

Attachment O. D-SNAP Study Overview

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Best Practices in Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) Operations and Planning

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Best Practices in Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) Operations and Planning: Study Overview

Authorized under 7 U.S.C. 2026, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has funded the Best Practices in Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) Operations and Planning study (to identify and document best practices in D-SNAP planning and operations for a variety of disaster types. State use of D-SNAP has increased in recent years. The program aided nearly 6 million households and responded to more than a dozen disasters during fiscal years 2017 and 2018. State agencies that had never operated D-SNAP are running programs for the first time, and experienced State agencies are gaining more experience operating D-SNAP. The data obtained through this study on D-SNAP planning and implementation are critical for FNS to effectively assist State agencies in operating D-SNAP. FNS has identified five objectives for this study:

1. Assess the implementation and operation of D-SNAP for selected disaster(s) in each study State.
2. Describe the characteristics and economic circumstances of the D-SNAP households for the selected disaster(s).
3. Document each State's approach to protecting program integrity while operating D-SNAP for the selected disaster(s).
4. Determine best practices for developing annual disaster plans to address a variety of disaster types.
5. Determine best practices for implementing and operating a D-SNAP for a variety of disaster types.

FNS is conducting this study with the assistance of an independent research contractor, **Insight Policy Research (Insight)**. To address this study's research objectives, the evaluation team will conduct the following data collection activities:

1. **Document review** of all available information on the planning, operation, and postdisaster reporting of D-SNAP in five States
2. **Interviews with Federal staff** at FNS Headquarters and Regional Offices who worked with States on D-SNAP administration and approvals
3. **Site visits to five States** to assess all aspects of the D-SNAP operations based on in-depth interviews, process-mapping discussions, and on-the-ground observations at former D-SNAP sites and disaster areas. Each site visit will include interviews with staff at (1) the State SNAP agency, (2) county SNAP office (if SNAP is county-administered), (3) one local office near the D-SNAP site, and (4) relevant stakeholders that supported the D-SNAP (e.g., community-based organizations, utility companies, local FEMA offices). The study team will also seek to interview any former State staff who were closely involved with D-SNAP operations for the relevant disasters

4. **Collection and analysis of administrative caseload data** to examine the characteristics and economic circumstances of D-SNAP households and estimate the economic impact in the affected areas

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is conducting the study?

FNS is conducting this study with the assistance of an independent research contractor, Insight Policy Research (Insight).

[INCLUDE ONLY WHEN SENDING TO STATE EMPLOYEES] Why am I being asked to participate?

Five States are being invited to participate in the study. FNS selected States that operated a D-SNAP in 2018 or 2019. States were selected to represent a diversity of disaster types.

What kind of administrative data will be collected?

Insight will collect administrative data from SNAP and D-SNAP case records from study States. Insight will request caseload data on SNAP and D-SNAP participants from each of the five study States for the 3 months prior to the D-SNAP, the duration of the D-SNAP, and through the 6 months after the D-SNAP. Caseload data will be collected for the entire State—not just the areas operating D-SNAP—because some participants may relocate as a result of a disaster. The caseload data will be used to describe the D-SNAP population and assess the economic impact of D-SNAP. Insight will work with each State to determine what information is available. Insight will then request a test file from each State and provide feedback to the State before the State submits its complete file.

When will the site visits be conducted and how long will they be?

Site visits to each State will last approximately 4 days and will be conducted in summer 2021 following receipt of OMB clearance.

What are the next steps?

A timeline of the planning and data collection appears in the table below.

Study Timeline

Estimated Date	Activity
Summer 2020	The study team conducts an introductory conference call with each State to discuss the study and answer questions. Following the introductory conference call, the study team will provide the administrative data request to selected States and hold another call to discuss the request.
Fall 2020	Insight establishes an MOU/DUA with each study State.
Winter 2020	State submits initial test file to Insight.
Spring 2021	Upon receipt of OMB approval (estimated April 2021), the study team plans the site visits with States and requests the full datafile.
Spring/Summer 2021	The study team conducts one site visit to each of the five States.

How will the information my State provides be used?

The information gathered during the site visits will be used to increase FNS's understanding of best practices in planning and implementing D-SNAP from States representing a variety of disaster types and to inform further guidance and technical assistance to States. Study results will be presented in a written report provided to FNS. All interviews will be considered private, and no participants will be cited by name or title.