

# If I need...Food

## Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program/SNAP (formerly Food Stamps or LINK)

Illinois Department of Human Services  
Family Community Resource Center  
[www.dhs.state.il.us](http://www.dhs.state.il.us)

SNAP (Food Stamps) are provided on a refillable Link card which looks and acts like a debit card. You may use the LINK card to purchase food items at all major grocery stores.

You must complete both an application and an interview. You also must show proof of your identity, income, Illinois residence, immigration status and Social Security Number.



### How to Access this Benefit:

You may apply on-line at

- <http://www.dhs.state.il.us>
- Click on the Icon **Apply Online, or**
- Apply in person at the IDHS-FCRC office in your area.



Other information you may want to know:

- If you pay court ordered child support to children not living with you, the support is deducted from your income for eligibility purposes.
- If under 60 or no one in the home is disabled, then assets are not counted if you have an income below 130% FPL
- If you are 60 and over, or someone in the home receives Social Security disability, SSI, Railroad Disability, Medicaid based on disability or rated by the VA as 100% disabled then assets are not counted if income is below 200% FPL. If over 200% FPL then assets are limited to \$3,250.
- If you are 60 or older, or receive Social Security or Railroad disability benefits, or are rated by the VA as 100% disabled, and you provide proof of a medical expense of \$35 an additional \$245 will be deducted from your income each month (if medical bills are over \$245 a month you can choose to use the actual bills). If you complete an on-line application this information will not be requested, you need to remember to provide the state a copy of the medical expenses

## Food Pantries

[www.feedingillinois.org](http://www.feedingillinois.org)

There are many organizations where you may get food. Some organizations allow you to choose the food you receive. Food pantries have different hours, eligibility criteria and frequency of allowed usage. Some food pantries require a referral. You can go on-line to [www.feedingillinois.org/](http://www.feedingillinois.org/), click on **NEED FOOD** Find your county on the map.

## School Lunches

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Lunch/>

If your family receives SNAP benefits your children automatically are eligible for the school lunch program.

Children can receive free lunches when the family income is at or below 130% of Federal Poverty Level and reduced price lunches when the family income is at or below 185% of Federal Poverty Level. For example, a family of 4 with a monthly income of \$3400 can enroll their children in the reduced lunch program. To find out if your family income is in the range to qualify you can go to <http://mtcil.org> and click on the Federal Poverty Level Calculator.

*How to Access this Benefit:* Apply at your child's school for the school lunch program. If you need more information call the US Department of Agriculture Public Information at 703-305-2286 or Illinois State Board of Education at 217-782-2491

## WIC (Women, Infants, and Children)

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/>

This food program is designed to help pregnant or breastfeeding women and children up to the age of five. You can enroll in WIC and still receive Food Stamps, school lunches and food from an area food pantry. To qualify the family income has to be at or below 185% of Federal Poverty Level\*.

*How to Access this Benefit:* Go to the IDHS website at [www.dhs.state.il.us](http://www.dhs.state.il.us). Go to the office locator section, at the bottom of the page. In the TYPE drop down menu click on the WIC program. In the COUNTY drop menu enter your county (if you are in Cook County you will also have to enter the Zip Code). This will then show you the address for the local WIC office.

If you care for foster children, your income is not used to determine if the foster child is able to receive WIC services.

## Senior Food Assistance Programs

<http://www.state.il.us/aging/default.htm>

There are a number of food programs that may be available for seniors.

- Congregate Meal and Nutrition- meals are often served at sites such as senior centers, churches, senior housing facilities and community buildings
- Home-Delivered Meals- **Illinois Meals-on-Wheels** is a private/public partnership, helping to fill the "gaps" left by the state and federally funded home delivered meals program.
- Senior Farmers' Market Coupons – This is a federally funded program that provides coupons to low-income seniors to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at local farmers' markets.

