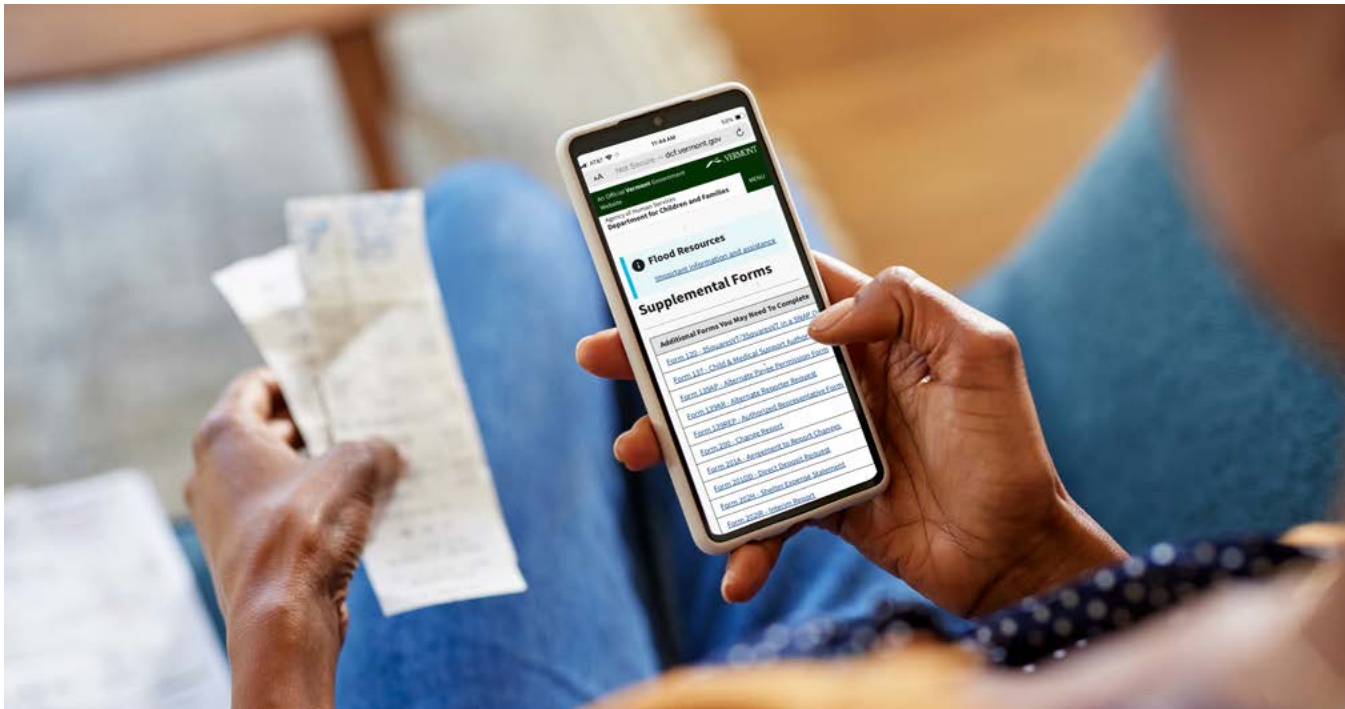


G2: Access 100% of federal funding available for Vermonters by completing the streamlined, accessible enrollment system



The current system available to apply for and enroll in food and economic assistance programs is flawed in a number of ways both for individuals navigating applications and for Vermont state employees operating the programs.

Required applications for food and economic assistance programs are difficult for anyone to navigate; limited English proficiency, certain disabilities, lack of access to broadband, and limited discretionary time due to work and family demands can compound this. When assistance programs are low-barrier, broadly accessible, and usable, it streamlines administrative time and cost. Program enrollment then increases, and thus the Vermont government, residents, and economy receive more of the federal funds set aside for these programs. Most essentially, everyone who qualifies for programs is able to participate with ease and dignity. Through the strategies below, we can maximize the reach and impact of these programs, creating a more just and resilient safety net.

Keep in Mind

The State of Vermont is engaged in a multi-year effort to make enrollment systems better using a modernized integrated eligibility and enrollment (IE&E) system. The Roadmap relies upon the IE&E system being fully operational. The advantages of IE&E will need to be experienced and promoted for the public to gain confidence in the changes.

Strategies

STRATEGY G2.1

Meet the established goal of completing the IE&E rollout by 2027, through allocating sufficient funding and staffing resources to maintain the intended timeline. Ensure flexibility in the IE&E system in order to create linked state support systems. ⚠️

STRATEGY G2.2

Invest in the information technology changes required to allow all federal nutrition program options and flexibilities to be activated in case of emergency. Impactful examples include enabling the activation of Disaster-SNAP, including on a county-by-county basis; activating WIC online ordering; and establishing back-up WIC retailers in regions where only one WIC retailer is currently operating.

STRATEGY G2.3

Fund Vermont 2-1-1 sufficiently to make it a fully functioning information referral system that connects people to the IE&E. It can also provide other comprehensive resources, information, and assistance to people and communities statewide, and collect data. The data is needed to make informed decisions, respond rapidly and effectively in times of disaster, and track progress toward the goals of this Roadmap. ⚠️

VOICES OF VERMONTERS

“Streamline food stamps, make it easier to apply—too much red tape. Also, have a state website where people could find resources [in] a one-stop-shop kind of program. Make it easy. The system is too difficult with Apps, QR codes[...]too many hoops to go through to apply.”

“More people should be able to sign up for EBT. What are the obstacles? Being on EBT has vastly improved my life, but I had to get past the shame of being on it. I have health issues, and good food is key.”

“When I knew that I needed help for food, I looked into 3SquaresVT, but it was pretty complicated even for me as a reader and speaker of English and have no disabilities, so I gave up on it. Getting all the documents together.”

“A comprehensive database or network of ALL resources for those who are food insecure.”