



# **NORTH CAROLINA ALLIANCE FOR HEALTH**

## **Federal Food Assistance Program Policy and Program Evaluation Analysis**

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## **Purpose**

There were two primary goals for this analysis. The first was to find relevant policies that were proposed or ratified to determine if they would improve eligibility, enrollment or retainment for select federal food programs; promote opportunities for redeeming benefits; promote opportunities for the purchasing or consumption of fruits and vegetables; or increase food access. The second goal was to analyze waivers related to COVID-19 and natural disasters to understand the impact those waivers have on food access. This analysis was conducted using peer-reviewed literature, organization reports, government reports and studies. The document highlighted the successes, failures, gaps in knowledge and potential opportunities for public policy relating to federal food programs.

## **Scope**

This document has five distinct parts. Table I covers the state policies in North Carolina, Table II includes state policies from differing states in terms of demographics and political nature (California, Florida, Ohio, South Carolina and Texas), and Table III encompasses programs, initiatives and organizations in the United States. Tables V through VIII assess COVID-19 waivers that have been implemented and Table IX summarizes natural disaster waivers and flexibilities from Food and Nutrition Services (FNS). For Tables I and II, a minimum of five years was scanned to capture recent data. This analysis was specifically addressing SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children) and CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program and child nutrition programs).

## **Limitations**

The two main limitations were limited state policy and limited research. Because the programs are administered at the federal level, state governments have limited power over the types of policies that can be passed. This became apparent in the analysis with only two bills total pertaining to WIC and CACFP. In addition to the lack of policy, there was a severe lack of research for both programs. As a result, the bulk of the policy analysis surrounds SNAP. It should be noted that policies involving those programs may be proposed, but they may also not appear in certain state general assembly legislation if they are not ratified.

## **Grading of Evidence**

The evidence was color-coded as red (weak evidence, lack of consistent evidence or extremely conflicting evidence relative to the topic or question), yellow (moderate evidence relative to the topic or question), green (strong evidence relative to the topic or question) or gray (relevant policy, but lack of evidence necessary to evaluate). The grading only reflects the strength and relevance to the four main questions based on evidence found.

## North Carolina Policies and Legislation

An analysis was carried out to find policies relevant to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and child nutrition programs, most notably the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) over at least a five-year period. The analysis of eleven bills revealed a balanced focus on five central themes: expanding access to programs, specific application requirements, food waivers or prohibiting certain foods, increasing direct food access, and lifestyle changes.

### Program Access Policies

SNAP improves security and food access, but the success depends on the level of outreach and access to the public.<sup>44-46</sup> States with simplified application processes have higher participation rates. The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) partnered with the Benefit Data Trust (BDT) to increase enrollment for the senior population who are dually enrolled in Medicare and Medicaid.<sup>1,2</sup> BDT reached more than 46,000 dual eligible seniors and submitted approximately 5,700 applications. The annual average benefits for the seniors enrolled was \$542.<sup>1</sup> North Carolina's simplified application processes and broad-based categorical eligibility policies contributed to the success of this partnership. However, not every initiative has the same success. In 2014, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) created the Healthy Incentive Pilot to promote the purchasing of produce by SNAP recipients.<sup>47</sup> As a result, the participants purchased twenty-six percent more fruits and vegetables compared to those who did not participate. Generally, programs promoting healthy foods only reach five percent of eligible SNAP recipients.<sup>47</sup>

### SNAP Requirement Policies

Eligibility largely determines the population that can access federal assistance programs. There are three distinct policies the North Carolina government attempted to pass addressing eligibility: required cooperation with child support, exempt individuals with a certain criminal charge and repealing a law regarding able-bodied adults without dependents.

There is no evidence suggesting the removal of SNAP benefits from individuals who do not pay child support is helpful or effective.<sup>18-22</sup> Food access is a notable barrier for non-custodial parents and removing those benefits may not increase the amount of child support given. Taking away benefits from a non-custodial parent limits their ability to pay and negatively affects both their food security and their child's food security.<sup>20</sup>

In 2011, North Carolina proposed a bill to allow individuals with class H or I felony offenses (e.g., possession of illegal substances) to take part in a work program and receive nutrition services. Sound evidence suggests that banning individuals from accessing assistance programs may increase recidivism because of a lack of support.<sup>40,41</sup> However, states may have full bans or modified bans (e.g., eligible after passing a drug test). The negative effects are apparent for a full ban but blurred for modified bans.<sup>43</sup>

The North Carolina House Bill 762, Nutritional Assistance for Employment Deserts (HB 762) attempted to repeal current laws that prohibit NCDHHS from seeking waivers for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs). ABAWDs can only receive up to three months of benefits within a thirty-six-month time period unless they are actively working. Work requirements like these result in a modest increase of employment, but at a cost.<sup>9</sup> Researchers estimate only one out of five SNAP recipients successfully become employed.<sup>9</sup> As a result, more

than half a million SNAP recipients lost benefits from 2013 to 2017.<sup>8</sup> Actively searching for employment does not satisfy the work requirements.<sup>11</sup> An economic downturn or natural disaster hampers an individual's ability to find a job. This policy adversely affects populations in the time of greatest need. College students are often not considered dependent on SNAP. However, many are, and they are not exempt from ABAWD work requirements.<sup>11</sup>

### **Food Waiver Policies**

Deciding what food and beverages may be purchased with federal benefits is actively debated. There is inconsistent evidence from the literature suggesting prohibition would be effective.<sup>13-17</sup> The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) released a report stating SNAP recipients are not more likely to choose low nutrient-dense foods compared to non-SNAP recipients.<sup>110</sup> However, other individuals believe enabling restrictions could be beneficial to improve the long-term health of recipients.<sup>15</sup> The FNS noted barriers such as defining healthy foods and efficiently tracking qualified and disqualified foods.<sup>110</sup> Cultures and geographic backgrounds influence what one population may consider healthy compared to another.