*How to Access this Benefit:* Contact your **Area Agency on Aging** <http://www.state.il.us/aging/2aaa/aaa-main.htm> or the Department on Aging **Senior Help Line at 1-800-252-8966, 1-888-206-1327 (TTY).**



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# If I need...Medical Care

<http://health.illinois.gov/>

## COBRA

<http://www.dol.gov/ebsa/newsroom/fscobra.html>

COBRA provides qualified persons the right to temporary continuation of health coverage for 18 months after a job ends. The cost of the COBRA coverage is usually more expensive than what the health coverage cost when employed since the employer subsidy is no longer available. It is ordinarily less expensive, though, than individual health coverage.



Not all employers are required to offer COBRA coverage (usually the employer has to have 20 or more employees). If your employment ends (voluntarily or involuntarily or hours are reduced resulting in the end of employer sponsored insurance), your former employer will notify you if you qualify.

If your dependents are no longer qualified for health coverage through your plan, they may be able to continue coverage through COBRA. Qualified beneficiaries have at least 60 days to opt for COBRA coverage from either the coverage loss date or the date the COBRA election notice is provided by the employer or plan administrator (whichever is later).

*How to Access this Benefit:* Contact your former employer or call U.S. Department of Labor at 1-866-444-3272.

## Family Care/All Kids

<http://www.allkids.com>

**Children** under age 19 can receive medical coverage through **All Kids**. Children are eligible regardless of citizenship status. When family income is over 200%FPL\*, children must also be uninsured for 12 months to qualify. If insurance coverage has ended due to the loss of a job or you have COBRA coverage this rule is waived. Premiums may be charged based on the family income.

The household income for families to qualify for All Kids is capped at 300% FPL. If income is over the limit, and medical coverage is still needed you may want to consider applying for a Family Health Spenddown Plan with your local IDHS Family Community Resource Center.

**Adults** receive medical coverage through the **Family Care** program if they are a parent, step-parent or primary caregiver of related children under age 19 (this includes grandparents raising grandchildren). The adult has to be a U.S. citizen or qualified non-citizen and the family income must be at or below 133% of Federal Poverty Level\*. Examples of adults who may be able to obtain the Family Care coverage beside the parent are: a grandparent, aunt, older sibling when they are the sole caretaker of the related child.

*How to Access this Benefit:* You may apply with the local IDHS office in your area or with the Illinois Department of Health Care and Family Services on-line at <http://www.allkids.com>

## Moms and Babies

<http://www.allkids.com>

Pregnant women & children under age 1 can receive Medical Care through this program. U.S. Citizenship status is not a factor. The family income must be at or below 200% of Federal Poverty Level\*.

*How to Access this Benefit:* Call 1-866-255-5437 or apply on-line <http://www.allkids.com>

## Early Intervention

<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=30321>

This program provides valuable screening and resources to help children (ages 0 to 3), with disabilities or delays, to learn and grow. Help can be provided with:

- assistive technology devices and services
- early identification screening and assessment services
- family training, counseling and home visits
- health services necessary to enable the infant or toddler to benefit from the other early intervention services
- medical services (only for diagnostic or evaluation purposes)
- nursing services
- nutrition services occupational therapy
- physical therapy
- psychological services
- service coordination
- social work services
- special instruction/developmental therapy
- speech language pathology and audiology
- transportation and related costs
- vision services

*How to Access this Benefit:* Call (877) 275-3227 or online at <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12&officetype=4&county=> or <http://www.eiclearinghouse.org/resources.html>

## Illinois Comprehensive Health Insurance Program (CHIP)

<http://www.chip.state.il.us/default.htm>

If you don't qualify for coverage through the Illinois Pre-existing Insurance Program you may want to consider the Illinois Comprehensive Health Insurance Plan (CHIP). CHIP is a state health benefits program that is funded partly by premiums. Premiums charged range from 125%-150% of the average rates charged individuals for comparable major medical coverage. There are a number of plans available to Illinois residents:

