ASSEMBLY, No. 2366

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 7, 2022

Sponsored by:

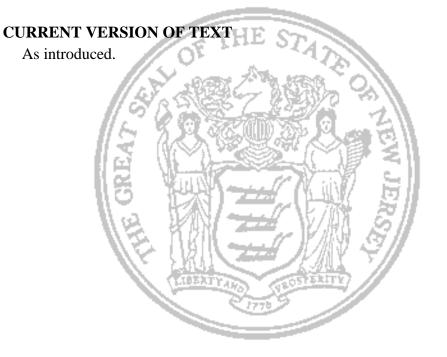
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Assemblywoman Quijano, Assemblyman Benson, Assemblywoman Reynolds-Jackson, Assemblymen Wimberly, Freiman, Assemblywomen Lampitt, Jasey, Lopez and Jimenez

SYNOPSIS

Requires DHS to issue monthly supplemental SNAP benefit of \$15 to senior citizens and disabled enrollees; appropriates \$20.5 million to DHS.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 5/26/2022)

1 AN ACT concerning supplemental benefits under the Supplemental 2 Nutrition Assistance Program, supplementing Title 44 of the 3 Revised Statutes, and making an appropriation.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

- 1. a. The Division of Family Development in the Department of Human Services shall issue a monthly supplemental benefit of \$15 to each eligible enrollee of SNAP, provided that the enrollee is a senior citizen or an individual with a disability. The division shall distribute the monthly supplemental benefit via the enrollee's existing SNAP electronic benefits card, on the same issuance date as the enrollee's standard SNAP benefits. An enrollee shall use the monthly supplemental benefit issued pursuant to this section in the same manner as, and in compliance with, all State and federal laws and regulations that apply to the use of the enrollee's standard SNAP benefits.
- b. The Commissioner of Human Services shall apply to the Food and Nutrition Service within the United States Department of Agriculture for any necessary waivers or approvals to implement the provisions of this act.
 - c. As used in this act:

"Individual with a disability" means an individual who meets one of the following requirements by the last day of the month in which the SNAP supplemental benefit is being issued: (1) receives federal disability or blindness payments under the federal "Social Security Act," 42 U.S.C. s.301 et seq.; (2) receives State disability or blindness payments under the Supplemental Security Income program, P.L.1973, c.256 (C.44:7-85 et seq.); (3) receives a disability retirement benefit from a governmental agency because of a permanent disability; (4) receives an annuity under the federal "Railroad Retirement Act of 1974," 45 U.S.C. s.231 et seq. and is eligible for Medicare or is considered disabled under the Supplemental Security Income program; (5) is a veteran who is totally disabled, permanently homebound, or in need of regular aid and attendance; or (6) is the surviving spouse or child of a veteran who is receiving federal veterans' benefits and is considered permanently disabled.

"Senior citizen" means an individual who is 60 years of age or older by the last day of the month in which the SNAP supplemental benefit is being issued.

42 "SNAP" means the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition 43 Assistance Program, established pursuant to the federal "Food and 44 Nutrition Act of 2008," Pub.L.110-246 (7 U.S.C. s.2011 et seq.).

2. The Commissioner of Human Services shall adopt rules and regulations, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act,"

A2366 MCKNIGHT, CARTER

P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), as may be necessary to implement the provisions of this act.

3. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Division of Family Development in the Department of Human Services \$20,500,000 to effectuate the provisions of this act.

4. This act shall take effect on the first day of the fourth month next following the date of enactment, but the Commissioner of Human Services may take such anticipatory administrative action in advance thereof as may be necessary for the implementation of this act.

STATEMENT

This bill directs the Division of Family Development (DFD) in the Department of Human Services (DHS) to issue a monthly supplemental benefit of \$15 to each eligible enrollee of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), provided that the enrollee is a senior citizen or an individual with a disability. SNAP, formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, is a nutrition assistance program that serves as a safety net for low-income households.

The federal government provides 100 percent of the funds for the standard SNAP benefit for all enrollees. According to existing eligibility standards, the monthly benefit for senior citizens and individuals with disabilities can be as low as \$16. Research has indicated that disabling or chronic health conditions may be made worse by insufficient food or a low-quality diet. A monthly supplemental SNAP benefit for senior citizens and individuals with disabilities would help meet the nutritional needs, and contribute to the overall health and stability, of these vulnerable populations.

Specifically, under the bill, senior citizens and individuals with disabilities, who are SNAP enrollees, would receive a \$15 monthly supplemental SNAP benefit, provided with 100 percent State funds. To accomplish this provision, the bill also appropriates \$20.5 million from the General Fund to the DHS. The bill defines senior citizen and individual with a disability to conform with the definition of these terms in federal regulations regarding SNAP. For example, under the bill, "senior citizen" means an individual who is 60 years of age or older by the last day of the month in which the SNAP supplemental benefit is being issued. "Individual with a disability" means an individual who receives, by the last day of the month in which the SNAP supplemental benefit is being issued, disability assistance under the federal "Social Security Act," 42 U.S.C. s.301 et seq.; the Supplemental Security Income program, P.L.1973, c.256 (C.44:7-85 et seq.); a governmental agency because of

A2366 MCKNIGHT, CARTER

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a permanent disability; or the federal "Railroad Retirement Act of 1974," 45 U.S.C. s.231 et seq., under certain circumstances. The following are also included under this definition: a veteran who is totally disabled, permanently homebound, or in need of regular aid and attendance; or the surviving spouse or child of a veteran who is receiving federal veterans' benefits and is considered permanently disabled.

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The bill directs the DFD to distribute the monthly supplemental benefit via the enrollee's existing SNAP electronic benefits card, on the same issuance date as the enrollee's standard SNAP benefits. Furthermore, an enrollee is required to use the monthly supplemental benefit in the same manner as, and in compliance with, all State and federal laws and regulations that apply to the use of the enrollee's standard SNAP benefits.

The bill directs the Commissioner of Human Services to apply to the Food and Nutrition Service within the United States Department of Agriculture for any necessary waivers or approvals to implement the provisions of the bill. The bill is to take effect on the first day of the fourth month next following the date of enactment, but the commissioner may take such advance anticipatory administrative action as may be necessary for the implementation of the bill.