

# SENATE, No. 1713

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 28, 2022

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator NELLIE POU**

**District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)**

**Senator M. TERESA RUIZ**

**District 29 (Essex)**

**SYNOPSIS**

Requires standard certification period of 12 and 24 months, under certain circumstances, within SNAP.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/28/2022)

1 AN ACT concerning the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition  
2 Assistance Program certification period and supplementing Title  
3 44 of the Revised Statutes.

4  
5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State  
6 of New Jersey:

7  
8 1. a. The Commissioner of Human Services shall establish a  
9 standard certification period of 12 months within SNAP, except that  
10 the certification period shall be 24 months if all adult household  
11 members are elderly or disabled provided that all certified  
12 households shall have contact with a State SNAP administering  
13 agency at least once every 12 months. Telephone contact shall be  
14 sufficient to comply with the provisions of this subsection.

15 b. The Commissioner shall apply to the Food and Nutrition  
16 Service within the United States Department of Agriculture for any  
17 necessary waivers or approvals to implement the provisions of this  
18 section.

19 c. As used in this section:

20 “Certification period” means the period for which households  
21 shall be eligible to receive SNAP benefits.

22 “Elderly or disabled” means the same as defined in section 3 of  
23 the federal “Food and Nutrition Act of 2008,” Pub.L.110-246 (7  
24 U.S.C. s.2012).

25 “SNAP” means the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition  
26 Assistance Program, established pursuant to the federal “Food and  
27 Nutrition Act of 2008,” Pub.L.110-246 (7 U.S.C. s.2011 et seq.).

28  
29 2. The Commissioner of Human Services shall adopt rules and  
30 regulations, pursuant to the “Administrative Procedure Act,”  
31 P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), as may be necessary to  
32 implement the provisions of this act.

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34 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

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#### STATEMENT

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39 This bill requires a standard certification period of 12 and 24  
40 months, under certain circumstances, within the New Jersey  
41 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). In doing so,  
42 this bill provides for the longest certification periods allowed under  
43 federal regulation. SNAP, formerly known as the Food Stamp  
44 Program, is a nutrition assistance program that serves as a safety net  
45 for low-income households. The certification period is the period for  
46 which households are eligible to receive SNAP benefits. Households  
47 may receive benefits beyond the certification period; however, the  
48 SNAP recipient must first submit certain documentation to a State

**S1713 POU, RUIZ**

1 administering agency to demonstrate eligibility. It is the sponsor's  
2 goal that standardizing the certification period to the maximum  
3 length allowed will ease some of the administrative burden on SNAP  
4 recipients imposed by the certification process.

5 Currently, pursuant to N.J.A.C.10:87-6.20, county welfare  
6 agencies (CWAs), the administering agencies for SNAP, are required  
7 to certify each eligible household for a definite period of time that  
8 cannot exceed 12 month, except for households in which all adult  
9 members are elderly or disabled, which are to be certified for up to  
10 24 months with at least one CWA contact every 12 months. As such,  
11 New Jersey CWAs issue four, six, 12, and 24-month certification  
12 periods.

13 Under the bill, the Commissioner of Human Services is directed  
14 to establish a standard certification period of 12 months within  
15 SNAP, except that the certification period shall be 24 months if all  
16 adult household members are elderly or disabled provided that all  
17 certified households shall have contact with a State SNAP  
18 administering agency at least once every 12 months. The bill clarifies  
19 that telephone contact is sufficient to comply with this provision. As  
20 defined under the bill, elderly or disabled means the same as defined  
21 in the "Food and Nutrition Act of 2008," Pub.L.110-246 (7 U.S.C.  
22 s.2011 et seq.), the enabling federal legislation for SNAP. Generally,  
23 elderly and disabled includes an individual who is 60 years of age or  
24 older; receives supplemental security income benefits or some other  
25 federally or State administered supplemental assistance; or receives  
26 Social Security disability insurance benefits.