

# SNAP Tiny Training: *Students of Higher Education*

## It's that time of year again...

While summer may be in full swing, the beginning of the school year is just around the corner.

August is one of the months we begin to see students applying for SNAP benefits. This Tiny Training is going to focus on how students need to be looked at (or not) when you are determining eligibility for SNAP. We will give you the answers and explanations to some of the most common questions we get this time of year. We will also give you plenty of policy references so you can do your homework and be ready when the school bell rings.

### Have a Question?

E-mail SNAP Policy at:  
SNAP.Policy@state.or.us

Fax: (503) 373-7032

## Do you need to even check student status?

When your applicant says they are student there are a couple of upfront things you can do that might save you some work.

*First*—how old is your applicant? Only those students who are between 18 and 49 need to meet special criteria. If your applicant does not fall into this age group, no need to determine student status.

*Second*— Are they attending higher education at least half time? If they are not in higher education and attending at least half time, no need to determine student status.

*Third*—if they are in the age range and attending higher education at least half time—do they have a meal plan (not to be confused with room and board) through the school? If yes, they are not eligible for SNAP benefits. If not, you can move on to determine whether or not they meet one of the student criteria.



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## Student Criteria

Once you have determined a person is considered a student for SNAP, you must determine if they meet any of the special student criteria. Most of the criteria has remained the same for years, but there have been a few changes since 2010.

Students working with Employment Department Programs such as the Trade Readjustment Allowance, Self-Employment Insurance or the Apprenticeship

Program meet the special student criteria. In addition students receiving UC also meet the criteria.

Work-study policy has changed recently as well. A person must have been awarded, have a start date and actually work in the work study position in the current term.

See [SNAP D. 3](#) for information about all of the student criteria.

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*Students who do not meet the special student criteria are not in the filing group. None of their income counts and no credit is given for any expenses they pay.*

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### Tiny Tidbits and Tooltips

Use the *Educational Income Calculation for ERDC and SNAP* worksheet (DHS 7351) to help determine countable student education.

**SNAP Webtools** is a helpful place, check it out at:

<http://www.dhs.state.or.us/training/foodstamps/webtools.htm>

## Income and Deductions

Educational income is designated specifically for educational expenses. If you are not sure whether or not something is considered educational income please see: SSP—[Counting Client Assets \(CCA\)\(B\)\(24\)](#), APD—[CCA\(B\)\(25\)](#). In addition [Multiple Program Worker Guide #14](#) will give you information about funding sources of educational income.

These manual sections are important because they will help you determine whether the educational income is excluded or countable.

Only eligible students will have their income counted. In addition, ineligible students with income will not have costs they pay such as shelter and utilities used on the case. The basic steps to figuring out what to count and how to count it are easy!

- \* First—Is the income excluded (CCA (B)(24)(3))?
- \* If not—total all of the countable educational income and deduct any costs such as tuition, fees, books, supplies etc. (Use the educational income worksheet to help you with this step).
- \* The remainder is counted on the SNAP case. However some income will be counted as EML and some as STU. Please check out CCA (B)(24)(6) for more information.

## Student Verification and Interim Changes

In recent months, the number of policy questions about students has increased. Most of the questions are about how, whether and when to act on reported changes in student status.

The following are real life questions and the answers we have given. These are meant to help you determine how to act. Please keep in mind that NO SNAP reporting system requires clients to inform DHS about changes to student status.

For each and every answer you should also assume it includes the requirement to narrate for later follow-up.

### Verifying Student Income

The worker has determined a student is ineligible. Should she pend for the student aid award letter to look for work study?

- \* *No. The eligibility worker should review student criteria (SNAP-D.3) with the client to determine eligibility and accept their statement about whether they are in a work study job.*

Most student income is excluded. Why can we not accept the student's statement that they have Title IV income only?

- \* *The answer is that whether*

*or not you can accept their statement depends. You must have a conversation with your client about the types of financial aid they have. Any potentially countable income has to be verified. If there is countable income, you must verify it. Be sure to use the interactive DHS 7351 to help correctly calculate the countable educational income.*

### Processing the Interim Change Report (DHS 852)

When the DHS 852 is received, the client notes one of the household members is now a student. If they do not provide any verification of student status, does the worker need to take action?

- \* *The question has been removed from the DHS 852 because it is against federal regulations for us to ask questions about student status at Interim Report. There is not enough information to determine if the person would meet student eligibility criteria, so no action should be taken.*

**(Continued on page 5)**

### Did You Know

A person is no longer considered a student when any of the following apply:

- The person graduates;
- The person drops out;
- The person withdraws from the individual's classes;
- The person reduces their credit hours to less than half time;
- The person is suspended or expelled from school;
- The person does not intend to register for the next school term (excluding summer term).

## Policy References

[SNAP D 3 Students](#)

[Multiple Program Worker Guide #14 Educational Income](#)

[Counting Client Assets \(B\) \(14\) Educational Income](#)

[461-135-0570 Eligible and Ineligible Students; SNAP](#)

[461-145-0150 Educational Income](#)

[SS-PT-13-013 \(change in work-study criteria\)](#)

[SS-PT-11-030 \(allowing UC recipients to meet special criteria\)](#)

[SS-PT-10-001 \(Oregon Employment Department Programs\)](#)

[SS-IM-09-041 \(acting on changes\)](#)

## Accuracy Activity

This Accuracy Activity will help you validate, refresh and reset your student knowledge!

