IDENTIFYING PROGRAM COMPONENTS AND PRACTICES THAT INFLUENCE SNAP APPLICATION PROCESSING TIMELINESS RATES:
The SNAP Timeliness Study

Survey of SNAP State Directors and Staff

Please enter your username (e-mail address) to start this questionnaire.

Username:

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Survey Instructions
It may take about 45–60 minutes to complete the survey. Please try to answer every question to the best of your ability. If you cannot answer a question, select the "Don't know" response. If you choose not to answer a question, you can skip it, and move to the next question. Your participation is entirely voluntary. By completing the survey, you indicate consent to participate.

Most questions in this survey refer to your State's administration of the SNAP program from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2015, unless otherwise specified. Please report about policies, procedures, or other activities that were in operation during this timeframe only.

To move through the survey, use the navigation buttons at the bottom of each screen. Do not use your browser's navigation arrows. If at any time you need to pause the survey, click on "Save" at the bottom of each page, and follow the instructions. You can then log back in later to complete the survey. Should you need to make changes to your previous responses, you can do so at any time after logging back in. Remember to click "Save" before you close the survey in order to record your responses.

Please monitor the time you spend to complete this survey and record that time at the end.

Thank you in advance for your participation in this important study.

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Part I: Respondent Identification Questions

Q1   **Please choose the response that best describes your role in the SNAP application process. Select only one.**

○   I provide leadership for our State, or work with State leadership, to define, implement and/or provide guidance to local offices on Federal and State SNAP application processing policy and procedures.

○   At the county or local office level, I primarily implement State guidance and manage staff who process SNAP applications.

○   Alone or as part of a team, I am responsible for processing SNAP cases and ensuring that applications are accurate and include all required supporting documentation.

○   Other

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Q2 **"Demonstrations" are projects that test new and innovative strategies that are approved by FNS and typically last 5 years. Which, if any, of the following SNAP demonstration projects associated with SNAP application processing were in operation in your State from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2015?**
(Check all that apply.)

☐ Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP) ❓
☐ Standard Medical Deductions (SMD) Project ❓
☐ Combined Application Project (CAP) (Standard) ❓
☐ Combined Application Project (CAP) (Modified) ❓
☐ Assessment of the Contributions of an Interview to SNAP Eligibility and Benefit Determination ❓
☐ Community Partner Interview Waiver ❓
☐ 36-Month Certification ❓
☐ Other FNS approved demonstration project(s) associated with SNAP application processing
☐ My State did not operate any demonstration projects from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2015

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When did the following project(s) start?

	Month (Please enter values between 1 and 12)	Year (Please enter values between 2012 and 2015)	Don't Know
Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP)			☐
Standard Medical Deductions (SMD) Project			☐
Combined Application Project (CAP) (Standard)			☐
Combined Application Project (CAP) (Modified)			☐
Assessment of the Contributions of an Interview to SNAP Eligibility and Benefit Determination			☐
Community Partner Interview Waiver			☐
36-Month Certification			☐
Other Demonstration Project 1			☐

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When did the following project(s) end?

	Month (Please enter values between 1 and 12)	Year (Please enter values between 2012 and 2015)	The project was still in operation as of September 2015	Don't know
Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP)			☐	☐
Standard Medical Deductions (SMD) Project			☐	☐
Combined Application Project (CAP) (Standard)			☐	☐
Combined Application Project (CAP) (Modified)			☐	☐
Assessment of the Contributions of an Interview to SNAP Eligibility and Benefit Determination			☐	☐
Community Partner Interview Waiver			☐	☐
36-Month Certification			☐	☐
Other Demonstration Project 1			☐	☐

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Did the project have any effect on application processing timeliness?

