

NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



Pete Ricketts, Governor

November 19, 2021

Patrick J. O'Donnell, Clerk of the Legislature
State Capitol, Room 2028
P.O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509

Dear Patrick J. O'Donnell,

Nebraska Revised Statute 68-1017.02 requires the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to report annually to the Legislature by December 1, 2021, regarding the status of the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) in Nebraska. This report is required to include information about federal options provided to the State with a description of any actions taken by the DHHS regarding these options, including the number of persons being served through these options.

The report is attached and also includes the most recent United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, State Options Report, SNAP (Fourteenth Edition, October 1, 2017).

If you have any questions, please contact me at 402-471-1757 or Stephanie.L.Beasley@nebraska.gov.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephanie Beasley".

Stephanie Beasley, Director
Division of Children and Family Services
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

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NEBRASKA STATE OPTIONS REPORT FOR LB171

NOVEMBER 2021

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM)

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) federal statutes, regulations, and waivers provide Nebraska (NE) with numerous policy options. The NE Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) uses federal options to remove or reduce barriers to access and participation in SNAP while also taking into account the fiscal impact and logistics of such options.

The current State Options Report by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Fourteenth Edition, was published in October 2017 (See attachment). This report is the most recent report published by USDA. Known changes from the report have been indicated accordingly within this report.

Changes made to State SNAP Programs since October 2017 are not reflected in this report due to the lack of a more recent comprehensive report of state options. Changes specific to Nebraska are reflected herein. Any changes to other states will be reflected after a future edition of USDA's State Options Report is issued.

The chart on the following pages summarizes the FNS State Options report and compares options taken by the 50 States and three territories operating SNAP.

Please note that Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) is known as Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) in Nebraska.

Further explanation follows the chart on the next page.

State Options	Does Nebraska Utilize the Option	All States/Territories
County or State Administration	NE is state-administered	State-administered – 43 County-administered - 10
1. Reporting Requirements	Yes, NE utilizes Simplified Reporting. All SNAP cases are Simplified Reporting or Transitional Reporting as of 4/11/2016	Simplified Reporting Only – 26 Simplified & Change Reporting - 25 Monthly, Simplified & Change Reporting – 1 Change Reporting Only - 1
2. Simplified Reporting – Action on Changes	Yes Act on All Changes	Data for other states not provided with Fourteenth Edition report
3. Simplified Reporting – Certification Length	Yes, 6 and 12 months certifications effective 4/11/2016	4 & 12 Months – 1 4, 6, & 12 Months – 2 4, 5, 6, & 12 Months – 1 4, 6, 12, & 24 Months - 3 5, 6, 12, & 24 Months – 1 6 Month Certification periods – 5 6 & 12 Months – 6 6 & 24 Months – 2 6, 12, & 24 Months – 2 12 Month Certification periods – 13 12 & 24 Months – 16 Change Reporting Only - 1
4. Simplified Income and Resources	Yes Income and Resources	Income and Resources - 22 Income only - 5 Resources only – 9 Neither - 17
5. Treatment of Self-Employment Income	Yes Another Method; Flat percentage & actual costs	Actual costs only – 30 Another Method – 23
6. Simplified Homeless Housing Cost	No longer an option, required for all states effective December 20, 2018.	Simplified Homeless Housing Cost – 53
7. Standard Utility Allowances (SUAs)	Yes Mandatory SUA	Mandatory SUA – 48 Non-Mandatory SUA - 5
8. Ineligible Noncitizens – Treatment of Income & Deductions	Yes Prorate for both categories	Count all but a prorated share – 41 Count All – 7 Count all for gross income test then count all but a prorated share for net income test - 5
9. Child Support Expense Income Exclusion	No Deduction	Child Support income expense exclusion - 12 Child Support income expense deduction - 41
10. Child Support Related Disqualifications	Yes; Disqualification for the custodial parent and non-custodial parent effective July 2020	Failure to Cooperate, DQ for custodial parent– 6 Failure to Cooperate, DQ for custodial and non-custodial parent – 2 Failure to Cooperate, DQ for custodial parent & arrearage on support payments – 1 Failure to Cooperate, DQ for non-custodial parent & arrearage on support payments - 1 None - 43

