

Appendix B.2. Research Objectives and Questions by Data Source

OMB No. 0584-[NEW]

Assessment of Mandatory E&T Programs

Month XX, 2018

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Research Objectives and Questions by Data Source

Research Objectives and Questions	Data Sources			
	Document Review	Site Visits		Administrative Data ^a
		Interviews With State and Local SNAP Staff	Interviews With E&T Providers	
Objective 1: Conduct a process evaluation to understand the process for notifying participants and enrolling them in mandatory E&T programs				
What reasons do States give for instituting mandatory over voluntary programs?	●	●		
Who is subject to mandatory E&T in the mandatory State programs? Do States exempt certain groups of individuals or geographic areas from mandatory participation in E&T? If so, why?	●	●		
How do mandatory States differ from one another in their intake procedures, referral procedures, orientations, and notification processes for mandatory participants?	●	●		
How do screening mechanisms work in regard to Federal exemptions from work registration and any State-selected exemptions from mandatory E&T? How often are SNAP participants referred to E&T when they should not be? Generally, how and when are incorrect referrals to E&T discovered, and how are they corrected?	●	●	●	
What activities are required for mandatory E&T compliance?	●	●	●	
Do mandatory E&T States have the resources to serve the entire eligible population should participation reach 100 percent? If not, what percentage of the eligible population can the States serve?	●	●	●	
How frequently do mandatory E&T participants leave the program for the following reasons? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participant is sanctioned for failure to comply with requirements. ■ Participant does not meet deadline to recertify. ■ Participant begins earning wages that are above the threshold to qualify for SNAP benefits. 		●	●	●

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Objective 2: Determine the main reasons why mandatory E&T participants are sanctioned, with particular attention to program dropoff points that result in sanctions				
<p>What State E&T policies and administrative practices may affect a mandatory E&T participant's likelihood of participating in E&T services and the participant's likelihood of being sanctioned? Features examined may include—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Group(s) targeted ■ Screening process used to identify Federal exemptions from work registration and any State-selected exemptions from mandatory E&T, particularly in States that rely primarily on telephone interviews ■ Intake process, including assessment and assignment to individual E&T components ■ Referral process, including systems of communication and collaboration between SNAP agencies and E&T partner organizations ■ Number of locations visited and referrals needed to obtain services ■ Participant reporting requirements ■ Notification process ■ Type of sanction imposed ■ Length of compliance period before being considered noncompliant ■ Opportunities for appeal, including formal and informal channels 				
At which points in the process are participants more likely to be sanctioned?		●	●	●
How clear are the NOAAs, which inform participants they are at risk of being sanctioned? Is due process followed for those who fail to meet program requirements?	●	●		
How frequently do participants who receive a sanction notice comply before the sanction is imposed?		●		●
<p>To the extent the information is available, what percentage of sanctioned participants return to SNAP and E&T?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How quickly do sanctioned individuals return to SNAP, if at all (e.g., never return, short-term absences, long-term absences)? ■ How long do mandatory participants typically participate in E&T (if data are available)? 		●	●	●

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Objective 2 (continued): Determine the main reasons why mandatory E&T participants are sanctioned, with particular attention to program dropoff points that result in sanctions				
<p>What are the challenges or obstacles mandatory SNAP E&T participants face in sustaining participation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What are the primary barriers clients report to SNAP agencies for not being able to comply upfront (never enter E&T)? ■ How do reasons differ for those that begin an E&T program but struggle to comply? 		●	●	
<p>What kinds of training do SNAP staff receive on practices for implementing mandatory E&T and sanctions for noncompliance? Features examined may include—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Who receives training ■ Frequency of training ■ Any printed materials ■ Format of the training (in person, web, required/optional) ■ Whether retraining is offered/required periodically 	●	●	●	
<p>Does the frequency of sanctioning differ in States with light-touch programs versus intensive programs?</p>		●		●
<p>How are sanction policies/procedures monitored and tracked by the State/local supervisors?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Are case reviews conducted on sanctioned cases to determine if they were sanctioned accurately? ■ Does the level of noncompliance remain fairly consistent annually and across the State? If not, how has it changed? Why? ■ Has the State made any changes to its sanction policies over time to account for high sanction rates identified? 	●	●		

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Objective 3: Assess how well mandatory programs help SNAP E&T participants gain skills, certificates and credentials; gain stable, well-paying employment; and move toward economic self-sufficiency				
How do the services included in State E&T plans compare with the services that participants are offered or actually receive (e.g., job search, job search training, supportive services)? Services examined may include—				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Light-touch services such as job search or job search training ■ Intensive services such as adult basic education, on-the-job training, or occupational or technical skills training ■ Case management, success coaching, or career navigation ■ Support services such as transportation or child care 	●	●	●	●
How do the services providers offer to E&T participants compare to what participants most frequently receive?				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How do staff determine what services to offer participants? ■ Are participants told about all services or only a limited amount based on assessments? 	●	●	●	
To what extent are mandatory E&T services specifically designed to prepare participants for in-demand jobs in the local job market?	●	●	●	
What metrics do States have in place to determine how well E&T services are moving participants toward economic self-sufficiency?				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Which organizations are tracking and monitoring those metrics? 	●	●	●	

^a Research questions addressed by the administrative data analysis may be limited by the data available from SNAP case records, E&T providers, and other State records. The study team will assess the extent to which available administrative data can provide information needed to address research questions during preliminary discussions with States.