### **Food Access Policies**

Directly increasing food access is critical for creating a healthy environment. Part of the analysis showed North Carolina legislation focused on grocery store incentives and small food retailers. Evidence shows that financial support enables a greater supply of and access to fresh foods.<sup>30,33</sup> Further evidence suggests providing a broader range of healthy food, incentivizing those foods, and providing education (nutrition education or cooking education) is effective in getting individuals to purchase more healthy options.<sup>23,24</sup>

### **Lifestyle Change Policies**

Lifestyle changes and nutrition education are another component of helping the public. North Carolina proposed legislation that would appropriate more funds to the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). EFNEP is run through the North Carolina Cooperative Extension. The program primarily serves youth (ages nineteen or younger). Strong evidence supports the value EFNEP has regarding positive effects on dietary behaviors, food safety and food management.<sup>4-7</sup> The program relies on knowledgeable professionals who create a supportive environment using evidence-based practice to support change.<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, the success is limited by the amount of funding available. Funding directly determines the amount of resources and staff. Another federal program, SNAP-Ed (SNAP Education), caters to all SNAP recipients. Evidence shows SNAP-Ed may modestly improve dietary behaviors, especially when combined with increased EBT acceptance (e.g., access to farmers' markets).<sup>23-27,36-39</sup> EBT allows patrons to use a card system for purchasing food and negates the need for food stamps or physical currency, similar to a debit card.

### **Conclusion**

North Carolina made several attempts to improve food access, promote program outreach and improve the well-being of the population. However, of the policies mentioned above, only two were ratified. Both focused on improving participation, access, and outreach to food assistance programs. The analysis did not find any legislation on WIC or CACFP. Both are federal programs, which may limit the amount of power a state has to create policies affecting

them. The evidence presented shows the potential for several policies (maximizing eligibility, promoting a healthy retail environment, and advocating for lifestyle changes).

[Table I](#)

## **Policies and Legislation in Other States**

This section highlights legislation in states with various characteristics (differing populations, political nature, and geography) to provide a wider lens on efforts to improve federal food assistance programs. Forty-four policies relevant policies were found from California, Florida, Ohio, South Carolina, and Texas. There were three primary types of policies: program expansion, requirements for receiving benefits, and school nutrition.

### **Program Access Policies**

California policy placed a heavy emphasis on the program application process. One method was through streamlining applications. One bill would have made all noncitizens automatically eligible for assistance programs. Another bill aimed at synchronizing applications for Medi-Cal (Medicaid for California) with CalFresh (SNAP for California). Both bills would quicken the process and improve access. Strong evidence suggests streamlining and simplifying applications can increase participation rates by removing logistical barriers (e.g., unable to be at appointments) and reducing unawareness.<sup>58-61</sup> California proposed additional bills supporting program expansion. In 2020, the Senate tried passing a bill allowing individuals to apply or recertify in multiple ways: in person, by mail, an online portal or by telephone. The government passed a bill that simplified verification of housing costs. Moderate evidence suggests more rigorous asset tests (e.g., housing costs) increases churn (e.g., leaving SNAP, then applying again in a few months), limits financial security, and limits the total number of people who can access a program.<sup>65</sup>

Unfortunately, some of these policies have drawbacks. For example, creating a robust online portal has a high startup cost, especially for a large state like California. Improving program access can strain the administrative side if the state agency lacks standardized forms or experiences high levels of churn.<sup>60,65</sup> Making noncitizens eligible would increase access in theory. But fear of deportation creates uncertainty and may cause an unintended effect.<sup>49,62</sup> Even if noncitizens are eligible for food assistance programs through legislation, they may avoid applying. As a result, their food insecurity may only worsen. Further research is needed to analyze the effects potential deportation may have on program participation rates.

Similar to North Carolina, California attempted to increase collaboration with other organizations. In 2019, the government proposed a bill to support local food hub efforts and push for EBT (electronic benefits transfer) systems on university campuses. There is strong evidence that food hubs can have a great impact on the economy, improve access to food and create the potential for more collaboration.<sup>73</sup> Regional food hubs are more likely to accept EBT than local food hubs.<sup>73</sup> The difference in EBT acceptance may stem from the high initial costs associated with establishing an EBT system.

### **School Nutrition Policies**

Policies targeting school nutrition are another way to improve food access and the food environment. South Carolina proposed a bill encouraging schools to maximize access to healthy meals at no cost to children. Analyses found purchasing fruits and vegetables in bulk was seventeen percent cheaper than low-volume purchases.<sup>112</sup> Programs like farm to school may provide improved access to food and positively affect the local economy.<sup>113,114</sup> Florida took a different approach. They proposed a bill that would provide tax credits for farmers, improve the rate of reimbursement for school meals and expand free breakfast. California wanted to develop ways to increase the time students get to eat lunch. Strong evidence shows free school meals can

increase participation for both free-or-reduced eligible and non-eligible populations. Researchers believe stigma associated with free meals is reduced if all students are eligible.<sup>82,83</sup> While partnerships with local farmers can be beneficial for market diversification and promoting locally grown foods, there is no evidence testing the effectiveness of tax credits to farmers.<sup>105,106,107</sup> Last, students are presented with a limited time to eat, but there is a gap in research indicating what actions would be best to improve this issue.<sup>82,83</sup> Schools face the tradeoff issue of limiting instruction time or lengthening the school day. School nutrition policies can reach and affect a broad audience, but they are bound by federal food guidelines, limited budgets, and educational requirements.

