Considerations for Administering SNAP E&T Programs: Lessons from the SNAP E&T Pilots

Brief

In 2015, the U.S. Department of Agriculture awarded pilot grants to 10 States—California, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington—to test innovative strategies for providing Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T). These pilots provided the grantees (State SNAP agencies) an opportunity to make major changes to their programs and explore how to operate robust SNAP E&T programs. Grantees and their partners spent most of 2015 planning the design and implementation of these pilots and then operated them from early 2016 through early 2019. This brief draws on the lessons learned from the pilots in designing, implementing, and operating these programs and presents the practical considerations SNAP E&T administrators and partners should weigh when contemplating changes to their SNAP E&T programs.

Under the pilots, most grantees dramatically reshaped their existing SNAP E&T programs or created entirely new programs. Although some grantees relied on the basic infrastructure and package of services from their existing SNAP E&T programs as a starting point for the pilot models, most grantees created new activities and partnerships to serve participants in different ways. A few grantees, particularly those in rural areas, did not have any existing SNAP E&T programs in some or all of the pilot areas, so they had to develop a new network of services. The extensive efforts that grantees and their partners undertook to design, implement, and operate the pilots over a four-year period provide useful lessons for States that are interested in strengthening or expanding their programs. This brief provides several tips for what works and what pitfalls to avoid as States consider making changes to SNAP E&T program policies, processes, or services.

Taking ownership of SNAP E&T

Although SNAP agency staff generally do not have a workforce background and their primary responsibilities are related to providing access to food, agencies also have a responsibility to administer and oversee the SNAP E&T program. SNAP agencies can obtain help in operating their programs through partnerships with intermediaries (an organization that conducts some operational or fiscal functions for the State agency) and service providers, but the SNAP agency must “own” their SNAP E&T program. SNAP staff know the policies the best and are ultimately responsible for all aspects of their SNAP E&T program.

Grantee oversight varied across the pilots. Some grantees were very involved, while others were more “hands off,” as they felt that providers know how to deliver services. The grantees assumed that providers would integrate the pilot policies into their existing programs seamlessly. However, frequently in these pilots, providers struggled to recruit SNAP participants and to provide a cohesive set of services to all of those who enrolled. For example, the grantee in Delaware generally did not include the providers in the pilot planning process, as the grantee did not envision the pilot would significantly affect the day to day operations of the providers. This led to providers making decisions without full information about the pilot policies and resulted in issues emerging after implementation that prevented some providers from fully launching their programs and few SNAP E&T participants receiving training. In the end, most grantees agreed that programs do not run themselves, even when working with providers that had operated their training programs for decades.

As SNAP agencies consider expanding or changing programs in the future, it is important to create programs intentionally.

To address these issues, the grantees in most of these pilots eventually took more ownership of their programs and became much more involved in the day to day operation of them. This included developing specific policy and procedures guidance for providers, sharing the vision of the program and service model, holding frequent meetings with and providing technical assistance to providers, and overseeing and monitoring the performance of each provider through onsite visits and data reports.

Some of the grantees worked with partners to help them with the day to day operations of the pilot (similar to intermediaries), but there was still a role for the grantees to play in administering the program. The grantee was most knowledgeable about SNAP policies and the vision for their SNAP E&T program. The grantees found that it was important to have clear lines of responsibility for each organization and that ultimately the SNAP agency needed to take the lead, with the intermediary in a supporting role. For example, in the Kentucky pilot, although the grantee was involved in designing and implementing the pilot, their partner was driving most of the discussion and planning. However, the partner was not managing the contracts for all of the providers included in the pilot, so at some points communication between the partner and providers became more limited and the planning was relatively siloed between organizations. Many of the providers suggested the need for more leadership and communication from the SNAP agency. The grantee staff agreed and affirmed they should have been more involved in the design, saying *"we did ourselves a disservice [by not leading the process]."*[1]

Tips for starting or expanding SNAP E&T programs

SNAP E&T programs have developed and evolved over recent years in a number of ways, but until recently SNAP agencies often have not invested in critically thinking about the vision for their program. This includes who they want to serve and how, and what goals they would like to attain. As SNAP agencies consider expanding or changing programs in the future, it is important to create programs intentionally. This section identifies several tips and best practices learned from the pilots for States to consider before making changes to their SNAP E&T programs, including investing in planning, considerations for partnering, and decisions about expanding services.

