emergency policies in place.

- People can submit the Combined Application Form electronically through ApplyMN (applymn.dhs.mn.gov/).
- People can complete their interviews by phone.
- Eligibility workers can complete the application or reporting form for the household with the person over the phone, if the household cannot submit a paper copy or an electronic form.
- The person designated the head of household can “verbally sign” the form by attesting that all the information they have provided is true during their telephone interview.
- The household can give the eligibility worker verbal permission to contact landlords, employers, etc., to request required information – or a three-way call can be set up to get that information verbally.

If people need more help with their recertifications, they can ask one of the following community agencies to act on their behalf to help them recertify.

See a list of those agencies at mn.gov/dhs/assets/2020-06-03-snap-outreach-grantees-ffy-2020-22_tcm1053-434573.pdf.

Staff of that agency can be directly involved in helping submit information to the county or tribal office and can get information about the household’s case to help with the recertification process.

Contact information for county and tribal human services agencies

The Minnesota Department of Human Services website has links to:

- [County websites](#)
- [Tribal websites](#)

There is also a list in PDF format of the general contact information for county and tribal human services offices at mn.gov/dhs/general-public/about-dhs/contact-us/counties-and-regional-offices/.

What information do people have to verify or update at recertification?

Required information	Cash programs	SNAP	Housing Support: 6 month reports
Identity of applicant or authorized representative (driver's license, state ID, passport, etc.)	✓	✓	
Social Security numbers of all people applying for help	✓	✓	
Residency in Minnesota (state ID, lease agreement, etc.)	✓	✓	
Income (paystubs, pension, etc.) or any other money coming into your household (unemployment, sponsor income, etc.). The agency will verify Social Security income.	✓	✓	✓
Housing costs (rent/house payment receipt, mortgage, lease, etc.)	✓	✓	
Medical costs (prescription and medical bills, etc.)		✓	
Relationship to other household members (birth certificates, marriage licenses, court documents, etc.)	✓		
Checking and savings accounts (bank statement, etc.)	✓		
Value of vehicles (cars, trucks, motorcycles, trailers, campers)	✓		
Current value of stocks/bonds, certificates of deposit, trusts (statement, etc.)	✓		
Utility costs (utility statement, phone bill, etc.)	✓		
Proof of illness or disability (doctor's statement, etc.)	✓		