

SNAP Retailer Reminder - Bag Fees, Sales Tax, Seasonal Items

Grocery Bag Fees

Recently some states have begun charging customers a fee for each shopping bag (plastic and/or paper) provided by a grocery store. Other states are considering charging grocery bag fees as well. State's grocery bag fees may not be paid for with SNAP benefits. In addition, we do not have authority to exempt SNAP clients from this fee. Therefore, grocery bag fees must be paid for using cash, credit card, or non-SNAP debit. Stores that give discounts at the point-of-sale if customers bring their own bags must treat SNAP clients in the same manner.

Sales Tax

SNAP licensed retailers may not charge state or local sales tax on SNAP purchases. This does NOT mean that food items that are subject to sales tax (e.g. soft drinks, snack foods, etc) are ineligible. Eligible items that are subject to sales tax may still be purchased with SNAP benefits. Sales tax, however, cannot be charged when SNAP is used to make the purchase. Sales tax can, however, be charged on the portion of eligible items paid for with manufacturers or other discount coupons. Such tax cannot be paid with SNAP benefits.

Seasonal Gift Items

Holiday gift baskets for Valentine's Day, Easter, Mothers Day, Thanksgiving, Holiday stockings, and seasonal items like holiday tins are NOT eligible for purchase with SNAP benefits if the value of the nonfood part of the item clearly accounts for more than 50% of the purchase price.

For Example

- A stuffed holiday bear sold with a small package of chocolate for \$14.99 would not be eligible for SNAP purchase, but
- A gift basket consisting primarily of meats and cheeses or snack foods, and including a small toy — where the cost of the food items clearly accounts for more than 50% of the purchase

price of the item — would be eligible for purchase with SNAP benefits.

Baskets and holiday stockings that contain any amount of alcohol, cigarettes, cat, dog, or other pet food and/or pet toys may **not** be purchased with SNAP benefits.

We encourage all SNAP participating stores to advertise healthy food items and encourage all people, including SNAP recipients, to eat healthfully. Visit <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/> for more information.

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