11. Comparable disqualifications	Yes	Comparable Disqualification – 14 No Comparable Disqualification - 39
12. Drug Felony Disqualifications	Yes Modified Ban	Lifetime Ban – 5 Modified Ban – 23 No Ban - 25
13. Work Requirements and Disqualification (DQ) Policy	Yes Regulatory minimum	Extended DQ only – 16 Regulatory minimum & Entire Household (HH) DQ – 6 Extended DQ and Entire HH DQ - 3 Extended DQ, entire HH, Permanent DQ – 1 Regulatory Minimum - 27
14. Broad Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) Note: LB 543 mandated BBCE as of 10/1/2011	Yes	BBCE – 42 No BBCE - 11
15. Transitional Benefits Alternative (TBA)	Yes	Transitional Benefits - 23 No Transitional Benefits - 30
16. Document Imaging/Electronic Case Files	Yes Completely electronic files statewide	Statewide – 35 Partially electronic statewide – 10 Completely electronic in specific areas - 1 Partially electronic in specific areas - 5 None - 2
17. Demonstrations for the Elderly and Disabled	No	Elderly Simplified Application (ESAP) - 5 Standard Medical Deduction (SMD) - 17 ESAP and SMD - 4
18. Combined Application Project (CAP)	No	Standard CAP – 7 Modified CAP – 10 No CAP - 36
19. Online Applications	Yes Apply and Recertify	None – 7 Apply only – 13 Apply and recertify - 33
20. Online Case Management	Yes View, Report, and Upload	No online management – 13 View case only - 2 View and report – 6 View and upload - 2 View, report, and upload – 27 Report only – 1 Report and upload – 1 Upload only – 1
21. Call Centers	Yes Multiple statewide call centers	One statewide call center – 24 Multiple call centers - 20 No call center - 9
22. Mobile Technology	Yes Messaging only	Messaging only – 9 Mobile app only - 4 Messaging and mobile application – 3 No mobile technology - 37
23. Averaging Student Work Hours	Yes; Average hours over one month	Unknown – this option was not on the 14 th edition of the options report
24. Acting on Certain Benefit Increases	Yes	Unknown – this option was not in the 14 th edition of the options report

FURTHER EXPLANATION ON STATE OPTIONS

States possess the flexibility to adapt their organizational structure to administer SNAP, which allows the States to serve the unique needs of their populations. States may opt to centralize or to decentralize

their administrative responsibilities for SNAP. In their State Plan of Operations, States describe their organizational structure, including whether the program is State, county, local, or regionally administered. Nebraska is state-administered.

1. Reporting Requirements

State agencies have the option of requiring SNAP recipients to report household circumstances at various intervals and in various ways. State agencies can use different reporting systems for different types of households, or different geographical areas, but each household is subject to only one reporting system. Recipients may be required to report changes periodically or within a certain time, typically within 10 days, after certain changes in circumstances occur (known as Change Reporting). Under Periodic Reporting, participants report either monthly, quarterly or by using a simplified system with reduced reporting requirements. Under the Simplified Reporting option, households are required to report changes in income between certification and scheduled reporting periods when total countable income rises above 130 percent of the poverty level, when work hours for able-bodied adults without dependents fall below 20 hours per week, or when a household member receives substantial gambling or lottery winnings.

Simplified Reporting does not expand initial or continuing SNAP eligibility but may prevent a decrease in a household's monthly allotment during their certification period. If total household income exceeds 130% of the federal poverty level, the SNAP case is closed.

As of September 30, 2021, there were 74,622 SNAP households in NE. Of these, 74,347 households are assigned to Simplified Reporting and 275 are assigned to Transitional Benefits Reporting. Nebraska currently utilizes the option to assign all SNAP cases to Simplified Reporting or Transitional Benefits Reporting¹.

