



## SNAP E&T REVIEW



December 2016

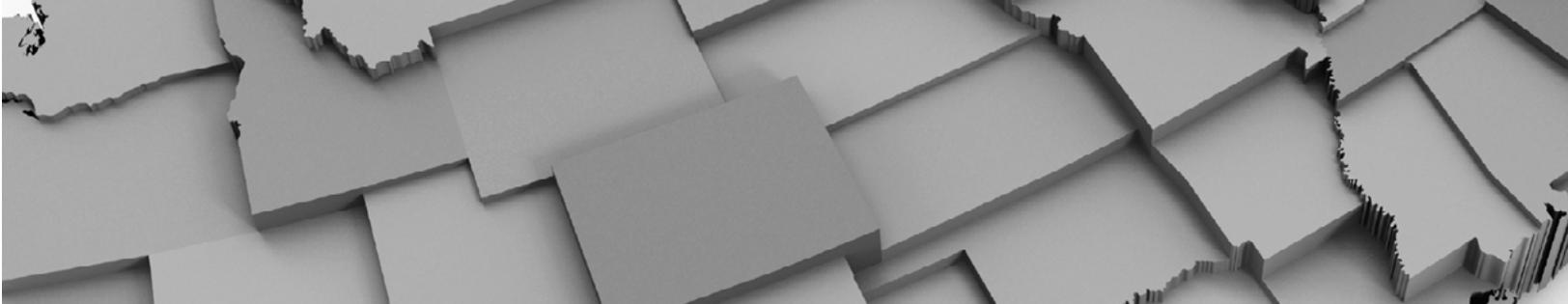
### E&T in Action: Highlights from Our States

#### **MICHIGAN:** Partnering with the Workforce System to Launch E&T Third-Party Partnerships

Michigan's SNAP to Skills work is rooted in a long-term vision to expand job-driven services to all SNAP participants through partnerships with third-party providers. The State's SNAP E&T program (called Food Assistance Employment & Training, or FAE&T), is administered jointly by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Workforce Development Agency (WDA). DHHS directs funds to WDA, which then contracts with its 24 local Michigan Works! Agencies (MWAs). The MWAs, in turn, provide FAE&T services or contract with local community-based organizations to provide these services. FAE&T services have been supported exclusively by 100 percent funds, outside of a limited 50-50 funded pilot in Detroit.

Over the last year, the State has made significant progress in laying the groundwork for expanding its FAE&T program and developing new third-party partnerships supported by SNAP E&T 50-50 funds. The State is focusing on two targeted areas of the State – Western Michigan and Detroit. To garner support and reach out to potential partners, Michigan held a convening in each area and released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for potential providers. The State's first two third-party partners, **Focus: Hope** and **Southwest Solutions**, will begin providing services in December 2016.

Focus: Hope is a nearly 50-year-old organization widely recognized for its work bridging the racial and economic divide in southeast Michigan. The agency offers multiple employment and training programs, including an IT and Advanced Manufacturing program, as well as college bridge and degree programs focused within the STEM fields. Southwest Solutions has operated for nearly 45 years, providing an array of programs focused on human development, economic development, and community engagement. It offers a wide variety of workforce programs, including: Adult Literacy, Earn + Learn, Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program, PATH (Partnership. Accountability. Training. Hope.), and Supported Employment Services.



Michigan continues to gain momentum. Future plans for the State include bringing on additional third-party partners in Western Michigan in early 2017, deepening collaborations between DHHS and the MWAs, and developing a FAE&T Partner Handbook to improve communication to providers about policies and procedures. Michigan is also exploring modifications to its Management Information System (MIS) to support FAE&T expansion and is mapping out client flow to ensure efficient processes for SNAP participants to access services.

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## USDA Joins Other Federal Agencies in Supporting College Access & Completion

### Aligning Federal Supports and Program Delivery for College Access & Completion

In November, six Federal agencies, including USDA, issued a joint letter to strengthen coordination among federal programs that can serve as supports to the growing number of non-traditional students who are seeking a postsecondary degree or credential. By 2020, more than two-thirds of jobs will require a postsecondary degree, yet a postsecondary degree or certificate is often far out of reach for low-income Americans.

Among community college students, poverty, hunger, and homelessness impact many students' ability to study effectively and complete a credential. According to a 2015 study at community colleges, 20 percent of students experience very low food security and at least half were at least marginally food insecure over the last 30 days. In addition, 13 percent of students indicated they had experiences with homelessness within the last year. This federal interagency letter publishes the latest guidance and resources that clarify how existing provisions within federal programs can be better aligned to support postsecondary success and completion for low-income students who are living in poverty, food insecure, or homeless.

The joint letter, signed by Secretary Vilsack, can be found **[HERE](#)**.

## New Face of *SNAP to Skills*

In case you missed the announcement in October or our November *SNAP E&T Review*: the *SNAP to Skills* Website is here! FNS officially launched a **new digital platform for the *SNAP to Skills* Project**. This new resource will serve as a “one-stop-shop” for information and news about SNAP E&T. States and their partners are able to access information about the project, SNAP E&T tools and resources, policy briefs, and stories from successful SNAP E&T programs. Experience learning opportunities with your colleagues on SNAP E&T topics and more. **Be sure to visit the website often as we are always adding new content!**

ACCESS THE WEBSITE **HERE**

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## Upcoming Events, Important Dates & Resource Links

- **Don't miss the recently released *SNAP E&T Best Practices Study: Final Report***. This study — mandated by Section 4022 of the Agricultural Act of 2014— reviews research on employment and training (E&T) program components and practices that: (1) assist members of households participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to obtain regular employment; and (2) are best integrated with State workforce development systems. This review also included research on the effectiveness of E&T components offered to low-income individuals by other Federal and State agencies, and the private philanthropic sector. Check out the final report **HERE** and USDA Under Secretary Kevin Concannon's blog post **HERE**.
- **Read the new Proposed Rule “SNAP Program: Student Eligibility, Convicted Felons, Lottery and Gambling, and State Verification Provisions of the Agricultural Act of 2014” published in the Federal Register**. The proposed action would implement four sections of the 2014 Farm Bill affecting eligibility, benefits, and program administration requirements for SNAP. In particular, Section 4007 adds additional requirements to which courses satisfy the exemption for higher education under the student eligibility restrictions. The proposed rule provides that the exemption is limited to those who are enrolled in a course or program of study that is part of a program of career and technical education (as defined in Section 3 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006). Read the proposed rule **HERE**.



## About the *SNAP to Skills* Project

Launched in October of 2015, *SNAP to Skills* (S2S) is a project of USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), operated in partnership with Seattle Jobs Initiative (SJI), to provide States the tools and resources they need to develop job-driven SNAP E&T programs that help SNAP participants find jobs and work toward self-sufficiency. The project seeks to help advance SNAP E&T programs in all States through these tools and resources, while 10 States have been selected to receive enhanced technical assistance. These States are: Arizona, Arkansas, California, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina and Tennessee.

Previous editions of the SNAP E&T Review are accessible here:

- April 2016 SNAP E&T Review**
- May 2016 SNAP E&T Review**
- June 2016 SNAP E&T Review**
- July 2016 SNAP E&T Review**
- October 2016 SNAP E&T Review**
- November 2016 SNAP E&T Review**



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