

Advocate Tip Sheet #1

Special 3SquaresVT Rules for Seniors and People with Disabilities

- ❖ **Income:** Do not have to meet gross income test.
- ❖ **Resources:** If income is less than 185% of poverty, there is no resource limit. If income is greater than 185%, household can have up to \$3,250.
- ❖ **Household Composition:** Can be a separate household if unable to purchase and prepare meals independently and gross income of others in the household is less than 165% of poverty.
- ❖ **Medical Expense Deduction:** Can deduct monthly medical expenses over \$35, including prescriptions and insurance premiums, eyeglasses and hearing aids, as well as transportation costs and mileage, etc. If medical expenses are over \$35 but under \$173, a standard medical deduction of \$138 is allowed. If expenses are over \$173, full cost of expenses (minus \$35) are what is allowed. Household must document the full cost of expenses if over \$173. See the [Department for Children & Families' Desk Aid](#) for documenting medical expenses on www.vermontfoodhelp.com/outreach-tools.
- ❖ **Dependent Care Deduction:** There is no cap on dependent care costs that can be deducted as long as care is necessary for a household member to work, look for work, or go to school. This includes adult day care and transportation to and from care.
- ❖ **Shelter Deduction:** No maximum shelter deduction.
- ❖ **Fuel Assistance & Other Household Needs:** 3SquaresVT connects with other benefits like fuel and phone assistance. Ask household if they receive fuel assistance; if they do not, encourage and/or assist them in applying. Fuel assistance can greatly increase 3SquaresVT benefits. Always ask about household needs.
- ❖ **Face-to-face Interviews:** An interview is required, most interviews are conducted over the phone. Applicants have the right to a face-to-face interview if requested.
- ❖ **Cash Out:** Households in which everyone is 65 or older or get SSI receive their 3SquaresVT benefits deposited directly into a bank account. If they do not have a bank account, they receive a cash benefit on an EBT card (used like an ATM card).
- ❖ **Length of Certification Period:** Households in which all adults are seniors or have a disability may be certified for up to 24 months when unearned income is stable.
- ❖ **Interim Reporting:** Households will receive an interim report form periodically. This is not recertification; the short report must be completed and returned on time. Households certified for 12 months will receive the interim report after 6 months; households certified for 24 months will receive the interim report after 12 months.



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