2. Simplified Reporting – Action on Changes

Under simplified reporting, State agencies have the option to act on all changes reported during the certification period or to act only on certain changes that increase household benefits. States which have chosen to act on all changes must act to verify any changes reported and take appropriate action, even if this change reduces the client's benefit. This option allows States that have combined SNAP/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs to more seamlessly integrate. It avoids a situation where the TANF program has acted on a change, but SNAP has not, and decreases the caseworker burden by aligning the programs.

This option has been limited by recent changes in Federal regulations. New regulations prevent states from acting on certain changes if the effect of that change on the case is unclear. If the effect is unclear, states cannot act on most changes if they are either not required to be reported by households or if the change occurred more than two SNAP issuances ago.

If information is known to the agency, Nebraska acts on all information. As clients are required to report changes for other economic assistance programs, the change is made for SNAP as well. If a client reports a decrease in income during their certification period, their SNAP benefits may increase.

This option does not expand initial or continuing SNAP eligibility. Nebraska acts on all changes.

¹ See section 15 for the definition of Transitional Benefits.

3. Simplified Reporting- Certification Length

Households certified for SNAP for longer than six months must submit a periodic report at least once every six months, but no more than once every four months during the certification period. Some State agencies have opted to certify Simplified Reporting households for 12 months, with a periodic report at six months. Others have opted to certify households for six months with no periodic report. Households in which all members are elderly or disabled with no earned income may be given 12 month certification periods without periodic reporting, or 24 month certification periods with a 12-month periodic reporting requirement.

This option does not expand initial or continuing eligibility for SNAP.

As of September 30, 2021, there were 74,347 SNAP households currently assigned to Simplified Reporting.

Nebraska certifies Simplified Reporting households for six months. Effective April 11, 2016, if all adult household members are elderly or disabled with no earned income, the household is certified for 12 months without periodic reporting.

4. Simplified Income and Resources

State agencies have the option to exclude some types of income and resources by aligning SNAP policy with the TANF or Medicaid policy. Income not counted under TANF or Section 1931 of the Social Security Act, which authorized Medicaid, can be excluded with some exceptions. These exceptions include wages, salaries, self-employment income, benefits from major assistance programs, regular payments from a government source, worker's compensation, child support payments, and other types of income determined countable to ensure fairness in eligibility determinations. The same option exists for the treatment of resources. A number of resources cannot be excluded when using this option, including cash, licensed vehicles, and readily available amounts in financial institutions.

Nebraska currently utilizes the option of excluding educational income as income and resources to align with TANF.

5. Simplified Self-Employment Determination

States have the option to adopt a simplified method for determining the cost of doing business in cases where an applicant is self-employed. Should a State decide to adopt a simplified method, the State agency has the flexibility to develop a method to calculate this cost such as a flat percentage, a figure based on average costs, or some other method. Some States use different figures/methods for different types of self-employment. At present, 23 States have adopted a simplified method for determining the costs of doing business for self-employed applicant income. Of these, 19 use a flat percentage of gross income applied to all types of self-employment.

This option will not expand initial or continuing SNAP eligibility but could increase some clients' benefits and decrease other clients' benefits.

Nebraska currently utilizes a flat percentage, forty-nine percent (49%) of gross income for self-employment deductions when income is verified with ledgers or bookkeeping records. If income is verified with a tax return, actual self-employment deductions are allowed.

6. Simplified Homeless Housing Cost

States had the option to use a standard deduction from income of \$159.73 per month for homeless households with some shelter expenses. This option streamlines the process for States and applicants who are homeless, as they are not requested to itemize specific costs. However, homeless households may claim actual expenses if they are higher and verified. This does not expand initial SNAP eligibility but may increase a households' monthly allotment.

Effective with the signing of the Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 on December 20, 2018, the homeless standard deduction is no longer a state option. Instead, all states must offer the homeless standard deduction.

This remains included on the report as it remains in the FNS options report.

7. Standard Utility Allowances (SUAs)

State agencies electing to use SUAs for all households in place of actual utility costs can opt to make their SUA mandatory. By taking this option, the State opts out of the requirement to prorate SUAs for households that share living space. In addition, this option requires that States use an SUA that includes the heating and cooling costs of public housing residents with shared meters that are charged only for excess utility costs.

