

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

OMB No. 0584-[NEW]

*Assessment of Mandatory E&T Programs*

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## Research Objectives and Questions by Data Source

Research Objectives and Questions	Data Sources			
	Document Review	Site Visits		Administrative Data <sup>a</sup>
		Interviews With State and Local SNAP Staff	Interviews With E&T Providers	
<b>Objective 1: Conduct a process evaluation to understand the process for notifying participants and enrolling them in mandatory E&amp;T programs</b>				
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"> <li>■ Participant is sanctioned for failure to comply with requirements.</li> <li>■ Participant does not meet deadline to recertify.</li> <li>■ Participant begins earning wages that are above the threshold to qualify for SNAP benefits.</li> </ul>		●	●	●

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

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

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<b>Objective 3: Assess how well mandatory programs help SNAP E&amp;T participants gain skills, certificates and credentials; gain stable, well-paying employment; and move toward economic self-sufficiency</b>				
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"> <li>■ Light-touch services such as job search or job search training</li> <li>■ Intensive services such as adult basic education, on-the-job training, or occupational or technical skills training</li> <li>■ Case management, success coaching, or career navigation</li> <li>■ Support services such as transportation or child care</li> </ul>	●	●	●	●
How do the services providers offer to E&T participants compare to what participants most frequently receive?				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ How do staff determine what services to offer participants?</li> <li>■ Are participants told about all services or only a limited amount based on assessments?</li> </ul>	●	●	●	
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"> <li>■ Which organizations are tracking and monitoring those metrics?</li> </ul>	●	●	●	

<sup>a</sup> 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.