	It seemed to improve application processing timeliness	It seemed to hinder application processing timeliness	It did not seem to affect application processing timeliness	Don't know
Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP)	○	○	○	○
Standard Medical Deductions (SMD) Project	○	○	○	○
Combined Application Project (CAP) (Standard)	○	○	○	○
Combined Application Project (CAP) (Modified)	○	○	○	○
Assessment of the Contributions of an Interview to SNAP Eligibility and Benefit Determination	○	○	○	○
Community Partner Interview Waiver	○	○	○	○
36-Month Certification	○	○	○	○
Other Demonstration Project 1	○	○	○	○

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The next few questions focus on policies your State used routinely to receive and certify SNAP applications.

Q3 **Which of the following SNAP policies did your State modify or have in operation from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2015?**
(Check all that apply.)

- ☐ Simplified reporting - certification length ❓
- ☐ Simplified reporting - action on changes ❓
- ☐ Change reporting ❓
- ☐ Simplified income and resources ❓
- ☐ Simplified self-employment determination ❓
- ☐ Child support expense exclusion ❓
- ☐ Ineligible non-citizens' income and deductions ❓
- ☐ Simplified deduction determination ❓
- ☐ Simplified homeless housing cost ❓
- ☐ Standard utility allowance ❓
- ☐ Comparable disqualification ❓
- ☐ Child support-related disqualification ❓
- ☐ Broad-based categorical eligibility ❓
- ☐ Narrow categorical eligibility ❓
- ☐ Work requirements and employment and disqualification policy (for all non-exempt household members) ❓
- ☐ Transitional benefits ❓
- ☐ Verification of deductible expenses ❓
- ☐ Photo EBT cards ❓
- ☐ Other policy associated with SNAP application processing
- ☐ My State did not modify or operate any new SNAP policy or operational procedures associated with SNAP application processing during this period.

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When were the following policies put into operation?

	Month (Please enter values between 1 and 12)	Year (Please enter values between 2012 and 2015)	Don't Know
Simplified reporting - certification length			☐
Simplified reporting - action on changes			☐
Change reporting			☐
Simplified income and resources			☐
Simplified self-employment determination			☐
Child support expense exclusion			☐
Ineligible non-citizens' income and deductions			☐
Simplified deduction determination			☐
Simplified homeless housing cost			☐
Standard utility allowance			☐
Comparable disqualification			☐
Child support-related disqualification			☐
Broad-based categorical eligibility			☐
Narrow categorical eligibility			☐
Work requirements and employment and disqualification policy (for all non-exempt household members)			☐
Transitional benefits			☐
Verification of deductible expenses			☐
Photo EBT cards			☐
Other policy 1			☐

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When were the following policies ended?

	Month (Please enter values between 1 and 12)	Year (Please enter values between 2012 and 2015)	The project was still in operation as of September 2015	Don't know
Simplified reporting - certification length			☐	☐
Simplified reporting - action on changes			☐	☐
Change reporting			☐	☐
Simplified income and resources			☐	☐
Simplified self-employment determination			☐	☐
Child support expense exclusion			☐	☐
Ineligible non-citizens' income and deductions			☐	☐
Simplified deduction determination			☐	☐
Simplified homeless housing cost			☐	☐
Standard utility allowance			☐	☐
Comparable disqualification			☐	☐
Child support-related disqualification			☐	☐
Broad-based categorical eligibility			☐	☐
Narrow categorical eligibility			☐	☐
Work requirements and employment and disqualification policy (for all non-exempt household members)			☐	☐
Transitional benefits			☐	☐
Verification of deductible expenses			☐	☐
Photo EBT cards			☐	☐
Other policy 1			☐	☐

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Did the policy have any effect on application processing timeliness?

