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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

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Subject: Changes to foods you can buy with SNAP beginning November 1, 2026

Dear SNAP and Summer EBT Households:

Beginning November 1, 2026, some foods and drinks will no longer be eligible for purchase with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in Montana.

This change does not affect who qualifies for SNAP or the amount of SNAP benefits your household receives. It changes only which foods and drinks you can buy with your SNAP benefits.

What foods and drinks are affected?

You will no longer be able to use SNAP benefits to buy:

- Candy, including candy bars, gummy candy, licorice, and hard candy.
- High-sugar beverages—certain drinks with more than 10 grams of sugar per 8 fluid ounces.
- Energy drinks that meet the state's caffeine and added-stimulant criteria.
- Shelf-stable prepared desserts—packaged, ready-to-eat sweet desserts that do not need refrigeration.

Not every sweet food or drink is restricted. Some products are excluded from these restrictions.

What can I still buy?

You can continue to use SNAP benefits to buy eligible foods that are not restricted. Examples of items that remain eligible include:

- Plain or naturally flavored water.
- Milk and milk substitutes.
- Drinks containing more than 50 percent fruit or vegetable juice.
- Protein bars and meal replacement bars.
- Granola and trail mix made mainly from nuts or real fruit.
- Fruit snacks made with real fruit and no added sugar.
- Store-made bakery items.

What should I expect when shopping?

There are no changes in how your EBT card will work in stores.

The new restrictions apply at SNAP-authorized stores in Montana, including stores that accept SNAP online.

If an item is not eligible, you cannot pay for it with SNAP benefits. You may remove it from your purchase or use another form of payment.

Where can I get more information?

For details about the changes and the foods affected, visit:HealthySNAP.mt.gov

You may also email healthysnap@mt.gov.

We understand that changes to shopping rules may raise questions. We are committed to helping you understand which foods you can continue to purchase with your SNAP benefits.