### **SNAP Requirement Policies**

South Carolina and Texas proposed multiple bills regarding eligibility and SNAP requirements. South Carolina took a regressive approach for SNAP eligibility. In 2017, one bill required individuals to comply with Child Support Services, and another bill pursued a modified ban by excluding recipients from receiving benefits if they tested positive for illegal substances. Like North Carolina, the evidence is similar – restricting and banning benefits for recipients may not bring the intended result, and may increase recidivism and negatively affect food security for households.<sup>18-22,40,41</sup> However, in 2019, South Carolina proposed a bill exempting individuals from eligibility restrictions related to drug convictions. Texas took a different approach with a bill that would require a photograph on the EBT card to reduce fraud and benefit trafficking. There is a lack of evidence indicating a photograph is effective in reducing fraud.<sup>117</sup> Instead, the FNS uses a system approach rather than pinning blame on one party, as fraudulent activity is multifactorial.<sup>118</sup>

In 2019, Texas proposed a bill requiring ABAWDs to receive SNAP employment and training (E&T) services. Evidence shows SNAP E&T can be effective under certain conditions. The frontline staff members need to be invested in the participant's outcome. State agencies must expand services to meet the changing needs of participants. Last, programs need to be robust (subsidized employment, education opportunities, job search assistance and offer professional certificates) to combat dropout rates.<sup>51-56</sup> Those conditions coexist only in the most optimal environment. Participants face notable barriers such as health complications, lack of transportation and baseline education (high school equivalent).<sup>53</sup> The barriers listed can be a root cause for low socioeconomic status. SNAP E&T also faces the challenge of staff turnover and high incompleteness rate of employment training.<sup>51</sup> While the program has potential to be beneficial, it requires consistent support for staff and participants to be successful.<sup>53</sup>

### **Food Access Policies**

Several bills were proposed to increase food access and present participants with more options. In 2019, Texas ratified the Texas-Grown Produce SNAP Pilot Program to encourage the purchasing of state-grown produce. Reasonable evidence shows incentivizing local foods can be effective, but it hinges on the policy implementation.<sup>85-93</sup> As mentioned in the North Carolina section, outreach and raising awareness is essential. The Healthy Incentive Pilot only reached five percent of eligible participants.<sup>47</sup> In 2016, California created a bill to design and implement summer EBT for children, but the bill died. The analysis found sufficient evidence suggesting summer EBT can reduce food insecurity for those who have very limited access during non-school months.<sup>95,96</sup> There is active debate on food that can be purchased under this specific program. One school of thought suggests WIC criteria would force children to consume healthier

options. Another school of thought notes that less restrictive criteria enables more freedom for parents buying foods. Data from the study showed recipients using the WIC model had greater nutritional impacts than the recipients using the SNAP model.<sup>95</sup>

Florida addressed food access by ratifying a bill allowing farmers' markets to accept EBT to improve SNAP participation. Evidence suggests incentives like these can be worthwhile, but they are much more effective if there is a broad range of food and if they are combined with educational components (nutrition education or cooking education).<sup>23-27</sup> While this policy helps participants and local farmers, it is not always realistic. Sometimes participants face transportation barriers, which limit the usage of the incentivized benefits.

Texas established a standard schedule for SNAP benefits to be evenly distributed. Strong evidence shows SNAP participants are more likely to experience periods of no eating or limited eating in a monthly cycle. Participants traditionally bulk purchase early in the monthly cycle.<sup>115,116</sup> This policy does not affect the total amount of benefits for a recipient, but it does dissuade spending all the benefits at once.

D-SNAP (Disaster SNAP) gives food assistance to households affected by natural disasters and life-threatening events (e.g., a pandemic).<sup>121,122</sup> Texas ratified a bill to establish points of contact, a plan of action, and roles and responsibilities for an emergency. The Food Research & Action Center developed a D-SNAP guide, noting the importance of establishing standards, communicating with stakeholders to implement strategies, and streamlining applications for vulnerable participants.<sup>121</sup> Previous events (e.g., Hurricane Harvey) demonstrated the importance of an emergency plan and necessity to meet the immediate needs of an affected population.

## **Conclusion**

Addressing the food environment is multifactorial as presented by several state policies. Streamlining and simplifying application processes can improve participation for assistance programs. Providing incentives to use those programs and benefits carries noteworthy potential but is limited by the level of outreach and initial costs to implement robust systems. Limiting benefits from individuals is not only likely to create unproductive results, but backfire and negatively affect household nutrition. The evidence in this section supports the idea that increasing eligibility and access are fundamental ways to realistically establishing a healthier environment.

## [Table II](#)

## **Programs, Initiatives, and Organizations**

A search was conducted to find programs, initiatives and organizations related to federal food assistance programs with a strong focus on SNAP, WIC and CACFP. The search found thirty-eight programs highlighting the possibilities and successes of efforts to improve the food environment through these programs. There were five main categories: initiatives to improve program services, programs directly targeting food access, organization-based efforts, programs promoting job acquisition, and initiatives to improve school nutrition.

### **Improving Program Services**

The Food and Nutrition Service gives grants out each year to improve technology and administration services. The Florida Department of Children and Families used their grant to improve application processes and developed an accompanying video for those who are deaf and hard of hearing.<sup>123</sup> The Oklahoma Department of Human Resources improved their technology for mobile device use.<sup>123</sup> Applicants can now apply remotely. Steuben County in New York allotted grant money to create more workstations and improved access in a rural area.<sup>123</sup> This grant program is competitive and only the most promising proposals are selected, making it potentially difficult to receive.

Tufts University received funding from the USDA for the Tufts WIC Telehealth Intervention and Evaluation Project.<sup>133</sup> The goal is to improve delivery of nutrition education, remove transportation barriers and improve care. The university will appoint WIC clinics that can participate in the project to assess the effectiveness of telehealth used this way.<sup>133</sup> The project is still in progress and no information has been released, but the results could show a new direction for service delivery in the WIC population.