	It seemed to improve application processing timeliness	It seemed to hinder application processing timeliness	It did not seem to affect application processing timeliness	Don't know
Simplified reporting - certification length	○	○	○	○
Simplified reporting - action on changes	○	○	○	○
Change reporting	○	○	○	○
Simplified income and resources	○	○	○	○
Simplified self-employment determination	○	○	○	○
Child support expense exclusion	○	○	○	○
Ineligible non-citizens' income and deductions	○	○	○	○
Simplified deduction determination	○	○	○	○
Simplified homeless housing cost	○	○	○	○
Standard utility allowance	○	○	○	○
Comparable disqualification	○	○	○	○
Child support-related disqualification	○	○	○	○
Broad-based categorical eligibility	○	○	○	○
Narrow categorical eligibility	○	○	○	○
Work requirements and employment and disqualification policy (for all non-exempt household members)	○	○	○	○
Transitional benefits	○	○	○	○
Verification of deductible expenses	○	○	○	○
Photo EBT cards	○	○	○	○
Other policy 1	○	○	○	○

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The next few questions are about the modernization features your State agency has implemented.

Q4 Which of the following modernization features did your State have in operation from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2015?

- [ ] Modified SNAP office lobby flow designed to reduce wait time
- [ ] A call center handled general inquiries and requests to reduce staff workload
- [ ] A call center that provided general data entry services to support local office staff (i.e., schedule appointments, process complaints, enter reported changes, set task alerts)
- [ ] A call center that made eligibility determinations: workers were empowered to act on changes, complete interviews, and make case determinations
- [ ] A call center that processed change reporting tasks: workers were empowered to make decisions and take necessary action on a case
- [ ] A contact center that gave clients 24/7 access to their case information and increased access points to view case information and to submit changes: clients could access SNAP services by visiting SNAP office, call center, or the Web
- [ ] Online eligibility screening tool
- [ ] Online application system that provided a PDF form that the client completes and sends back
- [ ] Online application system that allowed clients to apply online and was integrated with the eligibility system
- [ ] Online application system that allowed clients to apply online but staff input the online application into the eligibility system
- [ ] Online account management that allowed clients to check benefit information, report changes, upload documents
- [ ] Online case management for workers that organized caseloads by queue, tracked when application was routed from one process to another, and alerted workers when case actions were due
- [ ] Integrated systems that handled online applications, eligibility system, and data verification
- [ ] Text messaging to notify clients of appointments or for client-caseworker communication
- [ ] Mobile applications for clients to apply, submit verification, or report changes
- [ ] Video interviews
- [ ] Verification programs or State or Federal databases used to verify client income and other eligibility requirements
- [ ] Document imaging
- [ ] Electronic case files
- [ ] Other modernization feature
- [ ] My State did not operate any modernization features from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2015

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When were the following modernization features started?

	Month (Please enter values between 1 and 12)	Year (Please enter values between 2012 and 2015)	Don't Know
Modified SNAP office lobby flow designed to reduce wait time			☐
A call center that handled general inquiries and requests to reduce staff workload			☐
A call center that provided general data entry services to support local office staff (i.e., schedule appointments, process complaints, enter reported changes, set task alerts)			☐
A call center that made eligibility determinations: workers were empowered to act on changes, complete interviews, and make case determinations			☐
A call center that processed change reporting tasks: workers were empowered to make decisions and take necessary action on a case			☐
A contact center that gave clients 24/7 access to their case information and increased access points to view case information and to submit changes: clients could access SNAP services by visiting SNAP office, call center, or the Web			☐
Online eligibility screening tool			☐
Online application system that provided a PDF form that			☐

the client completes and sends back			
Online application system that allowed clients to apply online and was integrated with the eligibility system			☐
Online application system that allowed clients to apply online but staff input the online application into the eligibility system			☐
Online account management that allowed clients to check benefit information, report changes, upload documents			☐
Online case management for workers that organized caseloads by queue, tracked when application was routed from one process to another, and alerted workers when case actions were due			☐
Integrated systems that handled online applications, eligibility system, and data verification			☐
Text messaging to notify clients of appointments or for client-caseworker communication			☐
Mobile applications for clients to apply, submit verification, or report changes			☐
Video interviews			☐
Verification programs or State or Federal databases used to verify client income and other eligibility			☐

requirements

Document imaging			☐
Electronic case files			☐
Other modernization feature 1			☐

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When were the following modernization features no longer in operation?

