

# Food stamps essays example

[Economics](#), [Money](#)



Food stamps is a trend which was brought up by communists and activists in the US whereby a financially stable family chooses to survive on food equal to a family of the same size would get from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP gives a monthly food allowance to low-income families; with just the swipe of a SNAP card (Wade 34). The 35th US president, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, said that “ If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich.”

It is managed by the state and local agencies. On the month of February, CNN reporter Sean Cables conducted an experiment where he spent the month eating only as much as he could get from the maximum amount of food stamps. In New Orleans this added up to \$176. He reported to have eaten quite well and that the only drawback he had experienced was his social life since he couldn't go out with friends to hotel.

Eligibility for food stamps depends on a family's net and gross income and if a family has a disabled or elderly person (Wade 35). Gross income is obtained from the difference between child support paid and the total income. The federal government adjusts gross income parameters annually. The gross monthly income without deductions for a family applying for food assistance ought to be at 130% of the poverty level or below. In 2014 the, the poverty line for a family of 3 is about \$25, 400 a year or \$2, 116 a month. The poverty level is lower for smaller families and higher for big families. After deductions the net income should be at or below the poverty level. The assets of a family without a disabled or elderly person should be \$2000 or below and \$3250 or below for families with a disabled member. Jim Jones says that the “ government uses approximately \$72. 6 million on food

stamps” (Congress 44). SNAP counts income both earned and unearned such as unemployment insurance, child support and social security services.

Assets comprise of the inaccessible items such as retirement savings and household property and accessible items such as personal property and bank savings.

Undocumented immigrants, some legal immigrants and people on strike are not entitled to food stamps despite what their qualifications may be.

Unemployed adults who have no children and aren’t disabled have a limit of 3 months food stamp benefits a year; however, this varies in different states due to the high unemployment levels. Once eligible the benefits received are determined by the gross income after deductions and size of the household.

The deductions made include; a standard deduction, 20% deduction on the income earned, a medical deduction for the disabled or elderly, child support deduction, deduction for shelter care expenses and a deduction for dependent care. Jim Jones states that “ We cannot leave others to starve while we can help”. According to this food stamps are beneficial in that they provide food for the people with low income. Food stamps also help reduce crime rates since people with no food do not have to steal money to get it.

Despite the benefits food stamps offer to families, they have several disadvantages as mentioned below.

- They can only be used in the purchase of food; food stamps cannot purchase all sorts of food. They cannot buy cooked food thus making it hard for people who cannot access stoves such as the homeless.
- They cannot be used everywhere; for one to be able to use the SNAP swipe card, a store must have a partnership with SNAP. Large stores like Walmart

allow the use of the cards, however, small stores may not allow it making it hard for the people who live in rural areas where there are only small grocery stores.

- They may reduce the incentive to work; it is easy to slip into the mentality that I don't have to work since the government is providing food (Congress 44).

- Their monthly allowance may be too little for survival; a woman with children may get enough food aid to survive on but an unemployed person who just finished college may be in a very different situation. The ex-student may receive very little assistance such that it's not worth getting the allowance.

## **Unemployment**

Unemployment is a major problem facing countries around the globe especially developing countries. Unemployment is one of the main reasons people require food stamps since with no employment people are unable to earn a living. It leads to increased rates of crime because unemployed people tend to be idle and lack money which they need to buy food for survival. Job creation is affected by demographics, education, global competition, economic conditions and automation. These factors affect wage level, number of workers employed and duration of unemployment. One of the ways the United States can get rid of the unemployment issue is to ensure the economy continues growing. In July 2013, there were 12 million unemployed people in the US. Unemployment levels are higher for people who do not have high levels of education. A report in September 2011 from the American Enterprise Institute said that "the evidence that the quality of a nation's education system is a key determinant of the future growth of its

economy is increasingly strong."

As of December 2012, unemployment was approximately 4% for people with a bachelor's degree or higher, 6% for people with a college degree, 9% for people who had only graduated from high school and 12% for people with less than a high school diploma. Establishment of offshore businesses has also influenced unemployment greatly. Offshore businesses are businesses established in countries with low labor costs. Businesses established offshore may employ the local people due to the low labor costs leaving people at the home country unemployed. The United States bureau of labor reports that "Total nonfarm payroll employment rose by 288, 000, and the unemployment rate fell by 0. 4 percentage point to 6. 3 percent in April".

The number of unemployed people has decreased by 733000 at 9. 8 million people and the rate from 6. 7 percent to 6. 3 percent in April. Unemployment for men has decreased by 5. 9%, teenagers 19. 1%, women 5. 7%, blacks 11. 6%, Hispanics 7. 3% and whites 5. 3%.

The number of long term unemployed individuals i. e. people who have been unemployed for 27 weeks or more has decreased by 287000 to 3. 5 million in April 2014.

According to a Gallup poll released "Unemployment, economy and dysfunctional government remain the top problems facing the United States" (Shabab 201). Twenty percent of citizens interviewed name unemployment as the leading problem, 3 percent racism, 17 percent the economy and 19 percent dysfunctional government as the leading problem.

Poor employment is a sign of other problems to come. There is a huge relationship between consumer spending, job creation and business

spending and accounts for about 70 percent gross domestic product.

Businesses are not willing to increase labor costs unless the consumers purchase more of their products. Consumers who are unemployed are not likely to spend much in buying products. According to a federal reserve prediction “ The economy will expand at between a 2. 8 percent and a 3 percent rate this year, with the unemployment rate falling to between 6. 1 percent and 6. 3 percent” (Foley 57).

## **Works Cited**

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