

Bridging the hunger gap with seniors

Within Reach

a Perry County
Job & Family

Services (J&FS) Column

Research conducted by the Meals on Wheels Association found that one in every 20 seniors in the State of Ohio is at risk of going hungry.

There are over 5,200 persons aged 65 or older living in Perry County meaning that every day more than 260 seniors are at risk of starvation.

The following is a list of important facts about seniors and food stamps to help bridge this hunger gap:

1. To qualify for food stamps, a senior must be at or below 130 percent of the Federal Poverty Income Guideline (FPIG). For

example, a Senior who lives alone must have a monthly income of \$1,174 or less to qualify.

2. If a senior doesn't qualify for food stamps because their income is too high, they might still qualify if they are 65 or older, blind, or disabled.

3. Since food stamps are now loaded once a month onto a debit type card, seniors no longer have to come into the office to receive their food stamps. This also allows Seniors to save their food stamps for up to 12 months.

4. Phone interviews are available to seniors who are new applicants for the food stamp program as well as for recertification for current food stamp clients.

5. Seniors do receive

credit for shelter expenses as well as medical expenses.

6. Seniors aged 60 or older and meet the income guideline above are also eligible for food assistance through the Senior Commodity Program.

Applications can be picked up at Perry JFS.

7. Seniors can also pick up food once a month at their local food pantry.

If you or someone you know is elderly and in need of food assistance, please call Perry JFS at 342-3551 or stop by the office Monday through Friday 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

(Information for this article was provided by Cassandra Argo, HarvestCorps\ member)