

BUSTER!

A Product of the Federal Interagency Reentry Council

MYTH: An individual cannot apply for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp Program) benefits without a valid State-issued identification card.

FACT: A person can get SNAP benefits even if he or she does not have a valid State ID.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations require an applicant to verify his or her identity in order to receive program benefits. A valid State-issued ID is a common document used to prove an applicant's identity, but it is not the only acceptable form of proof. SNAP regulations require that local SNAP offices offer applicants flexibility about the type of documents they can provide to verify their information. A local office is required to accept any document that reasonably establishes the applicant's identity and cannot accept only one type of verification. Other examples of acceptable documents that verify an applicant's identity are:

- A birth certificate
- An ID card for health benefits or another assistance program
- A school or work ID card
- Wage stubs containing the applicant's name

If an applicant cannot obtain sufficient verification on his or her own, the local office is required to provide assistance. If sufficient proof of identity cannot be obtained, the local office can accept a statement from a collateral contact who can confirm the applicant's identity. A collateral contact is a person who is knowledgeable about the applicant's situation and can corroborate information given on the application. Possible collateral contacts include current or former

employers, landlords, probation officers or staff members from other social service agencies.

For More Information:

Visit the SNAP website at www.fns.usda.gov/snap for information on application and eligibility requirements.

What is a REENTRY MYTH BUSTER?

This Myth Buster is one in a series of fact sheets intended to clarify existing federal policies that affect formerly incarcerated individuals and their families. Each year, more than 700,000 individuals are released from state and federal prisons. Another 9 million cycle through local jails. When reentry fails, the social and economic costs are high -- more crime, more victims, more family distress, and more pressure on already-strained state and municipal budgets.

Because reentry intersects with health and housing, education and employment, family, faith, and community well-being, many federal agencies are focusing on initiatives for the reentry population. Under the auspices of the Cabinet-level interagency Reentry Council, federal agencies are working together to enhance community safety and well-being, assist those returning from prison and jail in becoming productive citizens, and save taxpayer dollars by lowering the direct and collateral costs of incarceration.

For more information about the Reentry Council, go to: www.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/reentry-council