



Food and
Nutrition
Service

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Center

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Retirement Accounts excluded From Resources by the Act

The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended, limits the amount of resources that a household may have and still receive SNAP benefits. The current resource limits can be found on the FNS website at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/resources-rules-resource-limits>. Resources can include, but are not limited to, cash and funds in checking or savings accounts.

Many retirement accounts are excluded from consideration as a resource. In 2017, FNS released updated guidance to State agencies on the treatment of retirement accounts in determining SNAP eligibility, which can be accessed at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/updated-retirement-account-exclusions-resources>. If a retirement account is included in the table below, the account is excluded as a resource in determining a household’s eligibility.

The following types of retirement accounts are excluded from consideration as resources:

Authorized	Plan/Account	What Is It?
Section 401 IRS Code	Traditional Defined-Benefit Plan	Employer-based retirement plan that promises retirees a certain benefit upon retirement, regardless of investment performance.
Section 401(a) IRS Code	Cash Balance Plan	Employer-based “hybrid” plan that combines features of defined benefit and defined contribution plans. Each employee is allocated a hypothetical account, but account balances accrue at a specified rate, rather than depending on investment performance.
Section 401(a) IRS Code	Employee Stock Ownership Plan	Similar to a profit-sharing plan that must be primarily invested in the employer’s stock and under which distributed benefits must be offered in the form of the employer’s stock.
Section 401(a) IRS Code	Keogh Plan	“Informal” term for retirement plans available to self-employed people.
Section 401(a) IRS Code	Money Purchase Pension Plan	Employer-based defined contribution plan under which annual contributions are fixed by a set formula.
Section 401(a) IRS Code	Profit-Sharing Plan	Employer-based defined contribution plan under which employer contributions may, but need not be, linked to profits. Usually refers to non-matching employer contributions.
Section 401(a) IRS Code	Simple 401(k)	401(k)-type plans available only to small businesses: exempt from certain restrictions and subject to some
Section 401(a) IRS Code	401(k)	Defined contribution plan that allows employees to defer receiving compensation in order to have the amount contributed to the plan. Commonly referred to as a “cash or deferred arrangement” (CODA). Some 401(k) plans allow after-tax Roth 401(k) contributions.
Section 403(a) IRS Code	403(a)	Plans that are similar to 401(a) plans but are funded through annuity insurance
Section 403(b) IRS Code	403(b)	Tax-sheltered annuity or custodial account plan offered by tax-exempt section 501(c) organizations or public schools. Many are funded by employee

		contributions that resemble 401(k)s.
Section 408 IRS Code	IRA	Vehicle for tax-deferred retirement savings controlled by individuals rather than employers.
Section 408(p) IRS Code	Simple retirement account IRA	Employer-based IRA (to which employers and employees contribute) available only to small businesses
Section 408(k) IRS Code	Simplified Employee Pension Plan (SEP)	Employer-sponsored plan available only to small businesses; allows employer to contribute to employee accounts that function as IRAs and are subject mostly to IRA rules. Generally ceased to apply in 1996.
Section 408A IRS Code	myRA	Same as IRA, except that qualified distributions are tax exempt.
Section 457(b) IRS Code	Eligible 457(b) Plan	Funded plan offered by state and local governments or unfunded plan offered by nonprofit organizations.
Section 501(c) (18) IRS Code	501(c)18 Plan	Plan offered mostly by unions. Had to be set by June 1959 and are now largely obsolete.
Section 8439 of Title 5 USC	Federal Thrift Savings Plan	Plan offered by the federal government to its employees.