Questions SNAP agencies should consider when developing their program

- What are the goals of our program?
- What outcomes do we want our participants to meet?
- What kinds of services do SNAP participants need and want?
- What providers are best to meet the needs of our population?
- What is the timeline for setting up an E&T program?
- What is the role of each organization involved in SNAP E&T?
- What is the communication process and frequency between all organizations involved in SNAP E&T?
- How is the SNAP agency taking ownership of the program and able to provide oversight and guidance?
- How does SNAP E&T fit into the existing services in the area and where are there gaps in service provision?
- What jobs are available in each area and how are specific jobs or industries expected to grow?
- What resources are needed to help participants obtain those jobs?
- How can we include employers' needs and voices in our program development?
- How can we implement SNAP E&T in areas where access to services and employment are limited?
- How does the program need to adapt to differing local circumstances across the State, such as geography (urban/rural), economy, or populations?

Because of the complexity of SNAP policies and the potential for those on SNAP to lose benefits without the offer of work supports, the SNAP agency is ultimately responsible for all aspects of the E&T program and must be the leader in making decisions about and changes to the E&T program.

Tips for planning

► **SNAP agencies should drive the change.**

The SNAP E&T program is an integral part of SNAP and can impact participants access to nutrition assistance. Participation in E&T is part of the general work requirements, and States that choose to operate mandatory programs must ensure participants are not improperly sanctioned. E&T should be part of a State's strategies to provide qualifying activities for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) to help meet their work requirements and retain SNAP benefits. Because of the complexity of SNAP policies and the potential for those on SNAP to lose benefits without the offer of work supports, the SNAP agency is ultimately responsible for all aspects of the E&T program and must be the leader in making decisions about and changes to the E&T program. The SNAP agency should accept suggestions from providers about how to grow the program and encourage innovation, but the agency should be purposeful about any expansion and ensure new services or proposed changes align with the overall goals and needs of the SNAP E&T program.

Although the SNAP agency is responsible for administering the E&T program, they should still bring workforce organizations to the table to help design and implement E&T services. In most communities there are already extensive workforce resources and SNAP should not reinvent the wheel. They can rely on experts in the field, but the SNAP agency should supply the vision for the SNAP E&T program. Because of the needs of the SNAP population, the current services offered by some providers may not be sufficient or will need to be modified in some way to meet the policy and vision for the program. To ensure that providers are meeting the program needs, States should develop written guidance for providers on how the program should operate. Ongoing training is also important. Although nearly all grantees provided training when the pilots began, most realized they needed to provide ongoing training due to staff turnover or to retrain around policies or procedures that were not being applied consistently or accurately. One staff member pointed out that, *"services are as good as the frontline staff who provide them,"* which underscores the need for continuing training.

►**Take time to plan and pilot changes.**

Program changes require thoughtful planning that includes all stakeholders. For the pilots, States had about a year to plan and implement their programs. All grantees acknowledged the importance of having a planning period that allowed staff at all levels and across organizations an opportunity to contribute and share their ideas. Depending on the number of partners involved, this process can be time consuming, but having everyone at the table is needed for the program to be successful. Grantee and provider staff suggested it was important to have clear lines of communication early in the process and to develop procedures for ongoing and open dialogue within and between all organizations.

Making any major change to grow or transform a program takes time and should not be rushed. Whenever possible, States should incorporate enough time in the schedule for these types of changes to roll out slowly or only in specific localities, making smaller changes before fully implementing the change or scaling up to the entire State. Although the pilots had a year to plan, staff in several pilots did not think it was realistic to develop and implement major changes to the program within a year and suggested that, if they could start over, they would roll out the pilot more slowly over several years.

Some pilot staff discussed rolling the pilot out in one county or region first and then using what they learned from that experience to adapt implementation in additional counties or regions. Others suggested starting small and expanding only when they had the staff and resources needed to support a realistic level of growth.