*Notice the policy references to the left? Please use them!*

1. Student status is an eligibility factor that must be looked at for every individual on a case? True or False
2. How can you tell if the person is participating in an Employment Department training program?
3. Sansa has been awarded work-study. She already has an off campus job for 12 hours a week so she could not accept the work-study position because she does not have the time to work a second job. Is she an eligible student?
4. How do you count Unemployment benefits for an individual that is going to school and receiving these benefits because they are a displaced worker under the Trade Act?
5. Bran is a student applying for benefits in September, and he has applied for Financial Aid but has not been approved yet. He has not received an award letter. You would pend the application for his award letter. True or False
6. Ygritte does not meet any of the student criteria, but she is also an ineligible non-citizen with income. Do I prorate her income?
7. Jorah is living in a dorm and has a very limited meal plan. Is he eligible to receive SNAP?
8. Tyrion turns in his 852 and marks in the income section that he is living off of his financial aid. What do you need to do?

## Student Verification and Interim Changes (continued)

If they do provide verification of student status, does the worker need to take action?

- \* *Proof of being a student does not provide all the information needed to verify whether someone meets the student criteria, so no action is necessary. But if income is reported on the 852 it may need to be verified. If you can determine that the educational income will be excluded (loans, title IV) then you would not need to follow up. If not, you may need to get verification.*

### Changes Reported During the Cert Period

An ineligible student client reports on a change report she is not going to school anymore. Do we change this or wait until recertification or certification?

- \* *We consider this a request for benefits. Call the former student or send a DHS 210A to collect the information needed to add her to the ongoing case.*

A client on an open case reports that he is now attending college. Based on information from the last cert, he is not an eligible student. How do we act?

- \* *Clients are not required to report anything on student status during the cert. We will not know if he is an eligible student unless we go through all the criteria in SNAP-D.3. So narrate only and do not pursue until REC.*

A student client states she dropped out of school after the spring term and does not intend to return in fall. Does this need to be verified before making her eligible?

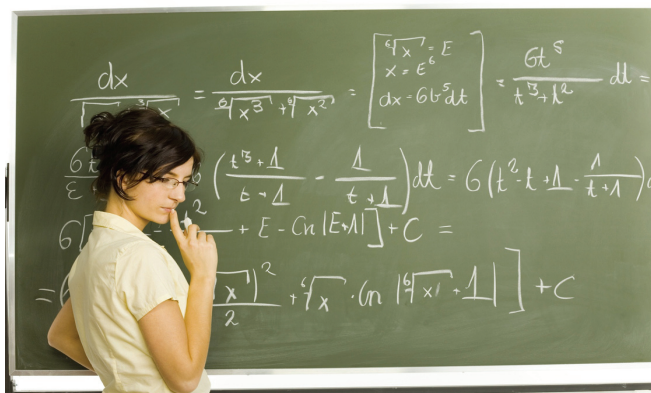
- \* *No. Clients do not have to verify student status. In most cases, it is not possible to verify that someone does not intend to re-enroll in college. Have a conversation with the client. If they say they are not going to return in the fall, accept their statement. If you find their statement questionable, ask yourself why. You need to have a specific, compelling and narrated reason why the statement is questionable and send a pending form that requests reasonable proof.*

A student turns in an 852 during the summer term. She previously had income from a non-Title IV work study job, but because of the summer break, she is not working and has no income right now.

- \* *She is not required to report, nor do we need to follow up on student status. Remove the income.*

Household with an ineligible student turns in either a change or an 852 showing the ineligible student is now working.

- \* *We are required to verify income, so you would need to follow up on student status to see if we would count it. In addition, you would need to gather verification on the income if the student is now eligible.*

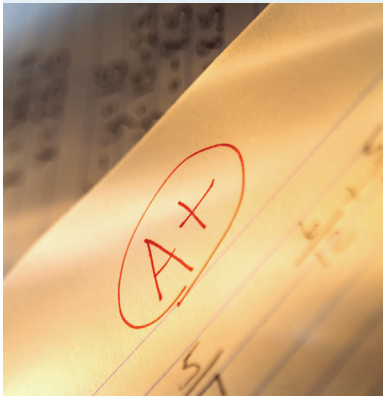




## Future Topic Ideas?

*Have a great idea for a Tiny Training? Please feel free to submit your ideas or topics to the SNAP Policy Unit.*

*We are always looking for new ways to get information to the field and give staff the tools they need.*



## Accuracy Activity Answers (No Peeking!)

1. FALSE – Student status must be reviewed for individuals between the ages of 18 and 49, who are attending higher education at least half-time.
2. These programs can be identified with a code 066, 067, 070, 079 or 088 on the ECLM screen.
3. NO – Although federal work study has been awarded, Sansa has not pursued a work-study position because of the conflict with her off campus employment.
4. These benefits are counted the same as all other UC benefits.
5. FALSE – If Bran is an eligible student, ask about any other countable educational income. Wait until Interim ICR or recertification to follow up on the income not yet received.
6. NO. Student status is determined in the filing group. Citizen status is looked at in the Need group. If Ygritte is an ineligible student, she cannot be included in the financial group which means her income is not counted on the case.
7. NO. Students who are receiving a meal plan are not eligible for SNAP.
8. ASK MORE QUESTIONS to determine whether or not the Financial Aid is countable or excluded (loans vs. scholarships etc.). This can be done with a call to the client—you can take their statement on the types of financial aid they have. If you cannot reach the client you will need to get a copy of the award letter.

## Have a Question?

E-mail SNAP Policy at:  
[SNAP.Policy@dhsosha.state.or.us](mailto:SNAP.Policy@dhsosha.state.or.us)  
Fax: (503) 373-7032

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