

SENATE, No. 3491

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 19, 2023

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

Senator NILSA I. CRUZ-PEREZ

District 5 (Camden and Gloucester)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senators Turner, Diegnan, Singleton, Gill, Gopal, Greenstein and Pou

SYNOPSIS

Increases minimum monthly benefit under State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program from \$50 to \$95 and authorizes DHS to increase program benefit amount.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/2/2023)

1 AN ACT concerning the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program and
2 amending P.L.2022, c.32.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6
7 1. Section 1 of P.L.2022, c.32 (C.44:10-111) is amended to read
8 as follows:

9 1. a. There is established in the Division of Family Development
10 in the Department of Human Services the State SNAP Minimum
11 Benefit Program. Under the program, the division shall distribute to
12 each eligible household a monthly State SNAP benefit equal to the
13 difference between the household's federal SNAP monthly benefit
14 and **[\$50]** \$95, which amount may be increased by the
15 Commissioner of Human Services, as deemed appropriate and
16 subject to available State appropriations. If federal funds become
17 available for the purposes of this subsection, the Commissioner of
18 Human Services shall utilize such federal funds as the primary source
19 for issuing the monthly State SNAP benefit before State funds, if
20 necessary, are expended. The State SNAP benefit shall be provided
21 to an eligible household in addition to the federal SNAP benefit.

22 b. The program shall be subject to the same State rules and
23 procedures for implementing the federal SNAP to the greatest extent
24 possible, including, but not limited to, distributing the State SNAP
25 benefit using the program's Electronic Benefit Transfer system and
26 requiring that benefits be used solely for the purchase of food as
27 defined in 7 U.S.C. s.2012.

28 c. The Commissioner of Human Services shall apply to the Food
29 and Nutrition Service within the United States Department of
30 Agriculture for any necessary waivers or approvals to implement the
31 provisions of this section.

32 d. As used in this section:

33 "Eligible household" means a household that is certified to receive
34 a federal SNAP benefit of at least one dollar per month, but less than
35 **[\$50]** \$95 per month, or a larger amount as deemed appropriated by
36 the Commissioner of Human Services, subject to available State and
37 federal funds.

38 "SNAP" means the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance
39 Program, established pursuant to the federal "Food and Nutrition Act
40 of 2008," Pub.L.110-246 (7 U.S.C. s.2011 et seq.).
41 (cf: P.L.2022, c.32, s.1)

42
43 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

STATEMENT

This bill increases the minimum monthly benefit under the State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Minimum Benefit Program from \$50 to \$95 and authorizes the Commissioner of Human Services to increase the program's benefit amount. SNAP, formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, is a nutrition assistance program that serves as a safety net for low-income households.

Base SNAP benefits are provided by the federal government. However, currently under the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program, State funds are used to ensure each SNAP household receives a minimum monthly SNAP benefit of \$50. This bill amends the governing law of this program to provide that the minimum monthly SNAP benefit is \$95. Moreover, the bill authorizes the Commissioner of Human Services to increase the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program benefit amount, subject to available State appropriations. The bill also clarifies that if federal funds become available for the purposes of the State SNAP Minimum Benefit Program, the Commissioner of Human Services is required to utilize such federal funds as the primary source for issuing the monthly benefit before State funds, if necessary, are expended.