- The Traditional Plan is available to you if you have been denied health insurance due to pre-existing conditions or your current premiums are higher than CHIP premiums and are not eligible for Medicare.
- The Medicare Plan is available to you if you are on Medicare, under 65, and are unable to obtain health insurance due to a pre-existing condition or your current premiums are higher than CHIP premiums. After January 1, 2006 this program no longer offers prescription drug benefits.
- The HIPAA Plan is available to persons who have exhausted coverage under COBRA.
- HCTC plans can help you if you are between the ages of 55 and 65 and are receiving benefits from the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) or are Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) certified. TAA certified indicates you have lost your job because your employer moved out of the country.
- If you have one of the following medical conditions it is presumed you are uninsurable. You are not required to get a rejection letter for health reasons from an insurance company before applying. You will be asked to submit a letter from your physician identifying you have one of the following conditions:

(AIDS) or Aids Related Complex (ARC)  
 Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome  
 Angina Pectoris  
 Arteriosclerosis Obliterans  
 Cerebrovascular Accident (Stroke)  
 Chemical Dependency  
 Cirrhosis of the Liver  
 Coronary Insufficiency  
 Coronary Occlusion  
 Cystic Fibrosis  
 Erythematous Disseminate  
 Friedreich's Ataxia  
 Hemophilia (Classical)  
 Hodgkin's Disease  
 Huntington's Chorea  
 Juvenile Diabetes  
 Kidney Failure Requiring Dialysis  
 Leukemia  
 Lupus  
 Metastatic Cancer  
 Multiple or Disseminated Sclerosis  
 Muscular Atrophy or Dystrophy  
 Myasthenia Gravis  
 Myotonia  
 Paraplegia or Quadriplegia  
 Parkinson's Disease  
 Poliomyelitis  
 Polycystic Kidney  
 Severe Traumatic Brain Injury  
 Sickle Cell Anemia  
 Silicosis Pneumoconiosis (Black Lung)  
 Syringomyelia  
 Wilson's Disease

How to Access this Benefit: Call 217-782-6333 or online  
<http://www.chip.state.il.us/appcentral.htm>

### **Illinois Healthy Women**

<http://www.illinoishealthywomen.com/>

Illinois Healthy Women provides family planning services to women 19-44 who are U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents whose income is at or below 185% of Federal Poverty Level and they have no insurance that covers family planning services. Some services include: birth control, pap tests, lab tests for family planning, testing and medicine for sexually transmitted infections found during a family planning visit, and mammograms.

How to Access this Benefit: Call 1-800-226-0768

### **Illinois Breast and Cervical Cancer Program**

<http://cancerscreening.illinois.gov/>

Medical coverage is provided for Breast and Cervical Cancer Screenings, or for ongoing cancer treatment. To be eligible women have to be Illinois residents, U.S. citizens or qualified immigrants and uninsured. If already receiving treatment or have a negative finding, please say this when you call since you will be given priority to access benefits.

How to Access this Benefit: Call 1-888-522-1282

### **Health Benefits for Workers with Disabilities**

<http://www.hbwdisillinois.com/>

If you have a serious disability that would meet the eligibility criteria to qualify for Social Security benefits, you may be able to purchase Medicaid coverage. You must be disabled, an Illinois resident, a U.S. citizen or qualified non-citizen and have an income at or below 350% of Federal Poverty Level\* and assets below \$25,000 (examples of exempt assets include your home, car). If you qualify you will need to pay a monthly premium.

How to Access this Benefit: Call 1-800-226-0768 for an application.

### **Illinois Warriors Assistance Program**

<http://www.illinoiswarrior.com/>



Illinois Warriors Assistance provides confidential assistance to veterans who are affected by Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

How to Access this Benefit: Call 1-866-554-4927. Family members can call for information or guidance. Someone is available 24/7 to help you.