	Month (Please enter values between 1 and 12)	Year (Please enter values between 2012 and 2015)	Still in operation as of September 2015	Don't Know
Modified SNAP office lobby flow designed to reduce wait time			☐	☐
A call center that handled general inquiries and requests to reduce staff workload			☐	☐
A call center that provided general data entry services to support local office staff (i.e., schedule appointments, process complaints, enter reported changes, set task alerts)			☐	☐
A call center that made eligibility determinations: workers were empowered to act on changes, complete interviews, and make case determinations			☐	☐
A call center that processed change reporting tasks: workers were empowered to make decisions and take necessary action on a case			☐	☐
A contact center that gave clients 24/7 access to their case information and increased access points to view case information and to submit changes: clients could access SNAP services by visiting SNAP office, call center, or the Web			☐	☐
Online eligibility screening tool			☐	☐
Online application system that provided a PDF form that the client completes and sends back			☐	☐
Online application system that allowed clients to apply online and was integrated with the eligibility system			☐	☐
Online application system that allowed clients to apply online but staff input the online application into the eligibility system			☐	☐
Online account management that allowed clients to check benefit information, report changes, upload documents			☐	☐
Online case management for workers that organized caseloads by queue, tracked when application was routed from one process to another, and alerted workers when case actions were due			☐	☐
Integrated systems that handled online applications, eligibility system, and data verification			☐	☐
Text messaging to notify clients of appointments or for client-caseworker communication			☐	☐
Mobile applications for clients to apply, submit verification, or report changes			☐	☐
Video interviews			☐	☐
Verification programs or State or Federal databases used to verify client income and other eligibility requirements			☐	☐
Document imaging			☐	☐
Electronic case files			☐	☐
Other modernization feature 1			☐	☐

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Did the modernization feature have any effect on application processing timeliness?

	It seemed to improve application processing timeliness	It seemed to hinder application processing timeliness	It did not seem to affect application processing timeliness	Don't know
Modified SNAP office lobby flow designed to reduce wait time	○	○	○	○
A call center that handled general inquiries and requests to reduce staff workload	○	○	○	○
A call center that provided general data entry services to support local office staff (i.e., schedule appointments, process complaints, enter reported changes, set task alerts)	○	○	○	○
A call center that made eligibility determinations: workers were empowered to act on changes, complete interviews, and make case determinations	○	○	○	○
A call center that processed change reporting tasks: workers were empowered to make decisions and take necessary action on a case	○	○	○	○
A contact center that gave clients 24/7 access to their case information and increased access points to view case information and to submit changes: clients could access SNAP services by visiting SNAP office, call center, or the Web	○	○	○	○
Online eligibility screening tool	○	○	○	○
Online application system that provided a PDF form that the client completes and sends back	○	○	○	○
Online application system that allowed clients to apply online and was integrated with the eligibility system	○	○	○	○
Online application system that allowed clients to apply online but staff input the online application into the eligibility system	○	○	○	○
Online account management that allowed clients to check benefit information, report changes, upload documents	○	○	○	○
Online case management for workers that organized caseloads by queue, tracked when application was routed from one process to another, and alerted workers when case actions were due	○	○	○	○
Integrated systems that handled online applications, eligibility system, and data verification	○	○	○	○
Text messaging to notify clients of appointments or for client-caseworker communication	○	○	○	○
Mobile applications for clients to apply, submit verification, or report changes	○	○	○	○
Video interviews	○	○	○	○
Verification programs or State or Federal databases used to verify client income and other eligibility requirements	○	○	○	○
Document imaging	○	○	○	○
Electronic case files	○	○	○	○
Other modernization feature 1	○	○	○	○

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The next few questions are about any business process reengineering (BPR) initiatives your State agency has employed. Related initiatives include Continuous Improvement, Business Process Analysis, Continuous Quality Improvement, Quality Management Systems, Lean, Lean Six Sigma, Total Quality Management (TQM), Toyota Production System (TPS), ISO 9000, Kaizen, or Rapid Improvement Events. For the purposes of this survey, please consider these terms synonymous.

