

We know that the current situation with COVID-19 is unnerving, and that each day brings new realities and challenges. **WithinReach is adapting and responding in a way that both prioritizes the health and safety of our staff, and allows us to continue serving Washington families in the best way possible.**

We remain committed to your health, and as your partner, have been working to ensure you get access to the resources you need. Please reach out to us if we can assist you in applying for health insurance, SNAP, ORCA LIFT, or to learn more about WIC benefits and healthy, early childhood development services.

Here are the best ways to connect with us while we require our staff to work from home:

- **Leave your name and number on our Help Me Grow Washington Hotline at 1-800-322-2588 – we'll call you back within the same day. Our hotline hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.**
- **Contact us through [the online form on our website, ParentHelp123.org](https://www.parenthelp123.org).**

In an effort to support our community and partners, we have also pulled together the following list of key updates pertaining to SNAP Enrollment & DSHS in response to COVID-19. These updates are the latest information we have as of **3/24/2020**, additional COVID-19 related updates can be found on the DSHS website here: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/alert/covid-19-information>

Guidance for New SNAP Applicants

We encourage anyone that is experiencing current or anticipated loss of income due to COVID-19, to consider applying for SNAP benefits. Income limits for this program remain at 200% FPL. WithinReach can provide an eligibility pre-screening to help determine if you are likely to qualify for food assistance based on your current circumstance, we can also help you complete an application over the phone. Call our friendly and knowledgeable staff at the Help Me Grow Washington Hotline for support: 1-800-322-2588. Do not delay reaching out, we are here to help you navigate your options.

Contacting DSHS for Support

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) has significantly limited its in-person services in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Some offices are closing to the public and others are limiting in-person lobby services. Households seeking SNAP benefits should complete their applications online or by phone. You should then contact the DSHS Customer Service Center, 1-877-501-2233, to complete a SNAP interview and follow-up with any requested verification documents.

Starting Friday, March 20, Community Services Offices (CSOs) will offer limited in-person services for SNAP, including:

- Issuing initial EBT cards for new food assistance applications or emergency replacements
- Receiving paperwork (via drop boxes at CSO) such as verification submissions, report changes or applications for review

DSHS can offer a full scope of services to clients over the phone at 1-877-501-2233, this includes:

- Spanish, Russian and English speaking staff. Staff can provide interpreter services in other requested languages.
- Over the phone applications and renewals for all programs such as food, cash, medical and Medicare Savings (without requiring clients to apply by paper or online).
- Regular services – clients can report changes, make case inquiries and request EBT card replacements.

Please note that you may experience longer-than-normal wait times as DSHS adjusts to this new service delivery model.

You can also submit applications, reviews and mid-certifications online at www.washingtonconnection.org. You can also report changes and find other local services on this site.

Delayed Roll Out of ABAWD Requirements

ABAWD policy changes that were slated to take effect on April 1, 2020 will be postponed. DSHS is delaying the roll out of ABAWD requirements across Washington State. This means the rule that would have imposed ABAWD requirements in other counties is not going into effect until further notice. Additionally, DSHS is granting *Good Cause* to mandatory ABAWDs in King County where ABAWD requirements have been in place. This means DSHS will not penalize clients who are not able to meet their 80-hour work requirement for March, April, and May 2020.

EBT Online Purchases

SNAP recipients residing in Washington State can now purchase groceries online from two major vendors, Amazon & Walmart, by using their EBT card. Only eligible food may be purchased with SNAP benefits; delivery fees and other charges may not be paid for with SNAP benefits. Both retailers offer free delivery, but require a minimum purchase amount. See retailer website for additional details and delivery radius. See SNAP EBT [Amazon FAQ here](#) and [Walmart EBT FAQ here](#).

Alternate EBT Cardholder Requests

The Head of Household can now place a verbal request to have an alternate EBT card holder. An Alternate Cardholder is a person you choose to access your benefits, they will get their own EBT card. Once you've placed a request, the Alternate Cardholder must visit a DSHS office and present their ID to pick up the alternate EBT card. The Head of Household does not have to be present for the card to be released. This is a modification to the previous policy to allow more flexibility for households who may need to authorize an additional person to access their benefits on their behalf.