This option does not expand initial or continuing SNAP eligibility but may increase a household's monthly allotment. Nebraska currently utilizes this option.

FNS issued a proposed rule on October 3, 2019, regarding how the SUA is calculated in all states. If the proposed rule passes, the SUA will be set by USDA/FNS at the 80th percentile of low-income households' utility costs for each state. Comments for this proposed rule were due December 2, 2019. No final rule has been issued.

8. Treatment of Income and Deductions of Ineligible Non-Citizens

Although aliens not lawfully present cannot receive SNAP benefits, their income is relevant to the benefit determinations of other eligible household members. If the non-citizen would have been considered ineligible for SNAP before the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA), State agencies have the option to either count all or a prorated share, of that individual's income and deductions when determining the benefit level of the other household members (referred to as category 1 for this report). However, if a non-citizen is ineligible for SNAP because of PRWORA, State agencies may either count none, or a pro-rated share, of the individual's income and deductions (referred to as category 2 for this report). When a State has chosen a given option, it must be implemented statewide, and only applies to the income of the ineligible non-citizen, not to other eligible household members.

Nebraska utilizes the option of prorating a share for both categories.

9. Child Support Expense Exclusion

States have the option to treat legally obligated child support payments made to non-household members as an income exclusion rather than as a deduction. This option helps to encourage payment of child support by excluding the amount paid from being considered part of the payer's gross income. States that do not use this option treat legally obligated child support payments made to non-household members as a deduction. States not opting for the income exclusion deduct legally obligated child support payments made per 7 CFR 273.9(d)(5) and 273.9(c)(17).

This option could expand initial SNAP eligibility, but it would not increase SNAP monthly benefits once they are eligible.

Nebraska does not currently utilize this option, thus it treats child support payments as a deduction, not an income exclusion.

10. Child Support Related Disqualifications

States have the option to disqualify natural or adoptive parents who fail to cooperate with child support enforcement agencies, who are in arrears in court-ordered child support payments, or both. States also have the option to require cooperation from non-relative guardians of children when there is an absent parent.

This option will limit ongoing SNAP eligibility and will not increase SNAP monthly benefits.

Effective July 6, 2020, Nebraska began utilizing this option. Nebraska has elected to sanction both custodial and non-custodial parents that do not cooperate with Child Support Enforcement but did not take the option to sanction individuals that have arrears.

11. Comparable Disqualification

State agencies may disqualify SNAP applicants or recipients who fail to perform actions required by other Federal, State, or local means-tested public assistance programs. A State agency has the option to select the types of disqualifications within a program that it wants to impose on SNAP recipients. Only the individual who committed the violation may be disqualified from SNAP, even if the entire household was disqualified under the rules of the other means-tested program.

This option does not expand initial SNAP eligibility nor will it increase monthly allotments. Nebraska currently utilizes this option.

12. Drug Felony Disqualifications

Welfare reform legislation permanently disqualifies people from SNAP participation if they have committed and been convicted of a State or federal felony offense which occurred after August 22, 1996, involving the possession, use, or distribution of a controlled substance. State legislatures can opt-out of the penalty entirely, or choose to impose less severe restrictions through a modified ban. Examples of these modified approaches are: limiting the circumstances in which the permanent disqualification applies (such as only when convictions involve the sale of drugs); requiring the person convicted to submit to drug testing; requiring participation in a drug treatment program; or imposing a

temporary disqualification period. Additional information on modified bans is available in the SNAP State Agency Profiles.

The Nebraska legislature opted for and currently utilizes a modified approach limiting the circumstances in which the permanent disqualification applies.

This option expands SNAP eligibility by partially opting out of the PRWORA provision.

