

Navigating the Illinois DHS System:

The Basic Processes

Initial Application

Name, address, and signature are all that is needed for the form to be accepted as an application, though more information will be needed for the office to determine eligibility. In most cases the day of its submission is simply the day the office receives the application. Paper applications, however, are considered submitted on the first workday the office receives the application before 5:00p.m. PM 02-02-06

Day 1: The application or redetermination form is submitted.

Day 14 (at the latest): Applicants for SNAP and/or cash are interviewed in person or by phone¹.

Hiccups in the process:

- If they miss their interview, their cash case is immediately closed, but they have until the 30th day to request another for SNAP. PM 02-06-01-c
- If they don't submit verification, DHS will mail a request for the required documents, at which point they will have 10 days to submit them.

Day 30 (at the latest): DHS should make a decision on a SNAP or TANF case and, if eligible, authorize benefits.

Day 40: If SNAP benefits have still not been issued, it violates the Goldenson Rule².

Day 45 (at the latest): DHS should make a decision on a medical or (non-TANF) cash case and, if eligible, begin coverage.

❖ Expedited SNAP:

(< \$100 in assets and < \$151 in gross monthly income; OR housing costs > income + assets)

- **Day 1:** The application is submitted.
- **Day 1 or 2:** Applicant is interviewed.
- **Day 5:** Benefits are issued.
- **Day 7:** DHS should make a decision regarding eligibility. If verification isn't provided in time, DHS may authorize benefits for a one or two-month period. PM 02-08-05

¹ If the applicant claims that it would be a hardship for them to do a face-to-face interview, DHS must take them at their word. PM 02-06-01-b

² Due to a 1977 consent decree (Goldenson v. Trainor), if enough SNAP cases go over 40 days, the US Department of Agriculture will fine the state and pay out damages to members of those cases.



IL Hunger Coalition
Hunger Hotline:
1-800-359-2163

Renewing Benefits:

DHS will periodically check in with recipients to see whether their circumstances (such as income, household makeup, or expenses), and therefore their eligibility, have changed.³

Redetermination (Medical, SNAP, and cash cases):

Renews case at the 12th month. Even if there have been no changes since the last renewal, verification must be submitted.

Mid-Point Reporting (most SNAP and all regular-roll TANF cases): PM-19-07-07

The Mid-Point Report form is an abbreviated version of the redetermination form. If there have been no changes since the last renewal, only TANF work hours require verification.

- Form is mailed: around the 18th day of the 5th month.
- Due back: the 5th day of the 6th month.

If the form is submitted late:

- In the **6th month**: case is reopened and they get full benefits;
- In the **7th month**: case is reopened and they get prorated benefits;
- In the **8th month**: they must fill out a new application.

Appealing a DHS Decision

The request for an appeal can be made over the phone (voice: 1-800-435-0774 or TTY: 1-877-734-7429); or by submitting a Notice of Appeal Form or a letter requesting a hearing via mail, email, fax, or in person.

Applicant must request an appeal within a specific period of time – the clock starts from the date printed on the notification letter.⁴

- SNAP cases: 90 days (60 if appealing an overpayment)
- Cash or Medical cases: 60 days
- No time limit if appealing a delay or failure to make a decision.

Note: if at any point the applicant signs a Request to Withdraw Appeal Form then they give up their right to appeal the issue.

After the official hearing, DHS must issue its final decision within a specific period of time beginning with the initial appeal request:

- SNAP-only cases: 60 days
 - If found eligible, benefits must be reissued within 10 days of the decision.
- Cash or Medical cases: 90 days

³ Note: some groups (such as households in which every member is a senior or person with a disability AND does not receive any earned income) do not have to renew their benefits so frequently.

⁴ There are some circumstances in which a later date may apply.