As SNAP agencies plan for changes, there often are numerous processes that need to be developed and resources that need to be put in place. These include documenting new policies and procedures for staff, contracting with new providers to offer services, updating and testing data systems to track new services, and hiring and training new staff to provide services. States need to consider how to incorporate this work into their timeline when making changes, and identify any consequences for implementing changes without all of the processes in place. The pilots that were able to finalize their processes, staffing, and systems before implementing services faced fewer challenges than the pilots that did not. For example, pilots that started providing services without some procedures, systems, or activities fully in place required changes in policies and procedures after the initial start-up, which caused misunderstanding among pilot staff and required frequent retraining. Staff in California described this as "building the plane while flying it," which they found often led to staff confusion and frustration. Particularly challenging to staff was when pilots (such as Delaware, Vermont, and Washington) did not have data systems in place to track all of the services. In these cases, staff had to document some aspects of service delivery on paper or in other electronic formats and then later enter this information into a new system. Staff noted that the time they spent dealing with data issues was time they could not dedicate to working with participants, which could lead to delays in moving participants into services or even some exiting the program. Also, until the new systems were in place, it was difficult for pilot leadership to monitor the flow of services and make needed changes to the model.

Providers across all pilots noted that they did not anticipate that individuals would face as many barriers as they did and needed "a lot of hand holding". The depth of these barriers was also surprising and often more pervasive than those in the broader workforce populations they typically served.

- **Know the target population.**

It is important to know the needs, barriers, and interests of the target population and design a program with them in mind. SNAP participants generally are very different from the broader set of workforce participants. In the pilots, many SNAP E&T participants faced barriers to participating in activities, including lack of transportation, unstable housing, physical or mental health issues, substance use disorders, and lack of child care. In many cases, participants were facing more than one barrier when they entered the program. Providers across all pilots noted that they did not anticipate that individuals would face as many barriers as they did and needed "a lot of hand holding". The depth of these barriers was also surprising and often more pervasive than those in the broader workforce populations they typically served. Although SNAP E&T participant reimbursements can help mitigate some of these barriers, such as transportation, child care, or housing, others needed to be managed through case management and community referrals (which were not always available across and within pilot areas).

Better understanding the characteristics and needs of the target population for SNAP E&T will help the SNAP agency identify which providers may best serve the population and which components are most appropriate. For example, in the pilots many SNAP participants had low education levels or criminal background issues that precluded them from starting certain training or entering certain employment. Individuals could not always obtain reading or math scores above an 8th to 10th grade level or pass a drug test needed to enter many training programs. Some also had felony convictions which precluded them from obtaining certain types of employment, for example at schools or some State or Federal jobs.

Knowing the population also helps the SNAP agency determine what types of services are of interest to participants. In the pilots, grantees found that not everyone needed or wanted the same set of pilot services, so providing options that could meet individuals' specific needs was beneficial. They also found it hard to anticipate what would attract individuals to the pilot. Many grantees and providers were excited about the levels and types of training opportunities they were offering, but many participants came to the pilot in crisis and only wanted to find a job and pay their bills. They indicated it was hard to focus on training, which could last for several weeks or months, without a paycheck. Staff also found that some individuals lacked interest in or had different interests than the pilot services being offered. The grantees had to pivot to meet the needs of those in the program. For example, in Kansas and Illinois, fewer individuals than expected participated in occupational skills training, but many more than anticipated participated in job readiness skills training because they were interested in moving into the workforce quickly. In some cases, pilots had to reallocate staffing and funds to activities in which individuals were more interested. In Delaware and Virginia, for example, some individuals were not interested in the occupational skills training options because they did not align with their career aspirations. Initially, Georgia had a similar problem because it offered training for only a few in-demand occupations that were not of interest to many individuals in the pilot; eventually, the pilot expanded its offerings to better align with individuals' needs and interests. In Mississippi, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington, individuals were reluctant to participate in basic education or soft-skills training because it delayed them from participating in other activities (such as occupational skills training or work-based learning) or finding employment. To address this issue, some of these pilots allowed individuals to participate in basic education or soft-skills training at the same time they participated in other activities.

Tips for working with partners

►Use existing infrastructure when possible.

In most States, SNAP agencies contract with service providers in the community to offer SNAP E&T services. This is prudent, as in many communities there are a range of workforce providers that can offer the types of services SNAP participants need. However, developing a package of services for SNAP E&T is not always easy. Kentucky did not have an existing SNAP E&T program in the pilot area, so they started with no existing infrastructure or partnerships in place. They contracted with the workforce agency, community college, and adult basic education providers in the community to shape their pilot services, but aligning these organizations was a challenge. The goals and missions of the various providers sometimes clashed, which made it difficult to weave existing services and activities into a package of services that best fit the needs of those targeted for the pilot. For example, the pilot was focused on providing occupational skills training and work-based learning opportunities, and then helping individuals transition into employment. However, each provider had a slightly different goal, based on its own mission, which created challenges early in the planning and implementation periods. The workforce agencies often aimed to get people into employment quickly, whereas community colleges encouraged individuals to remain in classes for multiple semesters or years (for example, stacking short-term training or continuing on to receive a degree). The grantee staff suggested that they underestimated the time needed to coordinate and develop pilot services within these existing systems. It was also important for the SNAP agency to take the lead when there were conflicting opinions and ideas to ensure each provider was meeting the needs of the SNAP participants and there were not major differences in the services participants could access.

