

Appendix B

Study objectives and research questions

Evaluation of Child Support Cooperation Requirements in SNAP

Study objectives and research questions

Study objective 1. Assess the implementation of child support cooperation requirements for each State in the study that currently implements the requirement.

- What is the step-by-step administrative process used to implement the requirement? What major changes have been made to the administrative process in the last 5 years?
- What system changes were necessary to coordinate SNAP and child support enforcement?
- Which agencies, organizations, or vendors help implement the requirement?
- What are (and were) facilitators to implementing the requirement effectively and efficiently?
- What specific requirements do States have? Are they enforcing all of them? If not, why?
- What procedures do States use to determine cooperation?
- What procedures do States use to sanction participants for failure to cooperate?
- What procedures do States use to determine good cause for noncooperation?
- What additional resources (for example, State and local staff time, printing costs for new forms, technical resources) were associated with developing and/or administering the systems necessary to coordinate SNAP and child support implementation of child support cooperation requirements?

Study objective 2. Assess the feasibility of implementing child support cooperation requirements in a sample of State agencies that formerly chose to implement the requirement or are considering implementing the requirement.

- What are (or were) facilitators and barriers to implementing the requirement effectively and efficiently?
- What are the critical systems and organizations a State should have in place to effectively and efficiently implement the requirement?
- What factors led to the decision to discontinue the requirement?
- What factors influence the State to consider adopting child support cooperation requirements? Which types of child support cooperation requirement policies are they considering adopting (or did they adopt)?
- How many SNAP participants would be subject to the child support cooperation requirement if the State chose to adopt it?
- How many of these individuals are already in the child support program?
 - Among those individuals already in the child support program: How many have paternity established for all of their children? How many have a child support order for all of their children? How much child support has been collected? How much child support arrears are owed?
 - Among those individuals already in the child support program: How many participate in TANF? How many participate in Medicaid? How many have been sanctioned by TANF or Medicaid for noncooperation with child support?

Study objective 3. Assess the impact of child support cooperation requirements in SNAP on both custodial and noncustodial parents in study States that have or formerly had child support cooperation requirements.

- How many individuals are subject to each of the child support requirements and what percent of the SNAP population does (did) this represent?
- How many individuals, at the time of application, are subject to child support cooperation requirements? What percent of SNAP applicants does (did) this represent?
- How many individuals who were subject to child support cooperation requirements at the time of application ended up meeting the requirement?
- How many individuals failed to meet child support cooperation requirements? What percent of SNAP applicants does (did) this represent?
- How many individuals who were subject to child support cooperation requirements at the time of application, were found to have good cause for noncooperation in child support payments?
- What is the impact of child support cooperation requirements on new and existing child support orders? How did the change in cooperation requirement policy affect the number of child support orders for custodial parents and noncustodial parents receiving SNAP?
- What is the impact of child support cooperation requirements on the establishment of paternity? How did the change in cooperation requirement policy affect the number of paternity establishments for custodial parents and noncustodial parents receiving SNAP?
- What is the impact of child support cooperation requirements on child support payments to custodial households? How did the change in child support cooperation requirements policy affect average monthly payments on child support orders for custodial parents and noncustodial parents receiving SNAP?
- What is the impact of the requirement on child support arrears?
- How many individuals who were subject to child support cooperation requirements were also subject to cooperation requirements through other programs, such as Medicaid or TANF?
- How many of those individuals were sanctioned or disqualified?
- What is the impact of child support cooperation requirements on arrears owed child support enforcement activity?

Study objective 4. Assess how State agencies align the procedures for implementing child support cooperation requirements in SNAP to those in other Federal programs.

- How does the requirement align with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) requirements?
- How does the requirement align with Medicaid requirements?
- How does the requirement align with programs carried out under Child Care and Development Block Grant?

Study objective 5. Determine the costs and benefits to State SNAP agencies, child support agencies, and households of requiring State agencies to implement the child support cooperation requirements.

- What are the Federal, State, and local costs associated with implementing each of the child support requirements for personnel, technology upgrades, and other costs?
- What are the costs and benefits to households and individuals in cooperating with the requirements?
- What are the benefits net of costs to SNAP agencies, child support agencies, custodial parents, noncustodial parents, and their families, and society as a whole?

Study objective 6. Assess the impact of child support cooperation requirements on SNAP eligibility, benefit levels, food security, income, and economic stability.

- What is the impact on individuals subject to the requirement and other household members, including children?
- What is the impact on households with nontraditional family structures, including a household in which a grandparent is the primary caretaker of a grandchild?
- Is there an impact on the relationship between the child and noncustodial parent?
- What do participants understand about the requirement? How well do they understand it?
- How do participants think that the requirement could be improved?
- How do States assist applicants and participants in understanding the process and impacts of the requirement?
- How does participant understanding of the requirement effect how they think about accessing food assistance?
- How has the cooperation requirement affected participants' relationship with the other parent?