### **Veteran's Health Care (Veterans Administration)**

<http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/online/>  
[http://www2.va.gov/directory/guide/division\\_flsh.asp?dnum=1](http://www2.va.gov/directory/guide/division_flsh.asp?dnum=1)

The Veteran's Administration operates many different health care programs.

How to Access this Benefit: Check out the clinics in your area by going to the website above or calling 877-222-8387.

## Federally Qualified or Rural Health Centers

<http://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov/>

These are clinics that receive enhanced Medicare and Medicaid funding and in return agree to provide primary health care access to low income persons. Income needs to be verified to determine payment rate.



## Free Clinics

<http://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov/>

There are numerous free clinics that operate throughout Illinois. Often these clinics serve individuals on a first come first served basis.

## Hospital Financial Assistance Programs

Hospitals often have Financial Assistance or Uninsured Discount programs to assist persons who are unable to pay hospital expenses.

*How to Access this Benefit:* Call the hospital where you received services to see if you qualify. You may have to apply for state Medicaid programs and obtain a letter saying you are not eligible for the state program.

For more information:

[http://www.illinoislegalaid.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.dsp\\_content&contentID=5827](http://www.illinoislegalaid.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.dsp_content&contentID=5827)

## Pharmaceutical Assistance

If you need emergency assistance with filling a prescription, local organizations, and county or township governments may have a program that can help in an emergency. Call them and ask.

There are also a number of resources that can help cover prescriptions.

- Needy Meds: [www.needymeds.org](http://www.needymeds.org)
- Partnership for Prescription Assistance (<http://www.pparx.org/>)
- Rx Assist (<http://www.rxassist.org/>)
- National Organization for Rare Disorders (<http://www.rarediseases.org/programs/medication>)
- Chronic Disease Fund ([www.CDFund.org](http://www.CDFund.org))
- Access to Investigational Drugs (<http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/DevelopmentApprovalProcess/HowDrugsareDevelopedandApproved/ApprovalApplications/InvestigationalNewDrugINDApplication/ucm107434.htm>)

If you have a specific illness for which you are being treated and have no insurance you can ask your doctor to help you apply for a *Pharmaceutical Assistance Program*.

For other information about different Rx Assistance programs [http://www.state.il.us/aging/3hot/pharm-assist\\_chart-rx.pdf](http://www.state.il.us/aging/3hot/pharm-assist_chart-rx.pdf)

## Mental Health Services

<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29728>

The Division of Mental Health (DMH) provides a wide variety of services at all levels for adults and children throughout the state. These services are offered through hundreds of community providers (i.e. mental health clinics, agencies and hospitals). Providers serve as 'front doors' to enter the publicly funded system of mental health care.

To link to Crisis services

<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=30893>

To locate a provider in your community

<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12>

# If I need...A Job

## Illinois WorkNet

[http://www.illinoisworknet.com/vos\\_portal/?partner=](http://www.illinoisworknet.com/vos_portal/?partner=)

Illinois WorkNet sites provide career, education and work support information for all residents and businesses. All services are free.



Some services available include job readiness workshops, resume preparation and printing, and access to job re-training. WorkNet distributes training funds authorized through the Federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Some job seekers will be eligible for job training through the local community college or an area educational vendor.

*How to Access this Benefit:*

Locate your local WorkNet office at [http://www.illinoisworknet.com/vos\\_portal/residents/en/Home](http://www.illinoisworknet.com/vos_portal/residents/en/Home)

### HINT:

During a job interview you may be asked whether you receive SNAP, TANF or other public benefits. This is not because the employer is nosy but rather the employer may be able to obtain a tax credit if he hires you. Ask your Work Net site about tax credits that employers receive, since this can enhance your chances of being hired.

## Career Building Resources

<http://www.ilworkinfo.com/icrn.htm>

<http://www.ides.state.il.us/employment/default.asp>

These resources can help you write a resume; get job search hints; explore new jobs and link to training programs.

