Changes to SNAP & HSRC’s MealBux Program

February 2nd, 2021

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

- A recent rule change means more college students are eligible for benefits. Domestic students are likely eligible for SNAP if they make less $1964 per month. Students do not have to meet SNAP work requirements if:
  - They are eligible for work-study (this is over 11,000 OSU students, including graduate students)
  - They have $0 Expected Family Contribution on their FAFSA
  - They have a child under the age of 6
  - They have a mental or physical disability that prevents them from working 20 hours per week
  - Meet other exemptions

At this time, SNAP is not available to international students (though, international students who are parents might be eligible for funds for their children). SNAP is a federal program that is not under HSRC purview - though the HSRC does help students
navigate applying for benefits.

- It’s possible (and not uncommon following dramatic rule changes) that students may be turned down or wrongly denied benefits. If this happens, HSRC can help you navigate next steps.
  - If you have time, inquire with the Department of Human Services (or the agency in your state) and ask why you were deemed ineligible. Ask if the staff are using the new student eligibility criteria effective on January 16th.
  - Meet with the HSRC Basic Needs Navigator for further assistance.

**MealBux**

- Historically, Mealbux offers students about 10 meals worth over a whole term ($80-$90 on average per approved applicant). (SNAP is worth $702 over a whole term).

- Mealbux is shifting to meet equity goals for our most marginalized students - undocumented and international students are not SNAP eligible.

- HSRC intends to adjust MealBux eligibility as follows:
  - Any student can apply for Mealbux. Applications will be evaluated to identify students who are most food insecure.
  - Domestic students (those who are not international or undocumented students) will only be eligible for Mealbux if they have been denied SNAP and are also food insecure. These students will be required to supply proof that they have been denied SNAP within the past 30 days.

- Mealbux (providing students money on their IDs so they can buy meals on campus) is on pause during the pandemic due to the remote environment and public health guidance. Mealbux will likely resume in the coming weeks - as grocery store giftcards. Watch HSRC social media for more information/when the application launches. Student feedback about these changes needs to be heard and integrated before program changes are finalized.

Students (or staff) are encouraged to submit feedback about the changes to Mealbux.
Many students can successfully apply for SNAP on their own without assistance and be successful with getting their application approved. Students can apply for SNAP at these links:

Oregon Residents

Outside of Oregon