Tips for Establishing CalFresh EBT On Campus

Prepping: First, you need to see if at least one of your campus markets will qualify as a Retail Food Store: Retail Store Eligibility USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

  a. Resources: Video on Stocking Requirement and What are Staple Food?

Applying Steps: If you believe your store(s) will qualify, go to the “How Do I Apply to Accept Benefits?” page on the USDA FNS website and follow the steps given online (These steps are also outlined below).

1. Get a USDA Account

  a. Register for a USDA eAuthentication account in order to obtain access to the online application
  b. Return to this page after you activate your USDA eAuthentication account to apply.

2. Complete the Application

  a. Complete the online application or if you own 10 or more stores, consider whether you are a Multi-Store Owner (MSO).

Helpful Tip: After starting an online application, you have 30 days to complete and submit your application. If you application is not submitted within 30 days, it will be deleted. Before starting your online application, make sure that you have name(s), home address(es), and Social Security Number(s) for each store owner, and sales data for the store.

3. Submit Supporting Documentation: Your application is not complete until you submit the required supporting documents. Instructions for submitting your documentation are provided at the end of the online application.

4. Check Application Status: After you submit your supporting documents to FNS, you can check the status of your application in real time.

SNAP Retailer Service Center: FNS will process your application and contact you if they need further information. If you have questions, please call the SNAP Retailer Service Center at 1-877-823-4369.

Keeping EBT After Approval: If your EBT store(s) on campus are going to be closed for 3-months or more, contact your local county EBT representative and FNS at 1-877-823-4369 before the planned closure. Even with this notification of closure, some California campuses have reported their EBT approval being canceled if no sales are recorded for 3-months. We recommend campuses do not close stores for 3-months to avoid the trouble of a possible cancelation of EBT. Stores should also promote EBT year-round to keep EBT sales up and increase healthy food access for students on campus.