## Veterans Services

<http://www.ides.state.il.us/veterans/default.asp>

<http://www.dol.gov/vets/>

<http://www1.va.gov/womenvet/>

There are many services available specifically for veterans. The Illinois Department of Employment has staffs who work with veterans. The IDES website also has a lot of valuable information about job fairs and special incentives given to employers to hire veterans.

The U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) website provides valuable resources including links to the Department of Veterans Affairs Transition Assistance Program.

The VA operates a program to assist women veterans <http://www1.va.gov/womenvet/>

## Services for Ex-Offenders

<http://www.ides.state.il.us/exoffenders/>

<http://www.ides.state.il.us/ExOffenders/rap.shtml>

The Illinois Department of Employment Security can assist you secure employment if you are an ex-offender.

How to Access this Benefit: To speak with someone about the Reentry Employment Service Program (RESP) which is targeted to ex-offenders call 1-312-793-9741.

There are times you are able to seal or expunge your record after an established period of time has passed. Check

<http://www.state.il.us/defender/exp.html>

The following types of convictions **can** be sealed:

- You were acquitted
- You were released without being convicted
- Your conviction was reversed
- You released with timed served
- You received a sentence of supervision or sentence of probation
- You had a conviction of conditional discharge
- You had a misdemeanor or Class 4 felony possession of the Illinois Controlled Substances Act (>10 and <30 grams, subsequent offense, >30 and <500 grams, first offense) or the Cannabis Control Act (>10 and <30 grams, subsequent offense, >30 and <500 grams, first offense)
- You had a class 4 felony violation for prostitution

The following types of criminal cases **can** be expunged:

- Arrests that do not result in a conviction (acquitted or found not guilty)
- Sentence of supervision
- First-time offender possession of cannabis or a controlled substance (1410/710 probation)
- Arrest without a conviction

## Child Care

<http://www.inccrra.org/>

Illinois provides help with child care expenses for many low to moderate income families. The help is available while you work, obtain job retraining and in some areas while you look for work. You can locate a child care program in your area at <http://www.inccrra.org/>

To see if you may be eligible for this assistance go to <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/applications/ChildCareEligCalc/eligcalc.html>

# If I need...Cash

## Unemployment Benefits

Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES)  
800-244-5631

**How to Access this Benefit:** You can apply on-line at <http://www.ides.state.il.us/> or in person at the IDES office listed above.

Other information you may want to know:

- If you were told you did not qualify for benefits due to insufficient wages, you can reapply in the next earning quarter to see if additional wages are now considered. A quarter is a 3 month work period beginning in the months of January, April, July, and October.
- If you are approved, your benefits are deposited directly into your checking account. If you don't have a checking account you will be provided a debit card. Be alert, if you use the debit card there may be usage fees to use the card at an ATM.
- You may still be able to receive Unemployment Benefits if you accept a part time job. Check with the local IDES office before you decline part-time employment.

## Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

[www.dhs.state.il.us](http://www.dhs.state.il.us)

Illinois Department of Human Services- FCRC



Temporary Assistance to Needy Families provides cash assistance and other supports to families with children under 18. You must be a U.S. Citizen or qualified immigrant and have extremely low income and assets. Grandparents and other relatives raising related children are also able to apply for cash assistance. The state does NOT count the grandparent's (or aunt's, uncle's, etc.) income or assets when determining the grandchild's eligibility. Guardianship is not required; you however will need to prove relationship by providing birth certificates that can prove the relationship.

**How to Access this Benefit.** Apply in person at the IDHS office, or begin the application on-line at [www.dhs.state.il.us](http://www.dhs.state.il.us). As part of the application, you will need to go the IDHS-FCRC office to be interviewed and begin to develop a Personal Responsibility Plan which identifies what you will do to obtain employment. Help can be provided with the cost of looking for work, obtaining training or expenses related to starting a job.

