

December 21, 2018

### Administration Resurrects SNAP Work Requirements to Limit Waiver Usage

While the President signed the 2018 Farm Bill, it quickly became clear that the push to restrict SNAP access is still ongoing. The same day he signed the legislation, President Trump and the USDA announced a rule proposal to limit state waivers on ABAWD (Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents) SNAP eligibility. States use the waivers to allow ABAWD recipients living in high unemployment areas to continue receiving benefits beyond time restrictions (ABAWDs may receive benefits for three months in a 36 month period). Ohio is one of several states utilizing SNAP waivers and this change could eliminate tens of thousands from receiving needed SNAP benefits. The actual rule has yet to be published; once it is, a public notice will be posted establishing a time line for comments to be submitted. We will share information when the rule is published and the timeline established.

### 2018 Farm Bill Breakdown

Now that the 2018 Farm Bill has been passed, signed and enacted into law – what does this mean? Following is a breakdown of key provisions of the Farm Bill:

#### SNAP

- Maintains eligibility and benefit levels as well as current work requirements for SNAP recipients. Requires SNAP benefits be moved to storage after 3 months of inactivity and expunged after 9 months with notification to the household at least 30 days prior to expungement. Reduces to 12 percent from 15 percent state ability to exempt recipients from ABAWD work requirements.
- Expands nationwide the National Accuracy Clearinghouse and clarifies that EBT vendors may not charge SNAP authorized retailers fees for processing EBT transactions and simplifies use of EBT **equipment at farmers' markets.**
- Continues the SNAP Nutrition Education program, requiring the use of an electronic reporting system to measure and evaluate projects.

#### TEFAP

Reauthorizes prior TEFAP mandatory food purchases and provides an additional \$206 million over 10 years for purchases. From the \$206 million, provides \$4 million per year for FY2019 through FY2023 for new Farm to Food Bank programs that connect excess agricultural commodities with food banks and communities in need. Reauthorizes storage and distribution grants at \$100 million per year.

#### Nutrition Programs

Reauthorizes Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program funding through FY2023; makes permanent the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) program; and, Reauthorizes the Healthy Food Financing Initiative through FY2023.

#### The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

Reauthorizes CSFP and establishes a minimum certification period of one year and gives states the option to establish a three-year certification period.

There are additional provisions of the bill that may have particular interests (i.e., a homeless housing deduction, program integrity changes, etc.); if you have questions or need additional information, contact your advocacy team: Tim White, Advocacy Manager: (614) 317-9480 or [twhite@midohiofoodbank.org](mailto:twhite@midohiofoodbank.org); or, Marilyn Tomasi, Vice President, Marketing, Communications and Public Affairs (614) 317-9446 or [mtomasi@midohiofoodbank.org](mailto:mtomasi@midohiofoodbank.org). Or, for information on the Farm Bill and grassroots advocacy, you can also visit the [Feeding America](#) and the [Food Research and Action Center \(FRAC\)](#) advocacy sites.

### Federal Ag Appropriations and Government Shutdown

Congress extended federal funding through December 21 to allow additional negotiation for pending budget bills, including the Agricultural Appropriations legislation. It fleetingly seemed as if a partial federal government shutdown (some federal appropriations bills have already passed) would be averted with another continuing resolution to provide funding into early 2019. However, after President Trump reversed course and stated he would not sign any short-term funding package without dollars for his proposed border wall, chances are slim for any action prior to the New Year, ensuring some government services will be shut down.

What this means for specific federal programs is unclear. TANF is mandatory spending and will continue, although logistical problems from lack of staffing could impact the program. SNAP and WIC are discretionary funding programs and it will fall to the USDA as to whether those programs will be funded beyond already allocated dollars. In general, programs have sufficient funds to carry through December and into January; if the shutdown goes much beyond January, issues will arise as already allocated funding runs out. In the most recent government shutdown, programs were continued. But, there has been no indication yet if that will occur again. When the USDA Secretary issues any direction, we will share it.

### House Bill 119: SNAP eligibility verification

House Bill 119 (Henne-R) was passed and signed in the State Legislative Lame Duck session. The bill will add additional burdens and hurdles for SNAP recipients. Most notably, the legislation requires SNAP eligibility verification four times a year now instead of one. For the official analysis of the bill as passed by the Ohio Senate, [click here](#).

### Public Charge Rule Proposal and ACA

The comment period for the Public Charge rule proposal has passed. The next step is for the Department of Homeland Security to either amend the proposal or publish it as a final proposal; we will continue to share updates.

### Affordable Care Act Health Insurance

The enrollment period for health coverage through the 2019 Marketplace (Affordable Care Act – ACA) has passed. And, a new federal court ruling has garnered great attention in striking down significant parts of the ACA. While this ruling is disturbing, it is important to note that this does not have any immediate impact; it is not expected that the ruling will immediately affect coverage. It is likely the case will become the third time the Supreme Court decides a constitutional question related to the ACA. Again, we will share updates as this winds through the process.