



SNAP E&T REVIEW

SNAP



March 2021

PRACTITIONER SPOTLIGHT: PATRICIA DUSHUTTLE, MAINE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Practitioner Spotlights are an opportunity to hear directly from individuals working successfully to improve SNAP E&T programs across the country.



What is your current role at the State of Maine's DHHS?

The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) provides health and social services to approximately a third of the State's population. Within DHHS, the Office for Family Independence (OFI) determines eligibility and issues benefits for several programs including SNAP, Medicaid, and TANF. OFI also oversees our SNAP E&T program.

At OFI, I am the Special Projects Manager for SNAP. In this role, I oversee SNAP E&T, SNAP-Ed, SNAP Outreach, and other SNAP roles. This leadership role includes developing these programs by procuring and managing contracts with quality providers, outreach to community-based organizations, writing annual plans and budgets, and working as the federal liaison for our agency and providers.

How has your work with DHHS/OFI intersected with SNAP E&T?

My management experience prior to OFI was in the areas of policy, program development, research and evaluation. I think this background was essential to the SNAP E&T program development we began at OFI. After assuming this role, DHHS had a goal to expand programming by using 50% reimbursement funding and contractors skilled in working with participants who are often not job ready or have multiple barriers to employment.

We began the process of developing expertise in this area supported by FNS and SNAP to Skills technical assistance. We started with only one SNAP E&T provider, and now we have six providers delivering a broad array of services statewide complemented by robust case management.

While Maine's population and programming are small compared to many States, the growth we have seen in our SNAP E&T program after implementing the third-party 50% reimbursement model is significant. In FY17 we served 102 participants, while in FY21 we project serving 395 participants. And our program budget has roughly tripled in that time.

Want to read the rest of the interview? Access the full Spotlight [HERE](#).

There's Still Time! Register for the Upcoming Webinar: Finding Solutions to Get E&T Participants to the Next Steps

How can SNAP E&T programs continually look for opportunities to develop and test small-scale solutions to participant engagement challenges? On this upcoming SNAP to Skills webinar, you'll hear from MDRC's Clint Key and Rebecca Schwartz about ways that States and their provider partners can identify opportunities for innovation and share easy to apply tools to reduce "drop off" of participants. The webinar will also discuss the role of getting feedback in identifying engagement challenges and devising solutions, as well as how to test whether your interventions are working.

The webinar will take place on April 15, 2021, at 1:00PM-2:30PM ET/10:00AM-11:30AM PT. Register [HERE](#).

FNS Requesting Applications for FY21 SNAP E&T DATA Grants to Improve State SNAP E&T Data Systems

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is now accepting applications for its SNAP E&T Data and Technical Assistance (DATA) Grants. Grants will support the development of State SNAP E&T data collection and reporting systems. DATA grants should be for one of the following purposes: 1) training and capacity building, including efforts to improve E&T data quality; 2) information technology (IT) systems development to support the collection, reporting, and analysis of SNAP E&T data; and/or 3) continuous program improvement of SNAP E&T programs, including the provision of effective and efficient services that move SNAP participants toward stable, good jobs. Applications due to FNS by April 29, 2021.

View the Request for Applications [HERE](#).

FNS Publishes Q&A on the Final Rule Employment & Training Opportunities in SNAP

On March 29, 2021, FNS released a Q&A on the final rule, Employment and Training Opportunities in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Many provisions in the rule, published on January 5,

reached their effective on March 8, 2021. All State agencies must have implemented these provisions in their SNAP program, as appropriate. However, certain provisions are not applicable until October 1, 2021. These provisions include the new FNS-583 reporting elements, the consolidated written notice and oral explanation of the work requirements, and implementation of provider determinations. FNS has conducted an initial webinar with States on rule implementation and will be providing additional technical assistance on these changes in the coming weeks.

The final rule Q&A can be found on the FNS website [HERE](#).

Upcoming Events, Important Dates & Resource Links

- Temporary Expansion of College Student SNAP Eligibility during COVID-19 – In collaboration with FNS, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) recently issued [guidance](#) to postsecondary institutions to inform them of a temporary expansion of student eligibility for SNAP. The guidance, issued on February 23, provides information about students who are enrolled in postsecondary education who may meet a temporary exemption from SNAP ineligibility during the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency. FNS and ED encourage institutions of higher education to coordinate with campus stakeholders to notify eligible students of the newly expanded eligibility rules.

Read more [HERE](#).

- Upcoming Panel Discussion: Work-Based Learning State Best Practices – On Tuesday, April 6th at 2:00PM ET the Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration will be hosting a panel discussion on work-based learning. Presenters from States across the country will share the challenges and strategies that are involved in developing the relationships necessary for successful on-the-job trainings and apprenticeships. Work-based learning is a critical component in SNAP E&T that can help SNAP participants gain skills in the context of real work.

Read more [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), 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 7 States have been selected to receive enhanced technical assistance. In Federal Fiscal Years 20-21, these are: Colorado, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island.

Previous editions of the SNAP E&T Review are accessible [HERE](#).



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