## Social Security Administration

[www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

800-772-1213

Provides ongoing cash assistance including: retirement, survivor and disability benefits. Survivor benefits can be issued to a widow(er) as early as age 60 or a disabled widow/widower as early as age 50 based on the deceased spouse's wage history.

Supplemental Security Income may be available to low-income and low asset aged (65+) or disabled persons,

**How to Access this Benefit:** Call 1-800-772-1213 or begin the application on-line at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov). You can also see if you qualify for these and other benefits at <http://www.benefits.gov/ssa>

## General Assistance (outside Chicago)

**Outside of Chicago:** If you do not qualify for state cash assistance due to care for related children or because you are 65+ or disabled, you may be able to receive help through your local township office through a program called General Assistance. Some townships also provide one time Emergency Assistance to help address a crisis. You have to live in the township to receive help and meet the programs income and asset requirements and also be a U.S. Citizen or qualified immigrant.

To locate the office that serves your area go to <http://www.toi.org/Resources/Illinois-Townships.aspx>

## Veterans Compensation and Pension

[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

Veterans who have a disability that is attributed to military service can apply for **VA Compensation**. VA Compensation provides a cash benefit based on the VA assessing the injury at anywhere from 10% to 100% disabling. Often disabilities from an injury do not appear until long after discharge. This does not affect the ability to receive VA Compensation, since there are no time limits on applying. Today many Vietnam era veterans are becoming eligible for benefits due to new discoveries being made about the impact of Agent Orange exposure.



In July 2010 the VA has written new regulations easing the application process for Veterans affected by PTSD. To find out more go to <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/compensation/>

Veterans who are disabled or elderly and low income may be able to qualify for a **VA pension**. This may be available regardless of the number of years served, to honorably discharged Veterans who served during a period of conflict. To find out more <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/pension/>

**Low income surviving dependents of veterans** who served honorably during a period of conflict may be able to get help through the VA pension program. Check out <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/pension/spousepen.htm>

Help may also be available to veterans or their spouses who need help to stay in the home or pay for the cost of nursing home care. The benefit is called **Aid and Attendance** <http://www.veteranaid.org/>

# If I need...Housing, Utility or Home Repair

## *Rent, Mortgage or Security Deposit Assistance and Homeless Prevention*

<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29723>

Many organizations in provide one-time emergency housing assistance to avoid eviction and homelessness of individuals and families who experience a short-term economic crisis. The funds may also be used to help homeless persons secure housing. Assistance is limited and households must show the ability to household expenses independently after assistance. Income eligibility and other eligibility factors apply depending on the type of funding available.

*How to Access this Benefit:*

<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=41038>

## *Housing Resources*

<http://www.ilhousingsearch.org/>

Information regarding fair market housing, senior housing, subsidized housing, reduced rent, shared housing, transitional housing programs for homeless persons, permanent supportive housing for persons who are homeless and disabled can be accessed.

## *Homeless Prevention*

<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=41038>

You may be eligible for temporary help if you are in immediate danger of eviction, foreclosure or homelessness or are currently homeless. You will be asked to document a temporary economic crisis and demonstrate an ability to meet the prospective rental/utility obligations after the assistance has been given.

## *LIHEAP/Weatherization: Make your home more energy efficient – save on your heating bills*

<http://www.ildceo.net/dceo/Bureaus/Energy+Assistance>

The Illinois Home Weatherization Program helps households whose income is at or below 200% of Federal Poverty Level\* with things like:

- Repairing or replacing windows and doors
- Furnace cleaning, safety checking, repair, or replacement
- Smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors and fire extinguishers are installed in homes without them
- Insulating walls and attics
- Sealing cracks with weather-strip and caulk

You may qualify for weatherization services whether you own or your rent your home. If you rent, the owner must agree to repairs.



