

Advocacy Update 11.2.2020



H-E-B, Brookshire's, Spring Markets, and Super 1 Foods Seek to Use Online SNAP Benefits

[The US Department of Agriculture Food & Nutrition Service \(USDA-FNS\) announced today](#) that 4 major Texas food retailers are currently going through the approval and testing process that will allow online purchasing using SNAP benefits in the next few months.

Currently, in Texas, only Amazon & Walmart can accept SNAP benefits for online food purchases. In addition to saving working families time, by reducing shopping hours, online purchases will help protect the elderly and high-risk from exposure to COVID-19. Delivery fees, convenience fees, and tip costs are not covered by SNAP benefits.

History

A mandate in the 2014 Farm Bill requested the FNS to test the ability for online SNAP food purchases, instead of *in-store* only shopping. In 2016, FNS asked for retail volunteers who were willing to conduct the purchasing pilot, with Amazon & Walmart immediately stepping up to lead the test sites.

The pilots slowly launched into eight states (AL, IA, MD, NE, NJ, NY, OR, and WA). At the end of 2019, those first pilots were proclaimed to be a large success.

COVID-19 has accelerated these initial pilots into rapid national expansion. Currently all states but Alaska, Louisiana, Maine & Montana now have online eligible food purchases through Amazon and/or Walmart.

With more local retailers joining the online purchase program, signing up more eligible households for SNAP is of the utmost importance to increase the nutritional health of our communities and infuse federal dollars into local stores.



Questions or Comments?
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