

Tribal SNAP Eligibility Determination Project

Program Description

The Tribal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Eligibility Determination Project honors Tribes' inherent right to design and operate appropriate, culturally relevant programs on behalf of the populations they serve. Tribal governments are positioned to better serve Native Americans in their communities and can increase access to SNAP for those who might not have the resources and information to access public assistance programs through a state agency.

Since 2009, DSHS has operated TSED in partnership with the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe through an approved U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service demonstration project waiver. While DSHS' Community Services Division maintains oversight and program development responsibilities for the Basic Food program and TSED, the waiver allows Tribes to use their own employees to determine Basic Food eligibility and issue EBT cards to Tribal community members.

In 2023, the TSED waiver expanded participation to the following Tribes:

- Quinault Indian Nation.
- Lummi Nation.
- Quileute Tribe.
- Spokane Tribe of Indians.

This project is in alignment with the Economic Services Administration's strategic goal to develop, expand and nurture strategic relationships with partners who serve shared customers. It also recognizes Tribal sovereignty in developing and delivering programs. See the [Tribal Relations one-pager](#) for more information on our continued collaboration and partnership with Tribes.



Highlights

- In February 2024, DSHS began visiting four new Tribal partners to review program requirements and complete readiness assessments. These assessments help DSHS understand preferences, barriers and limitations for each Tribe to process Basic Food.
- Enhancements to DSHS eligibility systems are underway to allow the four additional Tribes to issue EBT cards and determine SNAP eligibility.
- DSHS and Tribes continue to work together to make individual timelines, identify and acknowledge each Tribe's strengths and needs, and pursue collaborative government-to-government relationships to help each Tribe establish its own Tribal Services Office.

More information:

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