



# SNOQUALMIE INDIAN TRIBE-WSDA TRIBAL EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE VOUCHER PROGRAM POLICY

CATEGORY: Food Assistance-Grant

EFFECTIVE DATE: 12/1/2023

DEPARTMENT: General Resources

RESOLUTION: 271-2023

OFFICER: Community Services

TRIBAL COUNCIL APPROVAL DATE:12/1/23

## OVERVIEW

The Tribal Council of the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe ("Tribe") hereby establishes a Tribal Emergency Food Assistance Voucher Program ("Program") under the guidance of the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP) to provide emergency short-term food assistance to qualified Snoqualmie Tribal households as outlined in the eligibility requirements below. This Program Policy ("Policy") is intended to create a clear understanding of the eligibility requirements for, and services and limitations of, the Program.

## PURPOSE

The goal of the Program is to serve Snoqualmie Tribal households by improving access to safe and nutritious foods to those that may be facing financial burdens that otherwise would threaten their access to food for their household. The funding is offered in the form of a short-term food voucher payable to the eligible applicant to allow flexibility in vendor used. The applicant must either: 1) have a qualified life change that has recently presented a challenge to their financial well-being and threatened food stability in their primary household; or 2) be a current low-income household utilizing the STOWW-LIHEAP utility assistance program.

The Snoqualmie Tribal Council wishes to ensure that no Snoqualmie Tribal household in the community will be without basic fundamental necessities of life. The Program will not completely fund all of members' financial and other needs, but is designed to lessen the burden of food expenses. This program is funded through a combination of state, federal, and tribal funding regulated through the Washington Department of Agriculture Tribal EFAP program.



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## POLICY

The Program provides a Tribal food voucher in a flat rate amount based on household size to a qualified applicant once per month for a period no longer than two (2) months. The applicant must submit receipts showing the usage of the voucher within 60 days of issuance before being issued a second voucher. The program can only be accessed once per state fiscal year per eligible household. All state and federal funds through this program are limited in use to households within the state of Washington; Tribal match funds will be made available to eligible households outside of the state of Washington. Funding is limited and available on a first come, first serve basis yearly with the program expiring no later than June 30, 2025.

## 1. ELIGIBILITY

- A. For purposes of this Policy, a household is defined as those persons who reside in the same home as a family unit. The term does not include persons sharing the same general house when the living style is primarily that of a dormitory or commune.
- B. To be eligible for a voucher, a household must have:
  1. At least one adult enrolled Snoqualmie Indian Tribal Member; or
  2. An enrolled minor child, provided the minor does not live in a Tribal household already receiving a voucher.
  3. The eligible applicant must spend at least 51% of the month in the household to apply for a voucher.
- C. To be eligible for a voucher, the household must have experienced one or more of the below qualifying life changes within the last 90 days from date of application:
  1. Change in legal marital status that affects financial stability (i.e., marriage, divorce, death, legal separation).
  2. Change in number of dependents (i.e., birth, adoption, death, or addition of a vulnerable adult).
  3. Change in employment status due to job loss.
  4. Loss of, or significant change to, current financial status that threatens food stability.
  5. Facing eviction or homelessness which is causing food insecurity (e.e., sharing housing due to economic hardship, living in hotels, living in transitional shelters, migrant children, etc.)
  6. Victim of domestic violence or families/children that fall under protective services and are in need of food assistance.
  7. Considered low income and on the Tribe's STOWW program for utility assistance must have been approved on the STOWW program prior to applying for voucher, must have applied for STOWW within 30 days of applying for this program to ensure verification of low income.
- D. Eligible households must complete and submit Tribal Emergency Food Voucher Application, sign the understanding statement, and complete and submit a Form W-9.



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## 2. APPLICATION PROCESS

- A. Complete the Tribal Emergency Food Voucher Application and submit it to the General Resources Department with a Form W-9.
- B. After the General Resources Department receives all necessary documents, the application will be reviewed for completeness.
- C. All denials will be reviewed by the Program Manager for accuracy prior the applicant being notified.
- D. The General Resources Department processes the administrative functions within 14 business days of receipt of a completed application (i.e., denials/approval letters, processing documents through finance, etc.)

## 3. LIMITS ON DISTRIBUTION

- A. Vouchers are only available once per household per month for a period of no more than two (2) months within a state fiscal year (July 1-June 30). A new application is required each cycle that a household is requesting to access the program.
- B. All vouchers that are funded from State or Federal grant funding are limited to use inside of Washington State. The applicant household must reside in the State of Washington.
- C. The Tribal Match funds will be prioritized for eligible tribal households that exist outside the State of Washington.
- D. Program funding is limited; once funds are expended, the program will cease operations until the next round of grant funding is released.
- E. Assistance Funding will be given out monthly with a check or direct deposit voucher provided to the approved applicant.
- F. The voucher funding amounts issued will be as follows:
  1. Household size 1-3: \$250
  2. Household size 4 or more: \$350
- G. Purchases are limited to essential food and non-food items only as listed below.
  1. Essential food purchase must come from the following main food groups identified by the USDA:
    - (a) Meats (such as turkey, fish, pork, beef; also includes beans/nuts/seeds);
    - (b) Dairy (such as milk, yogurt, cheese, and similar dairy alternative products);
    - (c) Vegetables (such as fresh, frozen, or canned varieties);
    - (d) Fruits (such as fresh, frozen, canned, sauce or 100% fruit juice);
    - (e) Grains (such as whole grain cereals, bread, rice, pasta);
    - (f) Water; or
    - (g) Baby formula/Toddler food pouches.
  2. Non-food items are limited to the following and no more than 10% of the voucher or \$25/\$35 of each voucher respectively.
    - (a) Cleaning supplies;
    - (b) Dental hygiene products, deodorant, laundry detergent, dish soap, facial tissue, feminine products, toilet paper; or
    - (c) Diapers.



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- H. Assistance Funding *cannot* be used to purchase:
1. Processed foods/snacks such as candy, gum, cookies, crackers, granola, protein or energy bars, gummy type fruit snacks, popcorn, potato/corn/veggie chips, and beef jerky.
  2. Alcohol or tobacco products of any kind.
  3. Soda and energy drinks or carbonated beverage/flavored drinks.
  4. Pet food or pet supplies.
  5. Fast food.
  6. Desserts of any kind, including ice cream, pies, or cakes.
  7. Baked or processed breakfast items (e.g., donuts, pastries, muffins, etc.).
  8. Any non-food items other than those listed above.

## 4. PROGRAM GUIDELINES

- A. Voucher funding must be used at a recognized store or grocery. The store must be listed on the top of the receipt, all items must be easily discernable, and the purchases must have been made within 60 days of distribution of funding.
- B. The grocery store or vendor must be in Washington State for vouchers issued with state or federal grant funds.
- C. It is the responsibility of the voucher recipient ("Recipient") to track and maintain all receipts and submit them in good repair to the General Resources Department.
  1. Items purchased using Food Stamps and EBT SNAP will not be considered eligible purchases on receipts submitted for voucher funding.
  2. Items not on the eligible items list will be removed from receipt totals.
  3. A second voucher will not be issued until the first has been properly recognized.
  4. Failure to properly reconcile a voucher will result in the funds being considered taxable income. In the event the improperly used voucher is funded by state or federal funds, the voucher will be reclassified to Tribal hard dollars or the recipient will be required to return the funding to the Tribe.
- D. The Tribe reserves the right to pursue other available remedies at law and/or equity to recover misused funds.