## ASSEMBLY, No. 2361 STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 7, 2022

Sponsored by: Assemblywoman ANGELICA M. JIMENEZ District 32 (Bergen and Hudson) Assemblywoman SHAVONDA E. SUMTER District 35 (Bergen and Passaic) Assemblywoman BRITNEE N. TIMBERLAKE District 34 (Essex and Passaic)

Co-Sponsored by: Assemblywomen Reynolds-Jackson, McKnight and Haider

## **SYNOPSIS**

Requires DHS to develop and implement SNAP outreach plan; appropriates funds.

## **CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 5/2/2022)

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AN ACT establishing a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
 outreach plan, supplementing Title 44 of the Revised Statutes,
 and making an appropriation.
 BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State

- 6 of New Jersey:
- 7

8 1. a. The department, working in consultation and cooperation
9 with community-based organizations and county welfare agencies,
10 shall develop and implement a comprehensive SNAP outreach plan
11 targeted at increasing potential beneficiaries' access to:

(1) information regarding the availability of SNAP, the criteria
for eligibility for SNAP benefits, and the various methods to apply
for SNAP benefits; and

15 (2) the technological means to apply for SNAP benefits.

b. At a minimum, the department's outreach plan developedpursuant to subsection a. of this section shall include:

(1) establishing a SNAP Navigator Grant Program, the purpose
of which shall be to distribute grant funding, via a process and
method determined by the commissioner, to community-based
organizations to support the employment of SNAP application
navigators. In distributing grants under the program, the
commissioner shall give priority to community-based organizations
that assist underserved communities;

(2) providing training to the appropriate staff at communitybased organizations regarding the necessary steps to complete and
submit a SNAP application, through all available methods,
including online and by telephone. Staff trained pursuant to this
paragraph shall assist clients with the SNAP application process;

30 (3) partnering with community-based organizations to increase31 client access to computers and the online SNAP application; and

(4) providing SNAP information and resources to beneficiaries
of public assistance programs who are served by the department and
county welfare agencies, and who are likely to be eligible for, but
are not currently receiving, SNAP benefits.

36 c. As used in this section:

37 "Commissioner" means Commissioner of Human Services.

"County welfare agency" means that agency of county 38 39 government, which is charged with the responsibility for 40 determining eligibility and issuing benefits for public assistance 41 programs. The term county welfare agency shall include, but not be 42 limited to, agencies that may be locally known as the Board of Social Services; the Department of Citizen Services; the Division of 43 44 Welfare; the Division of Social Services; the Division of Temporary 45 Assistance and Social Services; or as the Department of Family and 46 Community Development.

47 "Department" means the Department of Human Services.

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1 "Public assistance program" means any program administered 2 through the Department of Human Services, a county welfare agency, 3 or a collaboration between the two which is authorized to provide 4 assistance and services to needy persons, including, but not limited to: 5 the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, established pursuant to the federal "Food and Nutrition Act of 6 7 2008," Pub.L.110-246 (7 U.S.C. s.2011 et seq.); the Work First New 8 Jersey program established pursuant to P.L.1997, c.38 (C.44:10-55 et 9 seq.); and the Medicaid program established pursuant to P.L.1968, 10 c.413 (C.30:4D-1 et seq.). 11 "SNAP" means the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition 12 Assistance Program, established pursuant to the federal "Food and Nutrition Act of 2008," Pub.L.110-246 (7 U.S.C. s.2011 et seq.). 13 14 15 2. The Commissioner of Human Services, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et 16 17 seq.), shall promulgate rules and regulations to effectuate the 18 provisions of this act. 19 20 3. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Human Services such an amount as is necessary, as 21 22 determined by the Commissioner of Human Services, to effectuate 23 paragraph (1) of subsection b. of section 1 of this act. 24 25 4. This act shall take effect immediately. 26 27 **STATEMENT** 28 29 30 This bill requires the Department of Human Services (DHS), 31 working in consultation and cooperation with community-based 32 organizations and county welfare agencies, to develop and 33 implement a comprehensive outreach plan for the New Jersey 34 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP, 35 formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, is a nutrition assistance program that serves as a safety net for low-income 36 37 households. 38 Research indicates that only an estimated 70 percent of eligible 39 individuals in New Jersey participate in SNAP, leaving many who 40 could benefit unserved. As staff and resources dedicated to 41 outreach on the county level are limited, it is the sponsor's goal to 42 increase the program's participation rate, while reducing hunger in the State, through a comprehensive Statewide outreach effort. 43 44 Specifically, the bill directs that the outreach plan is to focus on 45 increasing potential beneficiaries' access to: 1) information 46 regarding the availability of SNAP, the criteria for eligibility for SNAP benefits, and the various methods to apply for SNAP 47

benefits; and 2) the technological means to apply for SNAP
 benefits.

3 At a minimum, the plan is to include:

1) establishing a SNAP Navigator Grant Program, the purpose 4 5 of which will be to distribute grant funding, via a process and method determined by the Commissioner of Human Services, to 6 7 community-based organizations to support the employment of 8 SNAP application navigators. In distributing grants under the 9 program, the commissioner will be required to give priority to 10 community-based organizations that assist underserved 11 communities. The bill directs that funds, the amount to be 12 determined by the commissioner, be appropriated from the General 13 Fund to the DHS for the purposes of establishing this grant 14 program;

2) providing training to the appropriate staff at communitybased organizations regarding the necessary steps to complete and
submit a SNAP application, through all available methods,
including online and by telephone. Trained staff are to assist clients
with the SNAP application process;

20 3) partnering with community-based organizations to increase21 client access to computers and the online SNAP application; and

4) providing SNAP information and resources to beneficiaries of

public assistance programs who are served by the department andby county welfare agencies, and who are likely to be eligible for,

25 but are not currently receiving, SNAP benefits.