

Grocery Store Orientation (Using Food Stamps Card)

*Make it fun! Adjust lesson plans according to their level and ability.

*Be creative! Translation isn't necessary... practice non-verbal communication.

Grocery Store Orientation

1. Pick up an ad flyer as you enter. Get a cart or basket.
2. Go to Customer Service
 - Get a map of the store
 - Sign up for grocery store discount card
3. Walk around store and have refugee label the map in their own language (if literate)
4. Show them what things are covered on the food stamps card and what isn't (non-food items are not covered)
5. Show them store brands are cheaper (and usually above or below eye level)
6. In fruit department:
 - Step 1: get a bag
 - Step 2: pick out the ones you like
 - Step 3: weigh them, etc.
7. Talk about what these mean:
 - lb., oz, expiration date, 4/\$1.00 (not necessary to buy all 4)
8. In pharmacy area:

- Walk around and point out what different medicines are (act out cough, fever, eyes, nose, etc.)
- Indicate when you have a paper that says RX (prescription) you go to the counter
- Locate drop-off and pick-up counter

9. In meat department:

- Study package label on meats (item name, cost, poundage)

10. Buy a couple of “instant” items and go home and show them how to make them (brownies, oatmeal, pudding, cakes)

11. Demonstrate how to check out:

- Look for light that is on
- Put items on conveyor belt
- Store card for discount
- “Paper or plastic?”
- Slide food stamps card like credit card & push button
- Show where coins come out
- “Do you want help out?”

Activating Food Stamps EBT Card

What: The Food Stamps program is a federal aid program that provides financial assistance for low-income people living in the U.S. Refugees are able to apply for Food Stamps to cover the cost of their groceries for the first eight months. After they have applied to Social Services (DSS), their “Electronic Benefits Transfer” (EBT) card will be mailed to them. This card must be first activated and explained to the newcomer.

When: Generally, a week after the date of application at DSS, a letter will arrive at the applicant’s home. The letter states how much money will be on the EBT card when it first arrives and how much money they will get each month afterwards. A few days later, another letter will arrive at the applicant’s home which will have the actual EBT card in it. The card will then need to be activated.

Items needed:

- The directions to “activate” the card
- The card (often attached to directions)

- The head of household's date of birth -OR- last four digits of SSN
- A phone
- 4 digit PIN number chosen by refugee family





Process: *Another refugee or case worker may have already helped them. If unclear, a volunteer may check if the card has been activated by calling the number on the form and following the prompts.*

1. Dial the 1-888 number listed on the back of the card/on the letter that accompanied it.
2. Follow the prompts.
3. Enter the 16 digit number on the card.
4. If the client has an SSN, enter the last four digits to confirm the client's identity. If not, the volunteer can state the date of birth (MM/DD/YYYY). This information must match the name on the card (i.e., not the spouse).
5. Enter a 4 digit PIN password.
6. Re-enter the 4 digit PIN to confirm.
7. Remember self-sufficiency: let the newcomer do as much as possible, just help them through the process.

After the card is activated, the volunteer will explain:

- How to use the card (when you have gathered all of your groceries and are ready to pay for it, don't do it for them. Instead teach them to swipe the card through the machine and enter the 4 number PIN into the machine).
- How much money the refugee will receive for each month (stress that it must last for one month as they will not get more money on the card until generally the 12th day of the next month, not before).
- That the initial amount is prorated (so they won't receive the full amount). If possible, help them begin to think through budgeting (how much for one week?).

Explain to them that grocery store brands are usually cheaper and they should select those if they can. Also show them the difference between \$1/each and \$1/lb.

Attachment	Size
 Grocery Store Orientation.docx	16.81 KB
 SNAP Food You Can Buy With North Carolina EBT Car1.docx	13.66 KB
 EBTtoolkit.docx	88.44 KB
 GroceryStoreOrientation_Toolkit_April2017.docx	1.11 MB