WIC special project grants are awarded each year by FNS. Arizona established their own eWIC program (WIC using an EBT system) and converted from traditional paper vouchers to an EBT system.<sup>134</sup> WIC agencies in Arkansas partnered with the Arkansas STAR Health program and visit new mothers.<sup>134</sup> Each home-visit involves nutrition education, lactation education and breastfeeding tips. Meanwhile, the Texas WIC state agency developed a ‘Chatbot’ that can give participants information any time of the day.<sup>134</sup> The bot can make appointments automatically for a recipient. Overall, WIC needs expansion, but the program is limited by the amount of funding provided. These grants offer an opportunity to create and test novel technology to better serve the people.

### **Food Access Initiatives**

The USDA funded a Summer Food for Children Demonstration program to test methods for improving food access to low-income children during summer months in multiple states. This program included a Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer for Children (SEBTC) and the Enhanced Summer Food Service Program (ESFSP).<sup>136</sup> The SEBTC provided benefits in either thirty-dollar or sixty-dollar monthly units. Each participating agency used either SNAP or WIC purchasable item criteria. Both sets of benefits lowered the prevalence of very low food security and food insecurity.<sup>139</sup> However, families bought more fruits, vegetables and whole grains if given sixty-dollars compared to the thirty-dollar group. Participants who redeemed benefits under the WIC model had a stronger positive change in nutrition, and this is likely due to the stricter standards.<sup>139</sup> This is countered by participants redeeming fewer benefits overall under the WIC standards than the SNAP standards.

The Enhanced Summer Food Program (ESFSP) had four distinct initiatives: extending the length of school food service, activity incentive, meal delivery and a backpack demonstration.<sup>136,137</sup> The program compensated school food services for fifty cents per lunch served to extend operations beyond the normal school calendar. Grants were offered to fund recreational activities to yield higher participation in summer enrichment programs for youth. In select locations, students could pick up breakfast and lunch near local drop-off sites. Last, the program made food packages with meals for children when Summer Food Service Program sites were not available.

The evaluation stated the ESFSP showed no significant differences in food security for the child, parents or household.<sup>136,137,138</sup> This is likely attributed to the small sample size, so further research is needed to evaluate this program or a similar program. The program successfully reached eligible participants, but the implementation was not perfect.<sup>136,137</sup> Transportation was a barrier for the participants' families to arrive at the designated site.

The Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) Grant Program incentivized fruit and vegetable purchasing by SNAP recipients. Wholesome Wave Georgia (non-profit organization) provides local produce and implemented an "e-incentive" technology to improve access to multiple sites throughout Georgia.<sup>124</sup> In North Carolina, the grant made it possible to match funds for SNAP recipients purchasing fruit and vegetables up to forty dollars at Food Lion.<sup>125</sup> A similar program exists in Arkansas known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program.<sup>124</sup>

The USDA funded several states to allow online purchasing of food to SNAP households.<sup>128</sup> The retailers include Amazon and Walmart along with several smaller chains. In 2014, the USDA funded the Healthy Incentives Pilot Program to incentivize healthy food purchasing. While program participants consumed twenty-six percent more fruits and vegetables than non-participants, the participation was poor.<sup>140</sup>

## **Organizations**

Meals-to-You is an organization that delivers food packages (breakfast and lunch) to students while schools remain closed from COVID-19.<sup>127</sup> They currently ship boxes to fifteen states and another twenty are currently being enrolled. The box provides a balanced nutritional profile and includes a protein, whole grain choices, vegetables and fruit. The program has a wide reach and it helps children receive food they would otherwise not get.

Child Nutrition Program Inc. aims to prevent child hunger and support childcare providers. They provide more than 24,000 meals per day across forty counties in North Carolina, assist providers with funding eligibility and help providers remain compliant with regulations.<sup>141</sup>

The Meal Services Program is conducted by the Child Care Services Association. They specialize in providing meals (two meals and one snack each day) to childcare centers.<sup>142</sup> Bulk purchasing allows their model to be sustainable.

## **Employment & Training Programs**

North Carolina's SNAP E&T program operates in thirteen counties with nine partnerships, including the NC Community College Systems Office and several Goodwill locations.<sup>129</sup> Documented efforts have been made in Buncombe, Chatham, Moore and Wilson counties.

Buncombe County leverages long-term countywide partnerships for job opportunities.<sup>130</sup> The program is looking for apprenticeships that pay while working to improve participant financial security. In Chatham County, participants are reimbursed for transportation and

childcare to promote flexibility.<sup>130</sup> In Moore County, they reimburse for transportation and childcare, but they partnered with NC Works to collaborate and present additional resources.<sup>130</sup> Wilson County also has the same reimbursement method, and they credit their success to outreach with potential partners that could take participants.<sup>130</sup>

The program across the board is looking to develop a case management system, find more apprenticeships, expand the partnership with the community college system and continue making more partnerships.<sup>129</sup> Each county has noted the childcare reimbursement may be unsustainable if too many participants use the service. Another concern is maintaining retention of participants.<sup>130</sup> Participants who have an unpaid apprenticeship may be inclined to leave the program.<sup>130</sup> Participants face financial barriers when they stop receiving benefits after securing employment.

Texas implemented a policy for the SNAP Self-Sufficiency Pilot Program. The Texas program is similar to SNAP E&T, but the program intends to wean participants off SNAP benefits over time instead of automatic disqualification when earning a certain baseline income.<sup>120</sup> This forward thinking could improve participation, retention rates and bring positive outcomes for participants..

