



Lifting Asset Limits from Public Benefits Helps Families Become Financially Self-Sufficient

Some public benefits programs limit eligibility to those with few or no assets, including Idaho's Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). If individuals or families have assets exceeding the state's limit of \$5,000, they must "spend down" longer-term savings to receive what is often short-term public assistance. Asset limits discourage families from saving and pose serious obstacles for low-income families or individuals trying to become financially self-sufficient.

These asset limits, which were originally created to ensure that public resources did not go to "asset-rich" individuals, are a relic of entitlement policies that no longer exist. Safety net programs now focus on quickly moving individuals and families to self-sufficiency, rather than allowing them to receive benefits indefinitely. Personal savings and assets are the kinds of resources that allow people to move off public benefit programs, but asset limits can discourage anyone considering or receiving public benefits from saving for the future.

BUILDING ASSETS & MOVING UP THE ECONOMIC LADDER:

Assets are tangible and intangible economic resources - a home, savings in a bank account, a college education - that can produce value for their owner. "Asset building" refers to strategies that help families increase assets, allowing them to achieve long-term financial stability and move up the economic ladder. Research related to asset building has shown:*

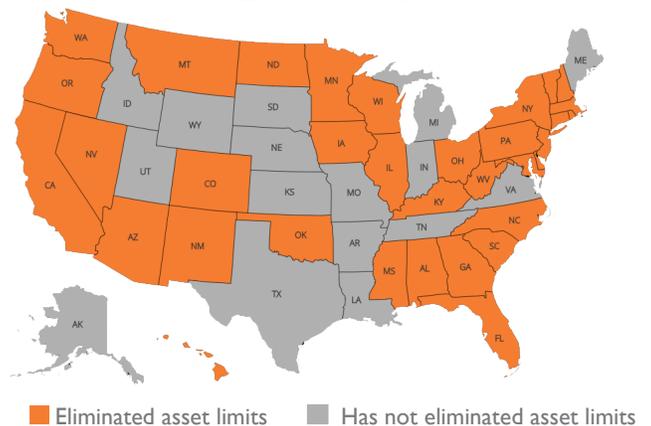
- Assets create a buffer to weather emergencies
- Assets can promote success in the labor market
- Assets can promote long-term thinking, planning, and psychological well-being
- Assets can enhance the well-being and life chances of children
- Assets can increase the likelihood of going to and succeeding in college
- Incentives, structures, and supports can encourage low-income people to save

*Source: CFED Assets & Opportunity Scorecard

What Idaho Can Do

States determine many policies related to families receiving benefits, including the discretion to set or eliminate asset limits for TANF and SNAP. Overall, eight states have eliminated TANF asset limits, and 34 have eliminated SNAP asset limits.

34 States Have Eliminated Asset Limits in SNAP*



Currently, Idaho has a \$5,000 asset limit on both TANF and SNAP, with key assets excluded. Based on extensive research by national and state organizations, the best option for Idaho is the complete elimination of asset limits from TANF and SNAP.



SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

OVERVIEW OF IDAHO'S SNAP ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS & ASSET LIMITS



Idaho Asset Building Network

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Financial Requirements:

- Your household income must be less than the program income limits for your household size.
- With few exceptions, you must work or participate in an employment training program.
- For most households, countable assets and resources must be under \$5,000 to qualify.

Households are categorically eligible for the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) if they qualify for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Households must meet both the gross and net income tests and are not eligible to receive benefits if income is over the amounts listed in table. Jobless adults without dependents are limited to 3 months of SNAP benefits every three years.

Non-Financial Requirements:

- You must be a resident of the State of Idaho.
- You must be a citizen or legal immigrant.
- Your “household” size must be determined. A household is defined as a person or a group of people living together, but not necessarily related, who purchase and prepare food together.

Maximum Monthly Income Limits:

Household size	Gross Income (130% FPL)	Net Income (100% FPL)
1	\$1,276	\$ 981
2	\$1,726	\$1,328
3	\$2,177	\$1,675
4	\$2,628	\$2,021

ASSET LIMITS FOR SNAP BENEFITS:

To be eligible for SNAP, households can have no more than \$5,000 in countable resources or assets, such as bank and savings accounts. The resources of all household members are counted. Certain assets and resources are excluded and NOT counted toward the asset limit.

Assets & Resource Exclusions* from SNAP Asset Limits:

- **Home and Vehicle**
 - One Vehicle Per Adult
 - One Home and Lot
 - Household Goods (furniture, appliances, television, etc.)
 - Personal Effects (clothing, jewelry, books, etc.)
- **Resources Used for Business**
 - Income Producing Property
 - Business Equipment
- **Special Savings Accounts**
 - Education Accounts
 - Retirement & Tax Preferred Accounts
 - Individual Development Accounts
- **Other Specific Assets/Resources**
 - Contracts (Mortgage, deed of trust, promissory note, etc.)
 - Life Insurance
 - Native American Payments
 - Funeral Agreements

*The Assets & Resource Exclusion list is summarized from Idaho Administrative Code 16.03.08 and not all inclusive. Certain restrictions apply for households who are not categorically eligible. For a full, detailed list of excluded resources and details on eligibility, please visit healthandwelfare.idaho.gov.



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For resources and more information:

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