
Government Benefits for Youth

NOTE: This is a complicated area of the law, it is important to talk with a lawyer about your special situation.

If you are **not** a permanent resident (green card) or a U.S. Citizen, do NOT apply for government benefits until you talk with a lawyer.

I am under 18.

Can I get help from government benefit programs?

If you are under 18 years-old, you may be able to get help from government benefit programs depending on your situation. Each program has income limits and assets limits. This means you can't make too much money and you can't own too many things.

- **If you are living with your parent, legal custodian (by court order), or family member and you have a child, you may be able to get:**
 - A monthly cash benefit from the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)
 - Food stamps (now called SNAP - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)
 - Medical Assistance
 - WIC (Women, Infants and Children). You can also get WIC if you are pregnant.

Your parents' income and assets are counted for some of these programs.

- **If you are living with a person who is not your relative or legal custodian, you may be able to get:**
 - Food stamps (now called SNAP - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)
 - Medical Assistance
 - WIC (Women, Infants and Children). You can also get WIC if you are pregnant.



You may be able to get these things whether you have a child or not. If the person you live with has a Delegation of Parental Authority, but is not related to you, you can't get monthly cash from MFIP.

- **If you are living away from home and do not have a child**, you may be able to get:
 - A monthly cash benefit from the General Assistance (GA) program
 - Food stamps (now called SNAP - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)
 - Medical Assistance.

- **If you are a teen parent living away from home** due to physical or emotional abuse to you or your child by a parent, legal guardian or legal custodian, you may be able to get:
 - A monthly cash benefit from the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)
 - Food stamps (now called SNAP - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)
 - Medical Assistance
 - WIC (Women, Infants and Children)

If you are a teen parent and want to get MFIP benefits, you have to live with an approved adult.

You may also be able to get subsidized day care to help pay your child care costs.

- **If you or your child are disabled** you may be able to get disability benefits from the Social Security Administration. There are two disability programs:
 - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - Retirement, Survivor's, Disability Insurance (RSDI).

If you qualify for either of these programs you will get a monthly cash benefit. You may also be able to get food stamps (now called SNAP - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and Medical Assistance.

If you get SSI and have a child, you can get a monthly cash benefit for your child from the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP). If your child gets SSI, you can get a monthly cash benefit for you from MFIP.



- **If one of your parents is deceased**, you may be able to get survivor's benefits from Retirement, Survivors, Disability Insurance Program (RSDI) from the Social Security Administration.

How do I get help from these programs?

You need to apply for all of the programs in this fact sheet.

Apply to the Social Security Administration for SSI and RSDI. Call 1-800-772-1213. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, call our toll-free TTY number, 1-800-325-0778. You can apply online at www.ssa.gov.

Apply for all the others with your county department of economic assistance. Call your county information phone number or go online to www.dhs.state.mn.us. That is the Department of Human Services website, there is a list of county contact numbers on their website.



First Call for Help is a good resource to find help and information. Call 211 statewide or 1 (800) HELP555. You can also call them at (651) 291-0211.

See our fact sheet [G-2 MFIP for Parents Under Age 18](#) for more information on the MFIP Program.

To find other fact sheets, including any mentioned above, go to www.lawhelpmn.org/LASMfactsheets

To find your local legal aid office by county go to www.lawhelpmn.org/resource/legal-aid-offices

Fact Sheets are legal information NOT legal advice. See a lawyer for advice.

Don't use this fact sheet if it is more than 1 year old. Ask us for updates, a fact sheet list, or alternate formats.

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