### **School Nutrition Programs**

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program provides fresh produce to eligible children in elementary school.<sup>148</sup> The program reimburses schools fifty to seventy-five dollars per participating student each year. The program increased fruit and vegetable consumption by one-third of a cup compared to students who did not participate.<sup>148</sup> Schools taking part in the program also provided more nutrition education and promoted healthy lifestyles and activities more than schools who did not participate. The program did not lower consumption of less nutrient-dense foods among students.

There are several grants for school nutrition. One is the Team Nutrition E-STAR Training grant given to support state agencies to improve the quality of school meals. The Michigan Department of Education used the E-STAR Training program to help school nutrition managers develop goals, a plan of action and properly evaluating those outcomes.<sup>132</sup>

Another grant is the Team Nutrition Training Grant for Innovative State Training Programs. This grant also supports state agencies in expanding job training and improving school meals.<sup>131</sup> The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education received the grant. They will implement culturally relevant training to 400 school nutrition professionals over thirty-nine sites. The program will assess meal quality and acceptability with photographs and student surveys.<sup>131</sup> The meals will be ranked using the Healthy Eating Index as an objective measure. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction also received the grant to expand the Goal Oriented Achievement Learning Skills certificate program for 180 school nutrition professionals and sixty underserved school food authorities.<sup>131</sup> They plan to evaluate slightly differently than Massachusetts by evaluating staff training, using student surveys, analyzing participation rates, and assessing production records. School nutrition grants are a way to circumvent the tight budget that binds most schools

### **Conclusion**

Funding for these food programs primarily comes from the federal level from FNS or the USDA. Because of their federal status, state policies surrounding these programs is often limited. However, FNS delegates the funding to a specific state agency for implementation, allowing

improved flexibility. Since changes and improvements are limited at the state level, grants and programs are one effective way to implement change. As mentioned previously, by improving technology and administration services more people can access the programs. This section highlighted multiple worthwhile approaches: telehealth for WIC, summer EBT for vulnerable children, Meals-to-You amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, an expanding employment training program, and school nutrition initiatives. Each are slightly different, but they all directly and indirectly affect food access.

[Table III](#)

## COVID-19 Waivers

During the COVID-19 pandemic schools were hit especially hard with widespread closures. Students' options for meals were limited and food access became a serious concern. The Food and Nutrition Service tried to alleviate the impact by implementing waivers on a case-by-case basis. The waivers fall under four main categories: SNAP, Child Nutrition Programs, USDA Foods Programs and the WIC Program.

### SNAP

FNS approved several multi-state waivers: adjustments to interview requirements, emergency allotments to households, extended certification periods, and pandemic EBT.<sup>149-154</sup> The interview requirement waiver allowed SNAP agencies to approve a verified applicant without completing an interview. This waiver eliminated in-person contact and streamlined the application process. FNS further supported SNAP recipients by approving a waiver that increased household benefits to the maximum amount for a household of that size.<sup>149-154</sup> Another waiver extended the time for certifications expiring in the months of March, April or May for an additional six months. The last noteworthy multi-state waiver was pandemic EBT (P-EBT). It provided temporary help to SNAP and non-SNAP recipients with children who were negatively affected by school closures from the pandemic.

Several waivers were approved for only a couple of states. For example, California was the only state to be approved for a telephonic signature instead of a physical signature when applying for benefits.<sup>151</sup> California and Ohio both received a waiver to suspend the Income and Eligibility Verification System for current SNAP households.<sup>149,152</sup> North Carolina was the sole state to receive a waiver to suspend claim collections on SNAP overpayments.<sup>151</sup> This waiver was requested to ease financial burden caused by the pandemic. Ohio was approved for a waiver to suspend in-person applications.<sup>152</sup> Instead, individuals could apply through online portals, mobile applications, mail, telephone or fax.

### Child Nutrition Programs

Child Nutrition Programs were a focus point of food assistance programs during the pandemic. FNS approved multiple widespread waivers for non-congregate feeding, mealtimes, afterschool snacks, meal pattern, meal pickup, and vulnerable zone coverage.<sup>149-154</sup>

FNS approved a nationwide waiver allowing school meals to be served outside of the normal school setting (non-congregate feeding). Because schools were officially closed from COVID-19, demand increased for flexibility regarding the location and distribution of school food. This waiver improved food access to the student population by allowing more distribution sites to serve as many students as possible.

In the same vein, FNS approved a nationwide waiver to pause mealtime requirements.<sup>149-154</sup> Normally, school food services are required to serve at certain times of the day for students (breakfast and lunch). The waiver reduced the burden for families having to pick up meals at a certain time. It allowed them to get the food at a more viable time based on their schedule.

Similar to the non-congregate feeding, a third nationwide waiver was approved for afterschool snacks and meals to be served outside a structured environment.<sup>149-154</sup> Traditionally, snacks could only be given after school if there was an educational or enrichment purpose. Approval of this waiver allowed students to receive afterschool snacks without having to congregate for educational purposes considering COVID-19. It effectively promoted food security while reducing the risk of infection.

FNS took an additional approach with the meal pattern requirements. The nationwide meal pattern waiver promoted flexibility for school nutrition staff, especially with the reduced supply chain capacity during the pandemic.<sup>149-154</sup> As a result, staff were able to work with the items available to them to meet the needs of children without meeting the federal requirements.

Through the parent or guardian pickup waiver, parents could pick meals up without having their child present to maximize safety.<sup>149-154</sup> Similar to the other waivers, this promoted flexibility for families but also reduced the risk of infection for a vulnerable population.

Last, FNS approved the area eligibility waiver.<sup>149-154</sup> It helped maintain food access, lifted restrictions on eligible sites for serving food, so they no longer had to be in an area where fifty percent or more of students receive free or reduced lunch. This waiver improved food access nationwide for each county where free or reduced lunch is not universally given.