13. Work Requirements and Disqualification Policy

SNAP regulations require all non-exempt household members to comply with work requirements such as registering for work, participating in Employment and Training (E&T) or participating in a workfare program if assigned, and not voluntarily quitting a job or reducing hours. Individuals who fail to comply without good cause are ineligible for benefits and are disqualified from SNAP for certain periods of time. The minimum periods set by law are one month for the first instance, three months for the second, and six months for the third. The law gives States the options to: establish disqualification (DQ) periods longer than the minimums; make the DQ permanent upon the third occurrence; and sanction the entire household if the head of household fails to comply.

Nebraska applies minimum periods set by law and disqualifies only the non-compliant head of household whenever the head of household fails to comply with work requirements other than the E&T program. Nebraska operates a voluntary E&T program.

14. Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE)

By law, households in which all participating members receive cash benefits from another means-tested program like Supplemental Social Security Income (SSI), TANF, or General Assistance are categorically eligible for SNAP. States have the option of adopting a policy referred to as BBCE, which expands SNAP categorical eligibility to households that receive non-cash benefits that are funded by TANF or Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds. Under BBCE, a state aligns its asset and income limits with the TANF non-cash benefit program that confers categorical eligibility. While certain eligibility criteria are deemed for BBCE households, as they are for other categorically eligible households, these households must provide documentation of income and certain expenses for benefits to be calculated. BBCE households must also meet all other SNAP rules and have net incomes low enough to qualify for a SNAP benefit.

Nebraska expanded categorical eligibility by broad-based eligibility requirements through the Expanded Resource Program (ERP). Only liquid resources that exceed \$25,000 affect eligibility. Non-liquid resources are excluded.

This may increase initial SNAP eligibility but does not increase a household's monthly allotment. Nebraska currently utilizes this option.

15. Transitional Benefits

State agencies have the option to offer transitional SNAP benefits to families leaving the TANF or State-funded cash assistance programs. Transitional Benefits Alternative (TBA) ensures that such households can continue to meet their nutritional needs as they make the transition from welfare to work. TBA provides a family with a set benefit amount and eliminates reporting requirements during the

transition period. Benefits can be continued for up to five months at a level equal to the amount the household received before TANF termination, with adjustments for the loss of TANF income. Certification periods may be extended so that families receive the full five months of benefits. State agencies may choose to exclude households where all members are ineligible to receive SNAP benefits because they fail to comply with laws related to a means-tested program, fail to cooperate with child support agencies, or are delinquent in court-ordered child support.

This does not expand initial SNAP eligibility, but may increase a household's monthly allotment and extend their certification period. As of September 30, 2021, there were 275 SNAP households enrolled in the Transitional Benefit Option.

Nebraska currently utilizes this option by allowing households to go into transitional SNAP when their TANF case closes due to going over the TANF income limit. Nebraska does not utilize the three optional disqualifications.

16. Document Imaging

Document imaging is the process of scanning paper documents and converting them to digital images that are then stored in an electronic format. This technology allows State agencies to create paperless or less paper-intensive certification systems, cutting the expenses and space requirements associated with the storage and maintenance of this documentation, and increasing the efficiency of the certification process.

This technology may be used to scan permanent verification documents (such as birth certificates or alien registration), temporary verification (such as wage stubs, rent receipts, or bank statements), or entire case records (including signed applications, periodic reports, or change reports).

In Nebraska, the Division of Children and Family Services (CFS), Economic Assistance programs, has one Document Imaging Center, located in Omaha, NE, that accepts applications, forms, and verifications from customers.

This option does not expand initial eligibility for SNAP eligibility. Nebraska currently utilizes this option.

17. Demonstrations for the Elderly and Disabled.

The Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP) and the Standard Medical Deduction (SMD) are two demonstration projects that target the elderly (aged 60 years and over) and disabled low-income populations. The ESAP streamlines the application and certification process by waiving the recertification interview, utilizing data matches, and extending certification periods to 36 months. ESAPs serve elderly households with no earned income, and in some cases also include disabled households with no earned income.

SNAP households with elderly or disabled members are entitled to a deduction from their household income of allowable, out-of-pocket medical expenses incurred by these members that are in excess of \$35/month. State agencies may request a demonstration waiver to establish an SMD for these households instead of calculating actual expenses however households still retain the option to claim actual medical expenses if they are higher than the SMD threshold. The SMD allows States to potentially reduce the paperwork burden on seniors and disabled persons. The SMD simplifies the process of claiming this deduction for vulnerable households.