LIHEAP (Low Income Housing and Energy Assistance Program) assists households with income at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level\* to help offset the cost of winter heating through direct financial assistance, energy counseling, outreach and education. An overdue bill or disconnect notice is not required

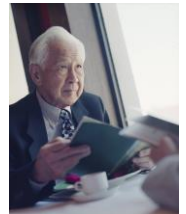
to receive LIHEAP assistance once per year. However, eligible persons must be the customer of record. Emergency assistance is available to eligible households whose utility service has been disconnected and for homeowners whose furnace is non-operational or determined unsafe to operate. Social Security numbers are required for each household member.

*How to Access this Benefit:* contact **Energy Assistance hotline 877-411-9276**

## *Senior Services*

<http://www.state.il.us/aging/1athome/athome-main.htm>

Senior Services assists residents' age 60 and older access many services that can ensure the ability of the senior to live independently in their own home. Some of the services include: home care services, home delivered meals, outreach visits, money management and elder abuse investigations. Senior Services also helps guide seniors and their families with accessing nursing home care.



*How to Access this Benefit:* Contact a local area on aging [http://www.state.il.us/aging/2aaa/aaa\\_map.htm](http://www.state.il.us/aging/2aaa/aaa_map.htm)

## *Benefit Access Program (Formerly Illinois Circuit Breaker)*

[www.cbrx.il.gov/](http://www.cbrx.il.gov/)

The Illinois Department of Aging Circuit Breaker program helps seniors (age 65 and older) and persons with disabilities with assistance to reduce license plate costs. The Circuit Breaker program for license plates and free rides for persons with disabilities is available to Illinois residents who meet income guidelines (\$27,610 for 1, \$36,635 for a family of 2, and \$45,657 for a family of 3).

*How to Access this Benefit:* Apply on-line <https://idoaweb.aging.illinois.gov/baa/Welcome.aspx> or call 1-800-624-2459.

## *Phone Assistance Programs*

<http://www.icc.illinois.gov/Consumer/LifelineAndLinkUp.aspx>  
<https://www.safelinkwireless.com/EnrollmentPublic/home.aspx>

You may qualify for assistance to help pay for installation of telephone service and monthly charges for local phone service through the Lifeline, Link-Up or SafeLink Telephone assistance programs.

To be eligible for **Lifeline or Link-Up**, individuals or families must receive benefits under one of the following programs:

- Medicaid

- Food stamps
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- National school lunch, free lunch program
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

**To qualify for Safelink** part of Lifeline Service depends on the State you live in. In general, you may qualify if...

1. You already participate in other State or Federal assistance program such as Federal Public Housing Assistance, Food Stamps and Medicaid OR
2. Your total household income is at or below of the poverty guidelines set by your State and/or the Federal Government. AND
3. No one in your household currently receives Lifeline Service through another phone carrier.
4. You have a valid United States Postal Address. In order for Safelink to ship you your free phone you must live at a residence that can receive mail from the US Post Office. Sorry, but P.O. Boxes cannot be accepted.

In addition to meeting the guidelines above you will also be required to provide proof of your participation in an assistance program, or proof of your income level.

### *Homeless Children*

<http://www.isbe.net/homeless/default.htm>

Children are considered homeless if they:

- Share housing with other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.
- Live in motels, hotels, trailer parks, cars, parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
- Live in emergency or transitional shelters.
- Are awaiting foster care placement.

Homeless youth are eligible to:

- Choose to remain in the school they attended before becoming homeless or in the school where they now reside.
- The right to immediate enrollment in school, even if lacking paperwork normally required to enroll.
- The right to receive transportation to his/her school of origin, if this is requested by the parent.
- Waiver of school fees
- Enrollment in school lunch programs

You need to let your child's school know if your child is homeless. If your school denies your child the right to register and receive services, ask to speak to the school's homeless liaison or contact the local homeless liaison at the school your child attends <http://webapps.isbe.net/homelesschildliaison/>

Help may be available from an agency that services homeless youth who are 14 to 20 years of age who:

- Lack housing
- Lack the skills needed to live on their own without parents
- Cannot return home

*How to Access this Benefits*

<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=32524>