

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations



**Department of Human Services
Division of Elderly Affairs**

RHODE ISLAND SENIOR BEAT

BY: Larry Grimaldi, Chief of Information & Public Relations
462-0509 lgrimaldi@dea.ri.gov

RELEASE: Friday, April 5, 2013

**ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS HELP SENIORS STRETCH
THEIR FOOD BUDGETS**

CRANSTON --- In today's economy, it's a challenge for many seniors to purchase nutritious food at reasonable prices. Good nutrition is one of the keys to successful aging and maintaining good health. There are many ways that seniors can stretch their food budgets. Some of these options can help seniors buy the foods they need for a healthy, active, and productive lifestyle.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, can provide cash assistance to help individuals and families who are struggling to purchase food. To be eligible for SNAP benefits, seniors and adults with disabilities must have an income of less than \$1,816 per month for a one-person household and less than \$2,452 per month for a two-person household. The resource limit is \$3,000 per household.

Several deductions are subtracted from a person's gross income. They may include deductions for household and telephone expenses, an earned income deduction for individuals who are working, and deductions for medical expenses, and excess shelter costs. Adults who are eligible for SNAP receive their benefits using an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card. The EBT card is accepted at grocery and retail food stores across the state for the purchase of food items. Seniors may request a home telephone interview. For more information, contact your local Department of Human Services office or call the University of Rhode Island SNAP Outreach Project at 1-866-306-0270. You can also log on to www.eatbettertoday.com.

The Ocean State Senior Congregate Dining Program provides nutritionally balanced, hot lunches, five days a week at more than 65 meal sites, for persons who are 60, and eligible adults with disabilities.

-more-

**John O. Pastore Center, Hazard Building / 2nd Floor
74 West Road, Cranston, RI 02920
Telephone 401-462-3000, Fax 401-462-0503, TTY 401-462-0740
Web Site: www.dea.ri.gov**

RI Senior Beat-April 5, 2013-food assistance programs-page 2

In addition to the meals, seniors also have a chance to socialize and participate in the wide variety of activities that these community sites offer. Donations for the meals are accepted, but no one is refused a meal if he/she is unable to contribute. Transportation to the nearest meal site is available. Call the Rhode Island Division of Elderly Affairs (DEA) at 462-3000 to locate the meal site nearest to you. The TTY number is 462-0740.

Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island provides home delivered meals to frail, homebound seniors and qualified disabled persons, five days per week. To qualify, seniors must be 60 years or older, live alone, have no one to help them, and be unable to shop, cook, or drive. Donations are accepted, but are not mandatory. For more information, call 351-6700, or go to www.rimeals.org.

These additional resources are also available to older Rhode Islanders who are in need of emergency food assistance.

Comprehensive Community Action Program, 311 Doric Avenue, Cranston, RI 02910, provides emergency food assistance to residents of Cranston, Coventry, Scituate, and Foster. For information, call 467-9610, or go to www.comcap.org.

The Rhode Island Community Food Bank, 200 Niantic Avenue, Providence, RI 02905, helps people stretch their food budgets. Call 942-6325, or log on to www.rifoodbank.org.

Crossroads Rhode Island, 160 Broad Street, Providence, RI 02903, provides emergency food assistance. Call 521-2255, or go to www.crossroadsri.org.

The Food Access Project allows persons 60 and older, disabled, and homeless SNAP participants to use their EBT cards to purchase meals at participating restaurants. For additional information, call 1-866-306-0270, or log on to www.eatbettertoday.com.

The Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless, 1070 Main Street, Suite 202, Pawtucket, RI 02860, also provides emergency food assistance. Call 721-5685, or log on to www.rihomeless.org.

Many churches or civic organizations host food pantries. To locate these resources, call THE POINT, Rhode Island's Aging and Disability Resource Center at 462-4444, or go to www.ThePointRI.org. The TTY number is 462-4445.

-more-

John O. Pastore Center, Hazard Building / 2nd Floor
74 West Road, Cranston, RI 02920
Telephone 401-462-3000, Fax 401-462-0503, TTY 401-462-0740
Web Site: www.dea.ri.gov

RI Senior Beat-April 5, 2013-food assistance programs-page 3

The Rhode Island Department of Human Services, Division of Elderly Affairs (DEA) is responsible for the development and implementation of a comprehensive system of programs and services for Rhode Islanders ages 60 and older and for adults with disabilities. Questions or requests for additional information on the issues of growing older, or for issues concerning adults with disabilities in Rhode Island should be directed to: Larry Grimaldi, Rhode Island Senior Beat, Rhode Island Department of Human Services, Division of Elderly Affairs, 74 West Road, Cranston, RI 02920 or faxed to 462-0545. The e-mail address is lgrimaldi@dea.ri.gov.

-30-