Nebraska is not participating in these demonstration projects.

18. Combined Application Project (CAP)

Combined Application Project (CAP) is a partnership between the Social Security Administration (SSA), FNS, and State and local agencies to streamline application procedures for individuals receiving SSI benefits. The projects are designed to strengthen access to nutrition benefits for this vulnerable population by streamlining the SNAP application process. There are two models for CAPs: standard and modified. A standard model includes simplified joint SNAP/SSI application processing by SSA as individuals apply for or are recertified for SSI. A modified model utilizes data from SSA for targeted SNAP outreach to eligible SSI households who are then sent applications. Both models rely on standardized benefits and shelter amounts and require evaluations to ensure cost neutrality is maintained. The existing CAP States are being provided for informational purposes; FNS and SSA are not soliciting proposals for new demonstrations of this type.

Nebraska is not utilizing this option.

19. Online Applications

SNAP online applications can increase program access by providing more flexibility for households interested in applying for SNAP and renewing their benefits. 46 State agencies provide SNAP applicants with the opportunity to apply for benefits online, while 33 State agencies allow SNAP participants to recertify or renew their benefits online.

Nebraska allows SNAP recipients to apply and recertify for benefits online.

The DHHS received 18,652 total (electronic, phone, and paper) applications for all programs in September 2021.

Of the total applications received in September 2021:

- 14,772 were electronic applications.
- Of the electronic applications, 2,276 were received during non-work hours (15.4%).
- 2,908 of the electronic applications were phone applications.

The total number of electronic applications for all programs submitted from October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021 was 171,680. Of the electronic applications, 27,367 were received during non-work hours (15.9%). The total number of phone applications for all programs submitted from October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021 was 38,431.

This option does not expand initial eligibility for SNAP. Nebraska currently utilizes this option.

20. Online Case Management

Online case management can provide support to the certification process in local offices by reducing the time caseworkers spend answering phone calls concerning application and benefit status information, and processing changes. Forty State websites allow clients to perform some case management tasks online, including viewing case information, reporting changes in factors that affect eligibility or benefit level, and/or uploading documents.

Nebraska currently utilizes this option. Nebraska allows clients to view case information, report changes, and upload documents online.

21. Call Centers

Call centers can provide support to the certification process in local offices by reducing the time local certification offices spend answering phone calls concerning general SNAP information, application and benefit status information, certification interviews, customer complaints, and processing changes. In some States, call centers go beyond these functions to directly certify and re-certify households. Call centers can help reduce errors caused by unreported changes, high workloads, and unanswered phone/voice mail messages. Benefits include task specialization, prompt customer service, self-service options, measurable work performance, dedicated phone lines, and one phone number for participants to remember. Additional information on call center functionality is available in the SNAP State Agency Profiles.

In Nebraska, the Division of Children and Family Services, Economic Assistance programs tied to ACCESSNebraska has two Customer Service Centers located in Fremont and Scottsbluff as well as many local offices across the state.

This does not expand initial eligibility for SNAP eligibility.

Nebraska currently utilizes this option.

22. Mobile Technology

The use of mobile technology enables procedural changes that streamline the enrollment process, facilitate verification and reporting requirements, and reduce “churning.” According to a 2015 Pew Research study, low-income individuals are more likely to be “smartphone-dependent,” meaning these Americans own a cell phone, but lack access to other sources of high-speed internet at home and have limited options for going online other than their cell phone. Through the use of mobile technologies, States can provide better service and more readily reach populations that lack access to a personal computer, enhancing access for those who would otherwise be limited in their ability to access information and complete the certification process.

Effective January 2020, Nebraska began utilizing text messaging to send important information and reminders to clients.

The iServe Nebraska initiative is working on creating a mobile-friendly application. The anticipated release date for this application is April 2022.

