

Attachment I.3 Frequently Asked Questions

Q Why is FNS conducting the study?

A Under Section 17 of the Food and Nutrition Act, 2008, this study is being conducted to provide FNS with information on the effectiveness of current strategies to improve SNAP access for elderly individuals. Ultimately, results from this study will be used to provide actionable recommendations to FNS that will help States maximize SNAP access for the elderly.

Q Who is invited to participate in the Evaluation of Alternatives to Improve Elderly Access to SNAP?

A The study team is working with FNS to select ten States for the study. Within each State, the study team will work with the State SNAP agency (and partner agencies if relevant), community-based organizations, and elderly individuals (60+) themselves to gather information on how SNAP operates and any programs or initiatives in place that are designed to help elderly individuals access SNAP. The study is completely voluntary and there are no penalties if you choose not to participate in part or whole.

Q Why did you select our State?

A FNS selected States that represent variation in the types and number of policies and procedures in place that could increase SNAP access for the elderly. The States also were selected to achieve variation with respect to geography and SNAP participation rates.

Q What kinds of policies and procedures are you interested in studying for this evaluation?

A The study team will be focusing on the following types of policies and procedures that could affect elderly participation in SNAP:

- Simplified application processes
- Waiver of certification or recertification interviews
- Standardized medical deduction
- Longer certification periods and reduced reporting
- Combined application project (CAPs)
- Community Partnership Interview Demonstrations

The study team is interested in including States that have one of these strategies in place as well as States that have a combination of these strategies in place.

Q What types of information should I be prepared to provide?

A The study team will be requesting administrative case records data on SNAP applications submitted and units on the caseload over a specified period of time. We have a list of data elements we will be requesting that we can share with you. The study team recognizes that States store different variables in different formats and will work with you to customize this list, which gives you a general sense of the types of information we are seeking. If you will have difficulty providing any of the

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requested data, the study team will work to figure out a solution.

For the site visit interviews, the study team will ask administrators and staff about the design, implementation, operations, and outcomes of policies and procedures that may affect elderly access to SNAP. No advanced preparation for the interviews will be required or expected. We realize that different individuals will have different knowledge on these topics and will only ask questions that are relevant to respondents' roles.

The study team also may request contact information for community-based organizations serving the elderly in your State.

Q How will you identify elderly individuals for interviews and focus groups and what is the State's role in that process?

A We propose a two-pronged recruitment strategy. First, we will attempt to use the rigorous approach of randomly selecting SNAP Participants and Non-participating Applicants in selected States and counties based on the state administrative data collected in Task 7.4 and third-party data. We will call potential respondents two weeks in advance of the visit to recruit them for interviews. If we are not successful in setting up enough interviews within a week of the visit (seven SNAP participants and four non-participating applicants per county, with the expectation that there will be a 30 percent attrition rate and we will be left with five SNAP participants and three non-participating applicants), we will default to the second strategy, which is to coordinate with local partners to identify additional respondents. For individuals in the Non-Participant group, who have never participated in SNAP and will thus not be in the administrative data, we will use third-party data or work with local partners to schedule three such participants in each county (with the expectation that two interviews will actually occur).

Q How long is the data collection period?

A The study team will conduct one three-day site visit to the State in the spring or summer of 2018. In those three days we plan to visit the State capitol and two local SNAP offices. Similarly, the study team will collect the administrative case records data in the spring or summer of 2018 and anticipate a one-time collection of those data. The data collection will occur in 2018 because we do not anticipate receiving clearance from the Federal Office of Management and Budget (or OMB) until that time.

Q How does FNS protect the privacy of the information that is provided?

A Data provided to Social Policy Research and Mathematica Policy Research will be used only for purposes of this study and products from the study will only include summary statistics. This means that personal information will be kept private and the responses provided during interviews will not be linkable to specific individuals. No personally identifiable information may be disclosed to anyone outside the research team unless otherwise compelled by law. The Federal Office of Management and Budget (or OMB) is in the process of approving the study. If necessary, we will also work with you to obtain approval from a State Institutional review board (IRB).

Q What if we do not have time or staff to participate in the study?

A We understand that your time is valuable. The study has been carefully designed to

collect the required information with minimal burden to both you and your staff. Information you provide about how your State is supporting elderly participation in SNAP is a valuable resource that FNS and other States can use to improve their programming.

Q Will my State receive any reimbursement for the costs of participating in this study?

A There is no reimbursement available for your participation in the study. However, the study has been carefully designed to collect the required information with minimal cost to the State. During the site visit, we will require no more than 60 minutes of any individual's time. We have developed documents and procedures to facilitate the transfer of administrative case records data, and through our substantial experience collecting these data for similar studies, we know how to work closely with States to minimize the burden of this process.

Q Who should I contact if I have questions about the study?

A If you have any questions please contact the study director, Melissa Mack, at melissa_mack@spra.com or by phone at (510) 788-2478. You also can contact Kameron Burt, the FNS project officer for this study, at (703) 305-2572 or Kameron.burt@fns.usda.gov.

Q When do I need to decide whether or not my State will participate in the study?

A The study team will need a response within one month.