The grantee staff suggested that they underestimated the time needed to coordinate and develop pilot services within these existing systems. It was also important for the SNAP agency to take the lead when there were conflicting opinions and ideas to ensure each provider was meeting the needs of the SNAP participants and there were not major differences in the services participants could access.

When SNAP agencies are exploring partnerships, it is important to first look at the needs of participants and identify where there are gaps in existing services. The agency can then seek out providers that fill those gaps.

► **Be intentional about selecting providers.**

When SNAP agencies are exploring partnerships, it is important to first look at the needs of participants and identify where there are gaps in existing services. The agency can then seek out providers that fill those gaps. SNAP agencies should also assess if a provider will be a good fit for the SNAP E&T population. As discussed above SNAP E&T participants have more barriers than the average individual served by most community based organizations and workforce agencies, so some providers may not be equipped to work with SNAP participants. In the pilots, grantees that worked with workforce agencies, such as in Georgia and Kentucky, found that case managers in these agencies generally were not accustomed to nurturing individuals or providing intensive case management services, which created challenges for the quality of the services provided. In Virginia, staff at one community college noted that serving SNAP E&T participants required different and more intensive supports than were needed for other students in comparable programs. Knowing the populations' barriers and interests and clearly communicating them to providers will help SNAP agencies decide which providers best meet participants' needs.

► **Ensure providers are serving SNAP E&T participants as intended.**

SNAP agency oversight of the E&T program is important to ensure that providers are serving SNAP E&T participants as intended. Because of the complexity of the SNAP program rules, providers likely do not have a good understanding of how they differ from the other workforce programs. During the pilots, interviews with and observations of provider staff revealed that provider staff sometimes applied policies or procedures from other workforce program to SNAP E&T participants. This happened most frequently with workforce agency providers, where staff initially struggled to identify differences between the policies for the pilot versus Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs. In Kentucky, staff frequently suggested that serving pilot participants was "no different than what we do each day" for the WIOA program participants; however, for the pilot there were differences in policy, intensity of services, and processes from the WIOA programs. When staff at these providers did not fully understand the SNAP policies or those policies were not consistently reinforced, staff fell back on the policies they knew, which sometimes did not align with SNAP E&T policies. Some staff suggested that in the future, the workforce agency should have separate staff to serve SNAP participants so that individuals can receive services as intended. In other pilots, such as Illinois, Mississippi, and Washington, providers that were not previously involved with SNAP E&T programs discussed how difficult it was to understand the SNAP policies, which could be complex. Also, provider staff in Illinois and Mississippi, which operated mandatory programs, found sanction policies and procedures especially challenging because it did not always align with the providers missions.

Although case management was not required at the time of the pilots, all of the pilots offered intensive case management. However, some providers struggled to understand the case management models or to provide the level of case management that was requested. In particular, staff from WIOA programs in Georgia and Kentucky focused more on monitoring and compliance, instead of a supportive, goal oriented or barrier reduction approach. Some pilots also had difficulty finding staff who were a good fit for providing the level of case management that was needed. In Delaware, the grantee wanted to hire clinicians or individuals with clinical backgrounds to provide on-site mental health services that would have addressed many of the issues participants

faced, but they struggled to identify and hire staff with those qualifications. Therefore, the grantee recognized that they were not able to serve participants as well as they would have liked. To ensure providers are able to properly serve SNAP E&T participants, SNAP agencies should explore what type of case management models providers are using and determine if the models align with the State's approach for SNAP E&T.

► **Establish clear and consistent communication between all organizations.**

SNAP agencies should invest early in establishing clear lines of communication between staff at all levels. Many of the pilots were hampered early on by poor communication within and between organizations. Several pilots sought to develop partnerships with organizations that had not typically worked with one another or with the SNAP agency in the past, and challenges in building these relationships often related to a lack of clear communication. Some pilots did not consistently engage their partners in planning and decision making, which led to inconsistent service delivery and misunderstandings. In some cases, the use of verbal rather than written communication also led to inconsistent messaging. Communication generally improved after grantees began holding regular meetings with partners, and providing written documentation detailing important changes in policies or procedures. Also, some pilots found that data systems could be used effectively to share information across multiple organizations and help staff stay in contact regarding the treatment group members they served. Two pilots—Kansas and Kentucky—also used collective impact meetings, at which all stakeholders periodically came together to discuss how to implement and improve the pilot, to help ensure that everyone was invested in the pilot and working together toward a common goal.