Q5 **Did your State implement any BPR initiatives related to SNAP application processing to improve timeliness from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2015?**

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Don't know

When did BPR activities start?

Month

(Please enter a value between 1 and 12**)**

Year

(Please enter a value between 2012 and 2015**)**

Don't Know ☐

When did BPR activities end?

Month

(Please enter a value between 1 and 12**)**

Year

(Please enter a value between 2012 and 2015**)**

Still in operation ☐

Don't Know ☐

Did these BPR activities have any effect on application processing timeliness?

- ○ They seemed to improve application processing timeliness
- ○ They seemed to hinder application processing timeliness
- ○ They did not seem to affect application processing timeliness
- ○ Don't know

Did State leadership support BPR by taking any of the following actions?
(Check all that apply)

- ○ Created new position(s) to handle new duties/responsibilities
- ○ Integrated BPR into the management structure of SNAP
- ○ Implemented a new application processing model
- ○ Other actions taken

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The next few questions are about the role of State and SNAP agency leadership has played in establishing Application Processing Timeliness (APT) as a priority.

Q6   **In what ways did your State leadership (i.e., SNAP agency executive administrators and managers) make SNAP APT a priority from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2015?**
(Check all that apply)

☐ Established clear performance targets or goals for improving the States' APT rate
☐ Monitored State APT rates annually
☐ Monitored State APT rates quarterly
☐ Monitored State APT rates monthly or weekly
☐ Monitored local APT rates annually
☐ Monitored local APT rates quarterly
☐ Monitored local APT rates monthly or weekly
☐ Held workers responsible for overdue cases
☐ Supported business processing reengineering initiative(s)
☐ Provided staff training about new application processing procedures
☐ Allocated resources for new technology designed to improve application processing
☐ Allocated resources for technical assistance to help workers use new technology
☐ Other State leadership action (please specify)
☐ My State did not make SNAP APT a priority

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Q7 **Did your State implement any workflow analyses or process management strategies to improve application processing efficiency from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2015?**

○ Yes
○ No
○ Don't know

Please briefly describe the workflow analyses or process management strategies your State implemented:

The next few questions are about performance-based incentives and penalties your State has implemented to improve your APT rates.

Q8   **Did your State implement any performance-based <u>incentives</u> (e.g., most productive workers were allowed to telecommute or performance bonuses) designed to improve APT rates from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2015?**

○ Yes
○ No
○ Don't know

Please briefly describe the performance-based incentives your State used:

[   ]

When did your State begin using performance-based incentives?

Month

[   ]

(Please enter a value between 1 and 12**)**

Year

[   ]

(Please enter a value between 2012 and 2015**)**

Don't Know   ☐

When did your State stop using performance-based incentives?

Month

[   ]

(Please enter a value between 1 and 12**)**

Year

[   ]

(Please enter a value between 2012 and 2015**)**

Still being used   ☐

Don't Know   ☐

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Q9   **Did your State use any performance-based <u>penalties</u> (e.g., lowering annual performance rating) to promote improvement in APT rates from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2015?**

○ Yes
○ No
○ Don't know

Please briefly describe the performance-based incentives your State used:

[ ]

When did your State begin using these performance-based incentives?

Month   [   ]

(Please enter a value between 1 and 12**)**

Year   [   ]

(Please enter a value between 2012 and 2015**)**

Don't Know   ☐

When did your State stop using these performance-based incentives?

Month   [   ]

(Please enter a value between 1 and 12**)**

Year   [   ]

(Please enter a value between 2012 and 2015**)**

Still being used   ☐

Don't Know   ☐

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Thank you for completing this survey. The information you have provided will help FNS identify best practices and provide guidance to State SNAP agencies and their staff to make their work easier and to better serve needy families throughout the country.

How much time did you spend to complete this survey?

Minutes

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