23. Averaging Student Work Hours

Students attending institutions of higher education cannot be eligible for SNAP unless they meet at least one of several exemptions that make them eligible, one of which is working for pay at least 20 hours per week. States can choose to average the hours they are working and, if they choose to, must choose to average the work hours over a month, quarter, trimester, or semester. If hours are not averaged, a student that works under 20 hours in a week could lose SNAP eligibility even if they work enough hours to make up for them during another week.

This option used to be a waiver that Nebraska utilized, but has since become a state option.

This may increase initial SNAP eligibility but does not increase a household's monthly allotment. This option expands SNAP eligibility.

Nebraska has taken the option to average student work hours and has selected to average them over the period of a month. Households are only required to verify a student's hours at initial application and at the time of recertification of eligibility.

24. Acting on Certain Benefit Increases

Recent changes to federal regulations require states to forgo acting on certain unclear changes reported by a household. States are required to take action to reduce benefits in these situations but may elect to act on unclear changes that may increase benefits. Nebraska has taken the option to act on the changes that may increase the benefits of a household.

This option does not expand initial eligibility for SNAP but may increase a household's monthly allotment.

Nebraska currently utilizes this option.

Other Changes:

Required Verification

Effective October 2009, when total countable resources are below \$1,500, a client's declaration on resources is sufficient. Client declaration on shelter and utility expenses is also accepted. Accepting client declaration is allowed per Title 7 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

This does not expand initial SNAP eligibility.

For households in the Expanded Resource Program, verification is only needed if their countable resources exceed \$25,000.

Report Changes (ACCESSNebraska)

Effective November 2009, a client that is currently receiving benefits and has a change to report, may report changes electronically via ACCESSNebraska. The client enters their name, birth date, and the last four numbers of the Social Security number and enters their change electronically.

This does not expand initial SNAP eligibility.

Modernization Initiatives

States are continually seeking innovative managerial and technology solutions to increase efficiency. Modernization initiatives include check-in kiosks statewide or in select areas, telephonic signature at application or recertification, automated voice response/interactive voice response system statewide or in select areas, process improvement projects statewide or in select areas, case banking, specialized work units, and targeted or waived interviewing and case processing.

This does not expand initial SNAP eligibility.

SNAP-Ed (former Nutrition Education) Program and Outreach Initiatives

All States and territories, except Guam, have SNAP-Ed programs. In addition, some States have formal Outreach Programs to increase program participation. Many additional States conduct informal Outreach activities.

The DHHS contracts with the University of Nebraska – Lincoln (UNL) to deliver SNAP-Ed. One component of the contract is to conduct informal outreach activities.

The DHHS contracts with the Food Bank for the Heartland in a formal Outreach Plan.

The DHHS has also developed a process of establishing community partnerships with community agencies and advocates increasing outreach primarily through assisting community partners with outreach and application assistance to SNAP applicants.

The DHHS presents information at area events, through Public Service Announcements on the radio and television for ACCESSNebraska web services as well as with brochures and flyers available at local offices and through community partners.

This does not expand initial SNAP eligibility.

SNAP FFY 2021 Expenditures:

SNAP Funding FFY2021 (September 2020 through October 2021)	Authorized	Expenditures as of 10/1/2021	Remaining
SAE Allocation (SNAP Administration)	\$22,063,249.00	\$20,713,772.00	\$1,349,477.00
SNAP E&T 100%	\$338,689.00	\$314,187.00	\$24,502.00
SNAP E&T 50% admin	\$238,053.00	\$83,644.58	\$154,408.42
SNAP E&T 50% participant reimbursement	\$553,306.00	\$39,943.00	\$513,363.00
EBT State Exchange	\$585.00	\$585.00	\$0.00
SNAP State Exchange	\$2,007.11	\$1,125.00	\$882.11
SNAP Outreach	\$487,285.00	\$275,660.51	\$211,624.49
Nutrition Education (SNAP-Ed)	\$1,771,236.00	\$958,104.69	\$813,158.31
Totals:	\$25,454,410.11	\$22,387,021.78	\$3,067,388.33