Tips for developing new services

► **One program model may not fit all.**

In the pilots, grantees found that not everyone needed or wanted the same set of pilot services, so providing a menu of options that could meet individuals' specific needs was beneficial.

Creating one structured client flow through services may not be the best fit for all SNAP E&T participants. In the pilots, grantees found that not everyone needed or wanted the same set of pilot services, so providing a menu of options that could meet individuals' specific needs was beneficial. For example, two pilots—Mississippi and Washington—designed a model that required individuals to complete a soft-skills training program for four and six weeks, respectively, before moving into education, occupational skills training, or work-based learning activities. Both pilots found that some individuals were not interested in the soft-skills training or did not feel they could afford to attend a full-day class for several weeks. This issue sometimes caused individuals to leave the pilot before completing services or to find a job on their own and stop attending classes. In Washington, in particular, the completion rate for the soft-skills classes was much lower than expected; thus, few individuals moved on to education, occupational skills training, and work-based learning opportunities.

The steps in the process or number of "hand-off" points may also increase opportunities for exits or limit take-up of activities. Some of the pilots had extended intake processes, including models with orientations that required many steps and visits to multiple organizations or locations. For example, after SNAP agencies in Georgia, Illinois, and Virginia enrolled individuals in the pilot during orientations at their offices, pilot participants were scheduled for subsequent orientations at a provider location. Significant drop-off occurred between these two types of orientations, and often between the provider orientation and the start of education, training, and employment activities. Limiting the number of hand-off points or providing warm hand-offs could reduce the number of participants who exit.

SNAP participants in rural areas of the State may be most in need of E&T services because of the lack of other opportunities in these parts of the State.

► **A single program model may not work across the State.**

Often SNAP E&T programs are most prevalent or primarily offered in urban areas. These parts of the State generally have the most workforce infrastructure and resources, so finding providers is relatively easy. Urban area also serve a large number of SNAP participants in a centralized location, so focusing resources on one area is efficient. However, SNAP participants in rural areas of the State may be most in need of E&T services because of the lack of other opportunities in these parts of the State.

As SNAP agencies consider expanding SNAP E&T programs to rural areas, it is important to keep in mind the different challenges that rural areas face. This includes a lack of:

- **Providers.** Rural areas often lack community based organization that provide a range of services, but many rural communities are served by workforce agencies, community colleges, and adult basic education (through a high school or community college). The community colleges in Virginia pointed out that community colleges in rural locations may be especially visible in smaller or underserved communities, which makes it a good option for providing SNAP E&T services.
- **Technology.** Depending on the area, some rural communities may lack access to reliable telecommunication like broadband or cellular communication. SNAP agencies may need to look for more in-person options for training and meetings to ensure everyone has access. For example, in Kentucky internet and telephone connections could be inconsistent, and as a result most participants preferred in person contact; nearly all case management was conducted in person, whereas in most other pilots it was more often conducted by telephone or other electronic means.
- **Transportation.** Rural communities generally have limited public transportation option and participants may have to travel farther to get to a program office or employment. SNAP agencies may need to consider providing more transportation support in rural communities, or identify creative options for providing transportation support (discussed below).
- **Employment.** These communities can also lack employers or it can be harder to obtain employment in smaller communities. Pilot participants in some of the rural communities discussed that if you had a bad reputation or a bad experience with one employer, other employers would hear about it and it could make it difficult to get another job. They also discussed that it was difficult to get a job without some connection to the employer. One participant in rural Kentucky said, "*A lot of this town is family owned…you've got to be family or a friend before you can get a job.*" However, some participants discussed how working with the providers was helpful in getting access to jobs, because the provider "had connections" to these employers and could get participants in the door. For example, one participant discussed how she really wanted to work at the hospital in the community and had applied for an entry-level job multiple times. She never received a response, but when she enrolled in the pilot, her case manager was able to place her in a work experience position at the hospital. She eventually transitioned into a full-time unsubsidized job there and was very excited about it. She pointed out that it was a small community and the only way to get a job was if people know you and can trust you. She credits the work experience position with allowing her to show the staff at the hospital that she could do the job and was reliable.

