

## SURVEY RESULTS- December 2020

Many people made a point of expressing deep gratitude for assistance, and understanding that this is a very difficult situation.

- 35% of survey responders are not getting enough food every week that meets their basic dietary needs and restrictions.
- 45% of survey responders are receiving some kind of food assistance, 86% of them receive 3Squares Vermont benefits.
- Nearly 30% of those people report having some kind of problem with benefits, which include:
  - Some people have lost their benefits or had them cut, even though they are still well below the poverty line.
  - Some applications have been lost so benefits stopped, and people are having difficulty in reaching someone to report problems.
  - Many people with complex health issues have dietary restrictions, and the foods they can eat are more expensive. Their benefits stay the same however, so they can't buy as much food as they need.
  - Comment from a Deaf-Blind person: "Need SSP services with ASL/Tactile skills for shopping"
  - Many high-risk people are struggling to find a way to get groceries. Some give a list to a support staff (for example, through Aris) to get groceries. Here is a quote from one person about the challenges they encounter:

"I am on such a restricted diet for my issues. My aides will misread my list and bring the wrong things. trouble is, none can be returned to the store like in the past.... stores will not accept returns or exchanges due to covid. I use food stamps only so this is a huge issue."
- "EBT Food" benefits & delivery
  - Aldi is the only grocery store that accepts EBT Food benefits with online ordering and delivery through Instacart (there are only 3 Aldi stores in Vermont)

- Can be used on Amazon, but no fresh produce, and fresh meat is very expensive
- Walmart does not deliver in Vermont, and curbside pickup is only available at one store in all of Vermont
- “EBT Cash” benefits cannot be used to have groceries delivered **anywhere** in Vermont (see *screenshot on next page from DCF website, with pertinent information highlighted*).
- Ordering groceries through a third party (such as Instacart) is very expensive
  - Comment from a person with chronic conditions, in August, just one grocery trip that cost \$94.78 in person had the estimated cost of \$135 through Instacart, with an Instacart subscription (not including the subscription fee)
- Food donation programs
  - Not getting a sustainable amount of food
  - Not getting healthy foods, whole grains, fresh produce and meat, and many foods are “...barely edible...the nutritional value of many commodities [is] questionable.”
  - Several people receive foods that they can’t eat due to medical conditions
  - Many people receive foods that are close to – or past – expiration dates, and on the verge of spoilage
  - Some have received excessive quantities of some foods that can’t be used, such as:
    - Two 10-pound bags of white potatoes for one person (who never uses white potatoes)
    - Two 10-pound boxes of breaded chicken patties
- Other gaps:
  - Problems finding transportation to larger stores where benefits go farther:
 

“I am stuck buying small overpriced quantities of food from a small local store”
  - Problems getting help to run errands, and pick up prescriptions (some places have added a delivery option for prescriptions, but there’s usually a fee for this, around \$10 in some places)

Administration

Benefit Programs

- 3SquaresVT
- 3SquaresVT in a SNAP
- Child Care Subsidy
- Crisis Fuel
- Emergency/General Assistance
- Energy Assistance
- Essential Person
- Farm to Family
- Fuel Assistance
- ICAN
- Micro Business Development
- Post-Secondary Education
- Reach Ahead
- Reach Up
- Reach Up Child Only
- Vermont EBT Card

Buy Food Online

You can now use your EBT card to buy eligible food items online.

### From ALDI Grocery Stores

- ▶ Order online from stores in Bennington, Brattleboro or Rutland
- ▶ Pay with EBT Food Only ▶ Same-day delivery or pickup via Instacart
- ▶ Pay for non-food items (e.g., taxes, tips and fees) another way

[LEARN HOW IT WORKS](#)

### On Amazon.com

- ▶ Order online ▶ Pay with EBT Food Only ▶ Delivered to your home

[HERE'S HOW IT WORKS](#)

### On Walmart.com

- ▶ Order online ▶ Pay with EBT Food or Cash
- ▶ Pickup at Bennington store only ▶ No delivery in VT

[HERE'S HOW IT WORKS](#)

### If you have any questions

Call our Benefits Service Center at 1-800-479-6151.