### **USDA Foods Programs**

The USDA Foods Programs focus on providing food for schools, supplying in times of need, distributing food to Indian Reservations and food safety. North Carolina and Ohio were approved for the disaster household distribution and entitlement waiver.<sup>151,152</sup> The first waiver approved The Emergency Food Assistance Program during the pandemic. The waiver provides food packages to those in need, but it comes with a limitation of not serving more than 225,000 individuals over a thirty-day period. The second waiver was approved to support school nutrition authorities. The pandemic skewed school meal data, making it difficult to determine the amount of reimbursement the government should give to schools. This waiver lets schools use the previous year's data for the number of lunches served to determine the amount of funding needed.

### **WIC Program**

The WIC Program is known for its rigidity and consistency with the services it provides to women, infants and children. The pandemic caused FNS to approve three widespread waivers that helped recipients.<sup>149-154</sup> The first was the physical presence waiver (including lab work), so that recipients did not have to be present to receive waivers. Second, the remote benefit issuance waiver allowed WIC clinics to issue benefits remotely if the recipient is not applying for the first time. Third, FNS approved a food package substitution waiver. The waiver promoted certain substitutions (e.g., milk of any fat content).

FNS approved several waivers that helped a few states. Florida and South Carolina received a waiver for WIC agencies to issue two months of exempt infant formula instead of one month.<sup>150,153</sup> This covered a potentially forgotten population and helped families reduce spending on the expensive specialty formulas. California, Florida and North Carolina were approved for a waiver extending the certification period for non-medically fragile children.<sup>149-151</sup> Approving the waiver allowed recipients to continue receiving benefits during the pandemic. Ohio and Texas received a waiver that let WIC agencies issue four months of benefits at once to reduce potential contact time.<sup>152,154</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Several actions were taken by FNS to protect SNAP, WIC, and CACFP recipients with specific waivers. For SNAP, agencies maximized the amount of benefits through P-EBT and eliminated in-person requirements. Child Nutrition Programs were able to serve off-site,

continue distributing meals and expand the coverage to all children in select areas. The USDA Foods Programs provided emergency food packages to alleviate the effects of a reduced supply chain. The WIC Program promoted flexibility for its recipients through food substitutions and eliminating in person requirements. Although not perfect, these waivers improved food access to vulnerable populations.

[Table V](#)

[Table VI](#)

[Table VII](#)

[Table VIII](#)

## **Natural Disaster Waivers**

Natural disasters are inevitable catastrophic events that put certain populations in a vulnerable position. The level of implementation for emergency plans directly affect the degree of the aftermath. Historically, FNS assisted individuals with the approval of select waivers.

### **Hurricane Florence**

Hurricane Florence primarily affected North Carolina and South Carolina. North Carolina acted with the help of waivers for four specific programs: D-SNAP, SNAP, Child Nutrition Programs and WIC.<sup>155</sup> D-SNAP was approved for thirty-three counties total. FNS loosened requirements, so SNAP recipients could purchase hot foods, extend certification periods, and replaced up to sixty percent of SNAP benefits for one month. Meanwhile, schools were declared as emergency shelters that could operate under CACFP. As a result, the schools had flexibility with meal requirements, and all students in select counties received free school meals.<sup>155</sup> WIC replaced one-month worth of food benefits for recipients. South Carolina also replaced SNAP benefits lost from the hurricane. South Carolina had a less robust Child Nutrition Program waiver, but they designated schools to serve breakfast and lunch while being reimbursed without meeting meal requirements.<sup>156</sup>

### **Hurricane Irma**

Florida is well-known for its hurricane season. Hurricane Irma caused FNS to support Florida through waivers to SNAP, Child Nutrition Programs and WIC.<sup>157</sup> Much like North Carolina, they implemented D-SNAP, conducted a mass replacement of benefits up to forty percent, allowed purchasing of hot foods, and extended certification periods. Additionally, there was a Presidential Declared Emergency for thirty-nine counties which resulted in disaster household distribution program.<sup>157</sup> The program served approximately 296,000 households for up to four weeks with food packages. All schools served free meals for students in affected areas, maintained federal reimbursement at the federal free rate and had meal flexibility. Unlike with Hurricane Florence, FNS approved food substitution waivers for WIC.<sup>157</sup> Recipients could purchase powdered milk and frozen juice if the traditional items were unavailable (fluid milk and shelf-stable juice).

### **Hurricane Harvey**

Hurricane Harvey was the second-most costly hurricane to hit the United States mainland.<sup>158</sup> As a result, FNS approved waivers for D-SNAP, SNAP, USDA Foods, Child Nutrition Programs and WIC in Texas.<sup>159</sup> Like with other hurricanes, SNAP flexibilities let recipients purchase hot food and waive certification periods. However, the Presidential Major Disaster Declaration allowed participants who evacuated to receive one month of benefits if they missed it from the hurricane. This hurricane also caused the mobilization of The Emergency Food Assistance Program, serving more than 23,000 households over a four-week period.<sup>159</sup> Texas supported children by providing free school meals and FNS approved non-congregate feeding. FNS also approved a food substitution waiver for WIC-approved items (fluid milk, bread and eggs) over a three-week timeframe.

### **Camp, Hill and Woolsey Fires**

Wildfires affect California each year due to the geography and climate. The Camp, Hill and Woolsey Fires caused the state to request several waivers to assist those affected. FNS

approved D-SNAP in select zip codes and counties.<sup>160</sup> Additionally, SNAP recipients could request replacement benefits and purchase hot foods. The Disaster Household Distribution Program served up to 8,000 individuals with food boxes for nearly two weeks.<sup>160</sup> Affected schools served meals that did not meet the nutritional requirements while still being reimbursed.

