



Food and
Nutrition
Service

Park Office
Center

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Date: **NOV 20 2019**

Subject: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Employment and Training Resources Available to States

To: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
All State Agency Directors

Together the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and State agencies, in their partnership to administer the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), have an opportunity to address challenges and provide support to program participants as they move toward and into employment.

The SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) program, administered by all 53 State agencies, helps participants gain the skills, training, or work experience they need to enter, reenter, or remain in the workforce. The program is flexible. State agencies can tailor services and supports to the needs of SNAP participants and the communities in which they live. State agencies can, and should partner with other State and Federal workforce programs to offer a continuum of services that help low-income Americans work toward self-sufficiency.

On December 20, 2018, the President signed the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill), which gives State agencies significant new opportunities to work across the workforce system to serve individuals and employers. State agencies must now consult with State workforce development boards when designing their SNAP E&T programs in order to meet State or local workforce needs. The 2018 Farm Bill also requires State agencies to do more to engage and support individuals as they progress through SNAP E&T by requiring State agencies to provide all participants with case management services. While many State agencies are already engaging participants using these approaches to the extent allowable, there is still more progress to be made. FNS encourages all State agencies to do more to serve the range of SNAP work registrants on a path to employment.

The 2018 Farm Bill also provides more resources for State agencies, such as an increase in the 100 percent Federal funding for SNAP E&T. Furthermore, in the last several years, FNS has redoubled its efforts to help State agencies build high quality, effective SNAP E&T programs. The following tools and resources can help State agencies improve and expand their SNAP E&T programs:

- [SNAP E&T policy guidance and clarifications](#) include information on how to partner with the workforce system, appropriately implement mandatory E&T programs, and implement various 2018 Farm Bill provisions.

Guidance documents lack the force and effect of law, unless expressly authorized by statute or incorporated into a contract. USDA may not cite, use, or rely on any guidance that is not available through their guidance portal, except to establish historical facts.

- [Interagency communications and directives](#) offer a call-to-action on partnering with programs authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to deliver services to able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs), and joint guidance on the use of career pathways across all Federal workforce programs.
- The [SNAP to Skills Project](#) (S2S) provides technical assistance to State agencies to help them design job-driven SNAP E&T programs. Through S2S, FNS has also made available [policy briefs](#) on best practices, such as *Integrating SNAP E&T into Career Pathways Systems to Boost Outcomes*, *Building an Employer-Driven SNAP E&T Program by Utilizing Labor Market Information*, and *Using SNAP E&T to Offer Job-Driven Training for ABAWDs*. To stay up-to-date on the latest S2S publications and offerings, all State agencies are encouraged to join the [SNAP E&T Review](#).
- The [SNAP E&T Operations Handbook](#) provides a step-by-step guide on how to grow SNAP E&T programs using “third-party providers,” such as community-based organizations, community colleges, and other training providers.

In addition, FNS is preparing to host the first-ever SNAP E&T National Forum. This 3-day conference in St Louis, Missouri will bring together SNAP E&T stakeholders from across the country to:

- Share and learn best practices for SNAP E&T programs;
- Network with peers, experts, and leaders; and
- Hear updates and refreshers on Federal SNAP and SNAP E&T policy.

FNS will share more information about the National Forum in the coming weeks, including the date and a call for presenters.

States should consider SNAP E&T programs as a means to help all SNAP work registrants, including ABAWDs, meet their employment goals. FNS encourages all States to strengthen their efforts to serve ABAWDs using all available means, not just SNAP E&T, including through available Federal, State, and local work, workfare, and volunteer programs, and to partner with Federal, State, and local entities to identify existing opportunities.

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FNS encourages State agencies to work with FNS Regional and National offices as they expand their programs to meet the dual needs of SNAP participants and employers. If you have questions concerning this memorandum, please contact Moira Johnston at Moira.Johnston@usda.gov or at (703) 305-2515.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Shahin', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jessica Shahin
Associate Administrator
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program