

CHANGING REQUIREMENTS OF THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

LEGISLATOR NOTICE

The Legislative Services Division is required to offer a brief history on the subject matter of a bill draft request prior to drafting. (5-4-105, MCA; [Chapter 309, Laws of 2017](#)) The history must include related legislation introduced over the last five sessions and hyperlinks to the bill, hearing information, and fiscal notes. The links below open to the page showing the status and history of bills introduced on this topic in the past. The bill text and any related fiscal notes can be accessed through the link at the top of that page.

Legislation can be complex and this history is not intended to be exhaustive. Please contact the drafter of the requested bill for more information.

Background Materials and Research

Topic Summary: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps, is a federally funded program that provides low-income people with monthly assistance in buying food. Federal law sets the income and asset standards that households must meet to qualify for SNAP benefits. Federal law also defines the items that people may buy with SNAP benefits. Almost all foods and non-alcoholic drinks available in grocery and convenience stores meet the law's definition of food. Because federal law and regulations govern the program, states cannot on their own establish limits on eligibility or on food purchases that are stricter than the limits set by the federal government. However, states may apply for waivers of federal law that would allow them to put stricter requirements in place. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, which administers SNAP, must approve such requests. To date, the department has not granted any state's request to limit food purchases.

States also may limit the extent to which their SNAP programs can take advantage of various federal regulations that make it easier to access SNAP benefits. For example, states are able to waive the work requirements for able-bodied adults without dependent children in certain circumstances. They also may expand eligibility through various means. A state agency can choose not to broaden its program in those ways, or a state legislature can prohibit the state from taking action to expand the program in the optional ways allowed under federal law.

Legislative Services Division Materials:

[To Buy or Not to Buy: Examining the Food Choices of SNAP Recipients](#), March 2012
[Flexibility in the SNAP and TANF Programs](#), January 2012

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Other Materials:

U.S. Department of Agriculture

[Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\) Website](#) (includes links to many SNAP topics)

Department of Public Health and Human Services

[State of Montana SNAP Program Overview](#) (includes table showing income requirements)

[Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents \(ABAWD\) Geographic Waiver, Jan. 1, 2020](#)

Introduced Legislation

2019

[House Bill No. 378](#) -- (H) Tabled in Committee -- AN ACT MAKING PARTICIPATION IN A WORKFARE PROGRAM A CONDITION FOR RECEIVING SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BENEFITS; PROVIDING EXCEPTIONS; ESTABLISHING THE DUTIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES IN OPERATING A WORKFARE PROGRAM; AND AMENDING SECTIONS 39-51-403, 39-51-2208, 39-71-118, 40-4-215, 45-6-312, 50-49-103, 53-2-108, 53-2-201, 53-2-211, 53-2-606, 53-2-901, 53-2-902, 53-2-903, 53-2-904, 53-3-115, 53-4-601, 53-4-602, 53-4-609, 53-4-704, AND 53-4-717, MCA.

[House Bill No. 400](#) -- (S) Tabled in Committee -- AN ACT CREATING THE NUTRITION INCENTIVES PROGRAM FOR SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS TO BUY ELIGIBLE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES; PROVIDING RULEMAKING AUTHORITY; PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

2017

[House Bill No. 153](#) -- (H) Missed Deadline for General Bill Transmittal -- AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES TO REQUEST A WAIVER TO PROHIBIT THE USE OF SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BENEFITS FOR THE PURCHASE OF ENERGY DRINKS; REQUIRING REPORTING TO THE LEGISLATURE; UPDATING TERMINOLOGY; AMENDING SECTIONS 39-51-403, 39-51-2208, 39-71-118, 40-4-215, 45-6-312, 50-49-103, 53-2-108, 53-2-201, 53-2-211, 53-2-606, 53-2-901, 53-2-902, 53-2-903, 53-2-904, 53-3-115, 53-4-601, 53-4-602, 53-4-609, 53-4-704, AND 53-4-717, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE.

[House Bill No. 361](#) -- (H) Missed Deadline for General Bill Transmittal -- AN ACT ESTABLISHING ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; PROHIBITING EXPEDITED PROCESSING OF ELIGIBILITY IN CERTAIN INSTANCES; AMENDING SECTIONS 39-51-403, 39-51-2208, 39-71-118, 40-4-215, 45-6-312, 50-49-103, 53-2-108, 53-2-201, 53-2-211, 53-2-606, 53-2-901, 53-2-902, 53-2-903, 53-3-115, 53-4-601, 53-4-602, 53-4-609, 53-4-704, AND 53-4-717, MCA; AND REPEALING SECTION 53-2-904, MCA.

2015

[Senate Bill No. 206](#) -- (S) Tabled in Committee -- AN ACT ESTABLISHING LIMITATIONS ON THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; LIMITING THE EXEMPTIONS FROM WORK REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN ABLE-BODIED ADULTS; REQUIRING SUBMISSION OF A WAIVER TO

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PROHIBIT THE PURCHASE OF CERTAIN FOOD ITEMS; LIMITING THE USE OF WAIVERS AND STATE OPTIONS TO EXPAND ELIGIBILITY; ALLOWING A PHOTO IDENTIFICATION OPTION; PROVIDING A TRANSITION; AMENDING SECTIONS 39-51-403, 39-51-2208, 39-71-118, 40-4-215, 45-6-312, 50-49-103, 53-2-108, 53-2-201, 53-2-211, 53-2-606, 53-2-901, 53-2-902, 53-2-903, 53-2-904, 53-3-115, 53-4-601, 53-4-602, 53-4-609, 53-4-704, AND 53-4-717, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE.

2015: None

2011: None

2009: None

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