## **Conclusion**

Both natural disasters and pandemics can cripple a supply chain, further limiting options for a damaged population. Although FNS did not replace all benefits for each disaster, they did respond within a reasonable time to improve food access. Progressive waivers such as purchasing hot foods are critical to effectively helping individuals affected. Generally, households lack power and may not have a way to cook or store foods. At the same time, child nutrition waivers promote flexibility for families to provide food for their children. Unfortunately, it is difficult to assess how long a population may need help. Most natural disaster waivers last one to two months, with a few select counties receiving more support. Massive disasters like Hurricane Harvey negatively affect populations for a long period of time, often leaving populations extremely vulnerable even after media coverage ceases. Overall, effective waivers should improve food access, promote quick distribution, and limit the number of requirements for potential recipients.

## [Table IX](#)

## Multi-State Policy Evidence & Evaluation Summary (Using Table I and Table II Evidence)

State	Policy	Improve eligibility, enrollment or retainment for SNAP, WIC, CACFP, NSLP or NSB?	Promote opportunities for redeeming benefits?	Promote opportunities for the purchasing or consumption of fruits and vegetables?	Increase food access?
CA	2020 SB 1443 Food Assistance Program Eligibility				
CA	2020 SB 1073 Medi-Cal: California Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children				
CA	2020 SB 882 CalFresh: Alternate Application Methods				
CA	2020 AB 526 CalFresh: Enrollment: Institutions of Higher Education				
CA	2019 AB 1022 California Antihunger Response and Employment Training				
CA	2019 AB 494 CalFresh: Eligibility: Shelter Expense Deductions				
CA	2019 AB 341 CalHEERS: Synchronized Application for CalFresh				
CA	2019 AB 1377 CalFresh: State Department Collaboration				

CA	2019 AB 534 Social Services: Access to Food				
CA	2019 SB 173 CalFresh: Postsecondary Student Eligibility: Workstudy				
CA	2019 AB 942 CalFresh: Restaurant Meals Program				
CA	2016 AJR 35 SNAP: Cash-out Policy				
CA	2015 AB 292 Pupil Nutrition: Free or Reduced-price Meals: Adequate Time to Eat				
CA	2015 AB 445 Child Day Care Facilities: Nutrition				
CA	2015 AB 1240 Pupil Nutrition: Free or Reduced-Priced Meals: Breakfast				
CA	2015 AB 1321 Nutrition Incentive Matching Grant Program				
CA	2015 AB 2054 Nutrition Assistance: Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer for Children				
CA	2014 AJR 29 Senior Nutrition Services and Programs: Funding				
CA	2012 AB 1872 Child Day Care Facilities: Nutrition				
FL	2020 HB 521 School Food and Nutrition				

	Services				
FL	2018 HB 47 SNAP Restrictions				
FL	2018 SM 1016/HM 847 SNAP Restrictions				
FL	2016 HB 103/SB 284 Transactions in Fresh Produce Markets				
NC	2019 H966 Appropriations Act Section 91.9.(a)				
NC	2019 H719 Expanded Food Nutrition Education Program				
NC	2019 H762 Nutritional Assistance for Employment Deserts				
NC	2019 S443 Waiver/Prohibit Certain Foods (SNAP)				
NC	2019 S453 SNAP Eligibility Reform				
NC	2015 S692 Nutritious Food Requirements				
NC	2015 H789 Grocery Store Incentives				
NC	2015 H250 Healthy Food Small Retailer/Corner Store Act				
NC	2011 H975 Promote Local/Healthy Food				
NC	2011 H600 Allow/Controlled Substance Felony/Wk 1 <sup>st</sup> / SNAP				

NC	2009 S1151/H 1775 SNAP Improvements				
OH	2017 Chapter 4000 Special Program, Ohio Works Now				
SC	2019 HB 3250 Fruit and Vegetable SNAP Grant Program				
SC	2019 S 639/H 3322 General Bill: Crime & Eligibility				
SC	2017 H 3314 SNAP Drug Testing				
SC	2017 H 4237 Child Hunger Resolution				
SC	2017 S 920 SNAP Adjustment: Waiver Prohibition				
SC	2017 S 921 SNAP Adjustment: Child Support & SNAP Benefit				
SC	2017 S 922 SNAP Adjustment: SNAP Eligibility: Financial Limits				
SC	2016 H 4409 SNAP Requirements: Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents				
SC	2016 H 4410 SNAP Waivers				
SC	2016 H 4411 SNAP Purchase Limitations				
TX	2019 HB 251 SNAP Eligibility Exclusions				
TX	2019 HB 285 SNAP Work Requirements & Employment Training				

TX	2019 HB 1218/SB 582 SNAP Distribution				
TX	2019 HB 1250/SB 671 EBT Cards: Photographs				
TX	2019 HB 1483 SNAP Self-Sufficiency Pilot Program				
TX	2019 HB 2335/SB 981 Disaster SNAP				
TX	2019 HB 3524 Simplified SNAP Recertification				
TX	2019 HB 3541/SB 1834 Texas-Grown Produce SNAP Pilot Program				
TX	2019 HB 4364 SNAP Purchase Limitations				

