



# Restaurant Meals Program

Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) is piloting a Restaurant Meals Program (RMP). Under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), those who are elderly (60 years and older) and/or disabled and their spouses and homeless households may use their LINK card to purchase meals from **authorized** restaurants (privately or corporate owned) in DeWitt County and select zip codes in Cook County in Illinois.

## Requirements for an Authorized Restaurant:

Restaurants in DeWitt County and Cook County (specific zip codes) must complete the following two tier process to be authorized to accept SNAP benefits under the RMP:

1. A restaurant must first complete an online interest/eligibility form on the IDHS webpage. (See *Request to Become Eligible to be Selected as an Authorized Restaurant* section below)
  - IDHS will select 2 restaurants in DeWitt County and 8 restaurants in Cook County from the listed zip codes.
2. Once selected, a restaurant must then be approved to participate as an authorized retailer by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the U. S. Department of Agriculture and complete the IDHS Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This approval will be initiated by IDHS once the restaurant selection process has been completed.

*Note: If a restaurant/contractor proposes to serve SNAP recipients at more than one site, each site must be included in the request for authorization.*

## In addition to the IDHS MOU and FNS approval, restaurants must also meet all the following requirements:

- ❖ The restaurant must be located in the following:
  - Dewitt County
  - Cook County – zip codes 60619, 60620, 60628 and 60617
- ❖ Have sit-down seating available (*Unless prohibited by a public health order that would only allow delivery or takeout*).
- ❖ Be fully accessible to persons with disabilities.
- ❖ Be in and maintain compliance with all current federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and/or orders throughout the duration of participation in the program.
- ❖ Provide low-cost meals.
- ❖ Have a point-of-sale device to process SNAP transactions.

If the restaurants primary business is **not** the sale of food, then:

- ❖ Food sales must account for more than 50 percent of a restaurant's total sales for authorization as a communal dining facility.
- ❖ Restaurants that primarily present themselves to the community as establishments for alcoholic consumption may **not** qualify as communal dining facilities, no matter what percentage of its total sales are for food.
- ❖ Restaurants that are strictly carry-out, or present themselves to the community in that way, may **not** qualify as communal dining facilities, no matter what percentage of its total sales are food sales.

*All restaurants must also follow IDHS or CDC's guidelines in regards to COVID-19.*

## **Request to Become Eligible to be Selected as an Authorized Restaurant**

Please go to [www.dhs.illinois.gov/rmp](http://www.dhs.illinois.gov/rmp) and complete the Request to Participate by 08/13/2021. IDHS will confirm your restaurant meets the eligibility requirements and randomly select 8 restaurants in the Cook County zip codes and 2 restaurants in DeWitt County. Restaurants that are randomly selected will be notified by 08/27/2021 to complete the IDHS and FNS Retailer Application.

## **Final Steps**

Once a restaurant is selected, IDHS will work with the restaurant to complete the MOU and FNS Application. IDHS may need to request additional verification(s) from the restaurant during this process.

IDHS will submit the completed MOU and FNS Application to FNS. FNS will contact the restaurant with their approval.

All restaurants not initially selected to participate in the program will be notified via the contact email address provided in the Request to Participate.

IDHS will not discriminate against any individual or group because of race, sex, religious creed, color, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, or political beliefs that is unrelated to the person's eligibility.

*IDHS is an equal opportunity provider.*

**For questions regarding the Restaurant Meals Program authorization process, contact IDHS at**

**[DHS.LINK@Illinois.gov](mailto:DHS.LINK@Illinois.gov)**