

Welfare

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Who has not wished for a check to come in the mail from CorpGov without having to deal with employers? Well, it is possible, but with major catches. The easy money of Hoffman's day are gone, as the middle class taskmasters of the man grew tired of not being able to get the poor to clean thier houses and cook thier meals for a pittance. Used to be, assistance programs paid more than working most wage slave jobs. Not anymore. Still, assistance programs should be discussed.

Welfare / Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Welfare programs have pretty much eliminated any funds for anyone hoping to lay out for more than one year. CorpGov needs your slave labor. Even if successful, CorpGov will hound you towards working even the most low-paying jobs to get out from public dole. There has even been a movement towards drug testing of welfare recipients. As of this writing the state of Louisiana has already passed a law mandating a certain percent of recipients be tested, others are considering similar rules.

Eligibility depends on the amount of money made and how many children are under your direct care. If you have any orders for child support against someone, Child Support Services may get involved as well. The amount of earned money for a single person to qualify for welfare is very low, so most folks that get it are single parents with multiple kids. If you have a legit job it is also not possible to lie about such income, or lack thereof, because employer withholding is reported to a national income tax and social security database.

Welfare social workers may also analyze what you are paying for housing and force you into massive, low income housing areas if they feel like you are paying too much. In addition, if kids are marked on the application, you can be sure BigGov's coming to inspect your pad at least a few times to make sure it is up to their standards.

Disability / Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

True and total disability such as being bedridden for life or needing extensive, long-term assistance to even do the simplest of things due to old age or medical conditions will not be discussed. Most of the time in these cases, a hospital or nursing home facility social worker will press this for you so BigMed can take the entire check except around \$30 a month to keep you in a facility.

However, you may still be able to pull disability off and live independently if you can prove you have some condition that limits your ability to actually work like chronic pain or depression. Most cities have an office or apply online. The trick is that you may be denied for just being an otherwise healthy drunk or addict. But, even if the disability is related to using drugs - you may still be allowed to collect. Expect to spend around two years applying and being rejected. During that time, continue to be seen at free clinics or other medical facilities so you can document your real (or fake) condition. Be sure to have a safe address for mail and a safe place to keep all important documents dealing with this, as you will need them.

Unfortunately, social security at this time only resets once a year for inflation. This could be a problem both for seniors and those on SSI. Depending on the nature of the disability and where you are in the empire, the money received may not even pay living wages. Since employer withholding is also reported to a database, if you make above a certain amount, the money may be cut off. Bear in mind that certain mental disabilities such as retardation, dementia, and other judgment impairing disabilities may require someone or some entity (like a nursing home/ group home) be made payee of the SSI check. These types of diagnoses may also limit your ability to legally purchase firearms and explosives and preclude you from obtaining many types of professional or operator license from medical to driving.

Under-the-table cash only employment is highly recommended if you receive SSI.

Food Stamps / Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Food stamps are still pretty easy to get. However, they are usually only for a short time. To qualify, you will need to have made below a certain amount or be totally unemployed, an official state ID, and have some sort of mailing address. Like SSI and welfare, you can not lie about this income because of shared databases between state employer tax withholding unless your income source is under the table. Although, it is not sure if the Empire checks, you may be automatically disqualified if they find you are a student somewhere. The amount gained depends on where in the Empire you are and if you have any children you currently care for. Be aware that if you have a Child Support order against someone and a claim is filed, Child Support Services may get involved as well to track down unpaid child support from that person.

Some states give out emergency food stamps and you can expect this in about a week or two. Others make you wait 30 days from the application. You do need an address for them to mail you the state debit card.

The old paper food stamp booklets are a thing of the past. Local offices now issue state debit cards. The cards serve two purposes. One is to ensure you only buy storable food items with the funds. A common scam where folks would barter food stamps for cash at a big discount as well as cigarettes, drugs, alcohol, or other items has been hampered by this move. The second purpose is, like any plastic card, to track the location and details of your purchases. (Which may be important if you are concerned about those things) If you are in a situation where access to cooking equipment is not available, you may be limited on quality choices as to being able to use what you can buy because you may not buy ready to eat items or restaurant items. Be sure to check out the section on portable cooking in this book.



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