SENATE, No. 3941



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE



INTRODUCED JUNE 10, 2021

Sponsored by:

Senator JOSEPH F. VITALE

District 19 (Middlesex)

Senator VIN GOPAL

District 11 (Monmouth)

SYNOPSIS

Directs DHS to develop mobile software program for SNAP recipients.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



An Act concerning a mobile software program for New Jersey Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program recipients and supplementing Title 44 of the Revised Statutes.

Be It Enacted by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. As used in this act:

“Commissioner” means the Commissioner of Human Services.

"Electronic benefit transfer card or benefit card" means a benefit card utilized by a consumer to gain access to nutrition assistance program benefits.

"Mobile software program" means a computer program or software application designed to be downloaded onto and used in conjunction with a mobile electronic communication device, as defined herein, and available through multiple software platforms.

"Mobile electronic communication device" means any mobile device capable of communication or other transmission of information and includes, but is not limited to, a cellular telephone, wireless tablet, or other device with Internet capability, or other wireless communication device.

"Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program" or "SNAP" means the supplemental nutrition assistance program, established pursuant to the federal "Food and Nutrition Act of 2008," Pub.L.88-525 (7 U.S.C. s.2011 et seq.).

2. a. The Department of Human Services shall develop and maintain, or enter into or modify an agreement with a third party to develop and maintain, a mobile software program for SNAP recipients. The mobile software program shall include, but not be limited to, functionality that allows a user of the mobile software program who is recipient of SNAP benefits to:

(1) view the user’s SNAP case status and the current benefits the user receives;

(2) view the current balance on the user’s electronic benefit transfer card;

(3) request an electronic benefit transfer card or a replacement card and track the card’s expected time of arrival by mail;

(4) upload and submit required documents for continued participation in SNAP and track the current processing status of those documents;

(5) receive alerts for upcoming SNAP appointments and important deadlines or actions;

(6) read and print notices and letters;

(7) update contact information;

(8) request to have a letter mailed to the user listing the amount of benefits the user receives; and

(9) view local contact information for the County Board of Social Services for the county in which the user resides.

b. The mobile software program shall be made available free of charge and in multiple languages.

3. The commissioner shall apply for any:

a. waivers from the federal government, which are necessary for the approval and implementation of this act; and

b. grants through the SNAP Process and Technology Improvement Grants program within the United States Department of Agriculture to receive federal funding to implement the provisions of this act.

4. The Commissioner of Human Services, pursuant to the “Administrative Procedure Act,” P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), shall promulgate rules and regulations to effectuate the provisions of this act.

5. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill requires the Department of Human Services to develop and maintain, or enter into or modify an agreement with a third party to develop and maintain, a mobile software program for SNAP recipients.

The mobile software program will include, but not be limited to, functionality that allows a user of the mobile software program who is a recipient of SNAP benefits to: view the user’s SNAP case status and the current benefits the user receives; view the current balance on the user’s electronic benefit transfer card; request an electronic benefit transfer card or a replacement card and track the card’s expected time of arrival by mail; upload and submit required documents for continued participation in SNAP and track the current processing status of those documents; receive alerts for upcoming SNAP appointments and important deadlines or actions; read and print notices and letters; update contact information; request to have a letter mailed to the user listing the amount of benefits the user receives; and view local contact information for the County Board of Social Services for the county in which the user resides. The mobile software program will also be required to be made available free of charge and in multiple languages.

The bill requires the Commissioner of Human Services to apply for any: 1) waivers from the federal government, which are necessary for approval and implementation of this act; and 2) grants through the SNAP Process and Technology Improvement Grants program within the United States Department of Agriculture to receive federal funding to implement the provisions of bill.