

Appendix E3: Study Overview

OMB Control Number: 0584-0524;
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Study Overview

Assessing the Feasibility of Implementing SNAP in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is conducting a Congressionally mandated study to assess the capabilities of the CNMI to operate the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and to assess alternative models of SNAP program operations and benefit delivery that would best meet the nutrition assistance needs of individuals in the CNMI. This study will assess the administrative, financial, technical, and other changes that would be necessary to implement SNAP (or a comparable program design). This includes extending participation to eligible households, issuing benefits through electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards, maintaining program integrity, operating an employment and training program, and paying a share of the administrative costs. The approach involves a mixed-methods design that includes both qualitative and quantitative components.



What is SNAP?

SNAP stands for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and is a federal nutrition assistance program formerly known as "food stamps". The goal of the program is to provide low-income individuals and families with help buying food.

Who is conducting the study?

USDA's FNS Office of Policy Support is directing this study with the assistance of its contractor, Insight Policy Research (Insight), an independent research organization, and its partners, Mathematica Policy Research and Maximus.

Why is the study being conducted now?

In February 2014, Congress passed the Agricultural Act of 2014, which authorizes an assessment, through a feasibility study, of CNMI's capacity to administer SNAP in a manner similar to the way that States currently administer the program or through an alternative model. If the study findings determine that operating SNAP or a comparable program is feasible, the Act authorizes administrative and technical assistance funds to support a 3-year pilot.

What kind of information will be collected?

Insight will collect descriptive information through interviews with participants in the CNMI's current nutrition assistance program, retailers, Community-Based Organizations, and the CNMI Department of Community and Cultural Affairs (DCCA). These interviews will ask questions about how certain SNAP requirements would affect retailers, low-income individuals, and DCCA. Additionally, administrative data will also be collected from DCCA to determine the infrastructure requirements that would be necessary to implement SNAP.

When will the information be collected?

The interviews and administrative data collection will take place between June 2014 and February 2015.

Will the information be private?

All data collected through the interviews are private and will be reported to USDA only in aggregate form. Any researcher that works on this project has signed a statement promising to protect the privacy of every person interviewed for the study.

How can I find out more?

If you would like to find out more about this study, or have questions, you may contact Carla Bozzolo at Insight Policy Research, who is responsible for collecting information for this study. You may leave her a message by calling 571-758-5036, and she will return your call promptly.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-0524. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 5 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.