Staff in Virginia also suggested that although these areas often have fewer employers, those employers may be willing to partner with E&T programs to gain access to labor. Whereas employers in urban areas have more options to find workers and may be more reluctant to work with SNAP.

- **Providing support services is beneficial in attracting participants to SNAP E&T and keeping them engaged.**

As described above, SNAP E&T participants face many barriers to participation and employment, but support services (referred to as participant reimbursements in the SNAP E&T program) can help mitigate them. When people's barriers are reduced they are more likely to remain in services and move into employment. In the pilots, both pilot staff and participants frequently discussed the importance of support services in attracting people to the program and ensuring they could remain in services.

Even with the amount of funding available through the pilots for support services (grantees could use 100 percent funding instead of a 50 percent reimbursement), some pilot staff underestimated the level of support services needed. Several of the pilots increased the amount of support services individuals could receive over the course of the pilot, including Kentucky, Illinois, and Washington. Other pilots tried to identify additional supports they could provide. For example, some community colleges in Mississippi offered free shuttle services to transport individuals from their homes to the colleges for pilot services, and a few pilots offered car repair. Washington began offering cell phones and cell phone minutes to help case managers reach individuals, particularly those who were homeless.

Despite the importance and wide use of support services, most pilots still faced challenges in helping individuals mitigate significant barriers that the supports could not fully address. These barriers were most often related to transportation and housing. The support services (usually gas card or bus passes) often could not help individuals who had no access to a car or public transportation, an issue most prevalent in rural areas. Many pilots did not provide assistance for housing or provided too little assistance to resolve housing issues. Availability of shelters or transitional housing was limited in many areas, which further compounded the problem. State agencies should be thoughtful about implementing different approaches for offering supports that better meet the needs of participants. For example, Kentucky provided transportation assistance (a flat $50 or $200 per month) through a check instead of vouchers, which offered much more flexibility in rural communities. Some pilots, including Virginia and Washington, reimbursed individuals for tolls, ride shares, or taxi rides. A few pilots, such as California and Kansas, also provided bicycles or bicycle repairs.

State agencies should be thoughtful about implementing different approaches for offering supports that better meet the needs of participants. For example, Kentucky provided transportation assistance (a flat $50 or $200 per month) through a check instead of vouchers, which offered much more flexibility in rural communities. Some pilots, including Virginia and Washington, reimbursed individuals for tolls, ride shares, or taxi rides. A few pilots, such as California and Kansas, also provided bicycles or bicycle repairs.

Conclusion

The lessons learned from the SNAP E&T pilots are beneficial for the current SNAP E&T program administrators and providers. As States considering making changes and expanding their programs to include more providers, services, or areas of the State, they will encounter similar issues that emerged in the pilots. The lessons from the pilots demonstrate effective ways in which SNAP agencies can take more ownership over their E&T programs and develop them intentionally to build robust programs. This includes being thoughtful about the planning process and which providers to include, as well as working to understand the needs and interests of potential SNAP E&T participants and developing programs that meet their specific needs.

For more information: *Detailed final findings are available in the full report "Expanding Opportunities & Reducing Barriers to Work: Final Summary Report" at https://www.fns.usda.gov/research-analysis. Reports summarizing final findings from the 10 individual pilot reports also are available.*

Endnotes

[1] Note that the pilots were designed to be partnerships with workforce organizations in the community, but the State SNAP agency was responsible (and is always responsible) for the administration and operation of the SNAP E&T program.

About the study

In the Agricultural Act of 2014, Congress authorized and funded 10 SNAP E&T pilots to test a range of innovative strategies to help SNAP participants find employment that increases their incomes and reduces their need for public assistance benefits. To encourage a diversity of approaches, each grantee identified focus populations, selected partners and service providers, and determined which services and activities best met their populations' needs. The legislation that authorized the pilots also included funding for a randomized controlled trial evaluation to assess the impacts of the pilots, which was awarded to Mathematica.

The tips on administering SNAP E&T identified in this brief are based on analyses of qualitative data collected through telephone calls and in-person interviews with pilot staff from State agencies, partners, and providers, and focus groups conducted with individuals participating in the pilot.

Prepared by Gretchen Rowe

May 2022

Mathematica
Progress Together

Produced by Mathematica for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service.
USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.