

# SENATE, No. 2033

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 3, 2022

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator NELLIE POU**

**District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**Senators Cruz-Perez and Ruiz**

**SYNOPSIS**

Concerns SNAP services provided at county boards of social services.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/6/2022)**

1 AN ACT concerning county boards of social services and  
2 supplementing Title 44 of the Revised Statutes.

3

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

6

7 1. As used in this act:

8 “Commissioner” means Commissioner of Human Services.

9 “Department” means Department of Human Services.

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

13

14 2. a. The Department of Human Services, to the maximum  
15 extent permissible under federal law, shall establish a training  
16 program for each employee of a county board of social services  
17 who assists individuals with SNAP enrollment and recertification  
18 processes. The purpose of the training shall be to educate  
19 employees on current federal laws, regulations, and standards  
20 concerning SNAP, and standard best practices to comply with  
21 federal SNAP requirements. The department shall review the  
22 training program and curriculum at least once every six months and  
23 shall require modification of the training program from time to  
24 time, as need may require, to incorporate any changes to the federal  
25 laws, regulations, and standards concerning SNAP.

26 b. Participation in the training program established pursuant to  
27 this section shall be mandatory for all employees of a county board  
28 of social services who assist individuals with SNAP enrollment and  
29 recertification processes. The chief administrative office of each  
30 county board of social services shall be responsible for ensuring  
31 that all required employees complete the training program, at least  
32 once in each calendar year.

33

34 3. The Department of Human Services shall publish county-  
35 level case tracking data for SNAP on its Internet website that  
36 includes, but is not limited to: application approval rates, reasons  
37 for application denial, and average application approval time.

38

39 4. a. The Department of Human Services, to the maximum  
40 extent permissible under federal law, shall establish a one-year pilot  
41 program that conduct focused outreach efforts about SNAP benefits  
42 and provides application assistance to certain populations. The  
43 purpose of this pilot program shall be to increase enrollment, among  
44 certain underserved populations, of eligible participants in SNAP,  
45 which underserved populations include, but are not limited to,  
46 college students, immigrants, and older adults.

47 b. The application assistance for older adults; commissioner  
48 shall select one county board of social services in each of the

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1 northern, central, and southern regions of the State to participate in  
2 the pilot program.

3 c. The pilot program may include, but shall not be limited to,  
4 the following elements:

5 (1) the creation and dissemination of videos to educate older  
6 adults about SNAP and the application process;

7 (2) grassroots outreach about SNAP through senior centers,  
8 hospitals, doctor's offices, houses of worship, and other place  
9 where older adults may congregate;

10 (3) the provision of telephone

11 (4) the development of a social media campaign for college  
12 students that raises awareness about SNAP;

13 (5) the formation of partnerships with institutions of higher  
14 education and the higher education community, such as school  
15 administrators, professors, counselors, student health offices,  
16 campus food pantries, and financial aid officers, to raise awareness  
17 about SNAP among students and provide students with the  
18 necessary information to apply for SNAP;

19 (6) the establishment of campus representatives at institutions of  
20 higher learning who can educate students about SNAP and refer  
21 students to a local county board of social services;

22 (7) the promotion of SNAP outreach and application materials  
23 in different languages through organizations and faith-based  
24 communities that serve immigrants; and

25 (8) outreach through social and traditional media, especially  
26 non-English media, to reach immigrant populations.

27 d. At the conclusion of the pilot program, the commissioner  
28 shall submit a report to the Governor, and to the Legislature  
29 pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), on the  
30 implementation, outcomes, and effectiveness of the pilot program.  
31 The report shall include the commissioner's recommendation on the  
32 advisability of the program's continuation and expansion to  
33 additional county boards of social services in the State.  
34

35 5. The Commissioner of Human Services shall:

36 (a) apply to the Food and Nutrition Service within the United  
37 States Department of Agriculture for any necessary waivers or  
38 approvals to implement the provisions of this act; and

39 (b) adopt rules and regulations, pursuant to the "Administrative  
40 Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.140 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), as may be  
41 necessary to effectuate the provisions of this act.  
42

43 6. This act shall take effect immediately.  
44

45 **STATEMENT**

46  
47 This bill would require the Department of Human Services  
48 (department), to the maximum extent permissible under federal law,

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1 to establish a training program for each employee of a county board  
2 of social services who assists individuals with the SNAP enrollment  
3 and recertification process. The purpose of the training will be to  
4 educate employees on current federal laws, regulations, and  
5 standards concerning SNAP, and standard best practices to comply  
6 with federal SNAP requirements. The department will review the  
7 training program and curriculum at least once every six months and  
8 will modify the training program from time to time, as necessary, to  
9 incorporate any changes to the federal laws, regulations, and  
10 standards concerning SNAP. Participation in the training program  
11 will be mandatory for all employees of a county board of social  
12 services who assist individuals with the SNAP enrollment and  
13 recertification process. The chief administrative office of each  
14 county board of social services will be responsible for ensuring that  
15 all required employees complete the training program, at least once  
16 in each calendar year.

17 This bill also requires the department to publish county-level  
18 case tracking data on SNAP on its Internet website that includes,  
19 but is not limited to: application approval rates, reasons for  
20 application denial, and average application approval time.

21 Finally, the bill requires the department, to the maximum extent  
22 permissible under federal law, to establish a one-year pilot program  
23 that conducts focused outreach efforts about eligibility for SNAP  
24 benefits and provides application assistance to certain populations.  
25 The purpose of this program is to increase enrollment, among  
26 certain underserved populations, of eligible participants in SNAP.  
27 These underserved populations include, but are not limited to,  
28 college students, immigrants, and older adults. The Commissioner  
29 of Human Services (commissioner) will select one county board of  
30 social services in each of the northern, central, and southern regions  
31 of the State to participate in the pilot program. The pilot program  
32 may include, but shall not be limited to, the following elements:

33 (1) the creation and dissemination of videos to educate older  
34 adults about SNAP and the application process;

35 (2) grassroots outreach about SNAP through senior centers,  
36 hospitals, doctor's offices, houses of worship, and other place  
37 where older adults may congregate;

38 (3) the provision of telephone application assistance for older  
39 adults;

40 (4) the development of a social media campaign for college  
41 students that raises awareness about SNAP;

42 (5) the formation of partnerships with institutions of higher  
43 education and the higher education community, such as school  
44 administrators, professors, counselors, student health offices,  
45 campus food pantries, and financial aid officers, to raise awareness  
46 about SNAP among students and provide students with the  
47 necessary information to apply for SNAP;

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1 (6) the establishment of campus representatives at institutions of  
2 higher learning who can educate students about SNAP and refer  
3 students to a local county board of social services;

4 (7) the promotion of SNAP outreach and application materials  
5 in different languages through organizations and faith-based  
6 communities that serve immigrants; and

7 (8) outreach through social and traditional media, especially  
8 non-English media, to reach immigrant populations.

9 At the conclusion of the pilot program, the commissioner will be  
10 required to submit a report to the Governor and Legislature on the  
11 implementation, outcomes, and effectiveness of the pilot program.  
12 The report will include the commissioner's recommendation on the  
13 advisability of the program's continuation and expansion to  
14 additional county boards of social services in the State. The  
15 commissioner will also be required to apply to the Food and  
16 Nutrition Service within the United States Department of  
17 Agriculture for any necessary waivers or approvals to implement  
18 the provisions of this act.