

## Advocate Tip Sheet #4

# 3SquaresVT in a SNAP (3SNP)

### What is 3SquaresVT in a SNAP (3SNP)?

3SNP aims to improve access to 3SquaresVT (3SVT) benefits for older adults and people living with disabilities by **simplifying the application and recertification process**, as well as combining the 3SVT application with the ECP Fuel Assistance application.

### What is 3SquaresVT?

3SquaresVT is a federal nutrition program known nationally as SNAP. 3SquaresVT gives people who qualify benefits every month to buy groceries at over 600 retailers and more than 40 farmers markets in Vermont—and anywhere in the U.S. that accepts SNAP.

### What are ECP Fuel benefits?

3SquaresVT applicants may qualify for fuel assistance, which can help cover the cost of heat. ECP stands for “Extended Certification Period”.

### People may be eligible for 3SNP if everyone applying are:

- At least 60 years old or receiving disability benefits,
- Not earning income from a job or self-employment, **AND**
- Buying food and preparing meals together

### The benefits of 3SNP are:

- A simpler and shorter application
- Three years of benefits with no additional paperwork
- Individualized case worker support
- No interim report or recertification interview\*

\*Interviews are required when the information on the application is questionable, incomplete, contradictory, requested by the household or results in a denial.

### Pathways to apply for 3SNP:

- **New Applicants** will apply directly to 3SNP and ECP Fuel benefits in one application. Note: 3SNP-eligible applicants who apply using the regular 3SVT application will automatically convert to 3SNP applicants by ESD.
- **Current 3SquaresVT recipients** who are 60+ or receiving disability benefits who meet eligibility for 3SNP will enroll during either:
  - Interim Report
  - Recertification

### 3SNP Certification & Recertification:

People who get 3SquaresVT benefits are approved for a certain period of time—this is called a certification period. At the end of the certification period, participants need to complete a review application to show that they're still eligible for the program—this is called recertification. People who are approved for 3SNP and enroll in benefits need to recertify every three years (36 months).

**During certification period:** The following changes must be reported within 10 days after the month in which the change occurred:

- If anyone in the household is newly employed or self-employed
- If anyone in the household moves in/out
- If anyone in the household has a baby

**At recertification:** If an individual is approved, recipient will automatically receive another 36 months of 3SNP. If an individual is denied or information on the review application is questionable, incomplete, or contradictory, an interview is required. Interviews are also completed at the customer's request.



### If a 3SNP recipient becomes ineligible for 3SNP, they may still be eligible for 3SVT.

For example, if a recipient gets a part time job that gives them earned income, they are no longer eligible. These recipients will:

- Retain however much time is left on 36-month benefits
- Move into the 3SVT caseload at the time the change is reported and keep the remaining time of their certification period. An application and interview will be required at the end of their certification period.
- Household will keep dedicated caseworker until they receive an interim report or recertification application whichever is sooner.

### ECP Fuel Assistance

- Helps pay part of your home heating bills — whether you own your home or rent, pay for heat directly or as part of rent
- ECP means people can receive up to three years of fuel assistance before needing to recertify.
- Recipients must report changes:
  - Move to a new residence or have an address change
  - If your household composition or household income changes
  - If you change the way you heat your home, or who supplies your fuel.
- If a recipient is no longer eligible to receive 3SNP, ECP certification period will continue for the remainder of the 36 months, but fuel eligibility will need to be reviewed on a yearly basis.

For more information visit [vermontfoodhelp.com/3squaresvt-in-a-snap](https://vermontfoodhelp.com/3squaresvt-in-a-snap)