

Attachment I.2 Study Description

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) has long served as a safety net for individuals, including elderly people, who are experiencing difficulties in obtaining adequate nutrition. However, elderly individuals have historically participated in SNAP at substantially lower rates than the general population. Without SNAP, elderly individuals may be unable to meet their nutritional needs, forego medicine for food or be unable to pay utility bills or secure safe or stable housing. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), which administers SNAP, is funding a study to understand the effectiveness of strategies to improve SNAP access for elderly individuals.

FNS contracted with Social Policy Research and its partner Mathematica Policy Research (“the study team”) to conduct this study, which seeks to:

- Better understand the effectiveness of current strategies to improve SNAP access for elderly individuals;
- Identify best practices in implementing strategies to increase and sustain SNAP participation by elderly individuals; and
- Provide actionable recommendations to FNS that will help States maximize program access while minimizing unintended consequences.

The study team will collect different types of data to respond to FNS’ research questions. First, the team will compile background information on what is known about factors influencing elderly participation in SNAP, caseload dynamics over time, and the scope, range, and effects of State strategies to date. Second, the team will conduct site visit interviews with SNAP administrators and staff and community-based organizations to document the design, implementation, and operation of strategies in 10 selected States. Third, the study team will conduct interviews and focus groups with elderly SNAP participants and eligible nonparticipants in the selected States to assess their experiences with and perceptions of the strategies and barriers to SNAP participation. Finally, the team will collect and analyze SNAP administrative case records to document how strategies in the selected States are associated with changes in SNAP applications, caseloads, participation spells, and benefit levels for elderly households and sub-groups of elderly individuals.

For questions or concerns about the study please contact Melissa Mack, Project Director, by email at melissa_mack@spra.com or by phone at (510) 788-2478.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information 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. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services, Office of Policy Support, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 1014, Alexandria, VA 22302 ATTN: PRA (0584-xxxx*). Do not return the completed form to this address.