## Appendix

<b>Table I: Legislation, Regulations &amp; Administrative Policies in North Carolina</b>					
<b>Title</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Key Text</b>	<b>Evidence (Weak/Moderate/Strong)</b>	<b>Potential Consequences</b>	<b>Source</b>
H966 Appropriations Act Section 91.9.(a)	2019 - Ratified	NCDHHS will continue implementing evidence-based pilot program to increase access to public benefits for seniors aged 65 and older who are dually enrolled in Medicare and Medicaid	<b>Strong Evidence</b> Outreach programs by the Benefit Data Trust positively impacted elderly SNAP applications and participations in states with simplified application processes. 5,756 SNAP applications submitted because of NC Benefits Center outreach to more than 46,000 dual eligible seniors. Over 3200 seniors were enrolled between October 2018 and September 2019. Average annual benefit for seniors is \$542.	Outreach during economic recessions/depressions could falsely bolster numbers	1 2 3
H719 Expanded Food/Nutrition Education Program	2019 – Referred to Com on Appropriations, Education	Appropriate funds to support EFNEP through cooperative extension programs at NCSU and NCA&T	<b>Strong Evidence</b> EFNEP can have positive impacts on nutrition practices & behaviors, food safety, and food management, especially if implemented in a supportive environment by program professionals instead of volunteers.	Budget restraints can negatively inhibit program outcomes for participants  Experience and knowledge are correlated with outcomes	4 5 6 7
H762 Nutritional Assistance for Employment Deserts	2019 – Referred to Com on Health	Repeal law prohibiting DHHS from seeking certain waivers from SNAP benefits for able-bodied adults without dependents	<b>Strong Evidence</b> While work requirements do result in a modest increase of employment, the increase comes at a notable loss. It is estimated only 1 out of 5 SNAP recipients losing benefits become employed. More than half a million	Actively searching for employment does not count as working  Adversely affect populations in the	8 9 10 11 12

			SNAP recipients lost benefits over a four-year period (2013 to 2017). The distribution and usage of SNAP benefits can result in a 1.73-1.79 GDP equivalent, resulting in a relatively stronger economy.	greatest time of need (Great Recession)  College students are not exempt from ABAWD work requirements  Negatively affect local economies due to decreased spending	
S443 Waiver/Prohibit Certain Foods/SNAP	2019 – Referred to Rules and Operations of Senate	Requires DHHS to seek a waiver from the USDA that would authorize the state to prohibit the purchase of certain foods under federal SNAP	<b>Weak Evidence</b> Inconsistent evidence from literature suggesting prohibition would be effective. FNS suggests SNAP recipients are not more likely to choose poor nutrient dense foods compared to non-SNAP recipients. However, other authors believe bans could be effective in improving nutrition.	Definition of prohibited food determines the outcome  Difficulty tracking qualified and disqualified foods	13 14 15 16 17
S453 Eligibility Reform/SNAP	2019 – Referred to Rules and Operations of Senate	Require applicants for food and nutrition benefits to cooperate with the state child support enforcement program as a condition of eligibility for benefits under the SNAP	<b>Weak Evidence</b> No evidence of the effectiveness for removal of SNAP based on child support. Evidence suggest child support increases over time as the parent’s ability to pay increases. Further evidence suggests support from assistance programs can increase the amount of child support given. Non-custodial parents may face notable barriers preventing them from making child support payments; reducing their food	May negatively affect informal child support arrangements	18 19 20 21 22

			security will likely have more detrimental effects than overall benefits.		
S692 Nutritious Food Requirements	2015 - Referred to Rules and Operations of Senate	Senate resolution urging congress to limit the types of food eligible for purchase under the SNAP to nutritious foods	<b>Weak Evidence</b> Inconsistent evidence from literature suggesting prohibition would be effective. FNS suggests SNAP recipients are not more likely to choose poor nutrient dense foods compared to non-SNAP recipients. However, other authors believe bans could be effective in improving nutrition.	Definition of prohibited food determines the outcome  Difficulty tracking qualified and disqualified foods	13 14 15 16 17
H789 Grocery Store Incentives	2015 - Referred to Commerce and Job Development	Act to promote healthy food financing	<b>Moderate evidence</b> Incentives, providing a broader range of healthy food instead of fresh food and education/cooking classes in conjunction are effective in purchasing of foods	-	23 24 25 26 27
H250 Healthy Food Small Retailer/Corner Store Act.	2015 – Referred to Com on Rules and Operations of the Senate; Passed 3 <sup>rd</sup> reading from House	Act to enact the corner store initiative act to assist healthy food small retailers	<b>Moderate evidence</b> Incentives, providing a broader range of healthy food instead of fresh food and education/cooking classes in conjunction are effective at increasing the purchasing of healthy foods.  <b>Strong evidence</b> Increased financial support enables greater supply and access of fresh foods	Lack of dietary change  Excessive costs  Undesirable location	23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35

H975 – Promote Local/Healthy Food	2011 – Referred to Health and Human Services	Act to work toward decreasing obesity among SNAP participants by increasing their participation in SNAP-ED and making fresh, locally grown produce available by increasing the acceptance of EBT cards at farmers markets and food co-ops.	<p><b>Moderate evidence</b> SNAP-ED may modestly improve dietary behaviors, especially when combined with increased EBT acceptance.</p> <p><b>Weak evidence</b> SNAP/SNAP-ED decreases obesity.</p> <p>*More importantly, SNAP increases food access and the potential to improve dietary behaviors, rather than decreasing bodyweight.</p>	Cultural stigma surrounding obesity	23 24 25 26 27 36 37 38 39
H600 Allow/Controlled Substance Felony/Wk 1st/ SNAP	2011 – Referred to Rules, Calendar and Operations of the House	Act allowing NCDHHS to opt out of the ban that only allows individuals convicted of either class H or I controlled substance felony offences to be eligible to participate in the work first program and food and nutrition services program (SNAP).	<p><b>Strong Evidence</b> A ban on benefits for benefit programs such as SNAP may increase recidivism due to the lack of support outside of the penal system. A ban can negatively affect children and households. Full bans are strongly associated with negative effects, but modified bans are more flexible and come with varied results. However, Oregon and Minnesota state-sponsored support programs reduced recidivism by 83%.</p>	Inconsistent policies may create confusion about benefits accessibility and eligibility	40 41 42 43
S1151/H1775 SNAP	2009 - Ratified	Act to direct Division of Social Services of DHHS to examine ways to expand and enhance the SNAP in North Carolina	<p><b>Moderate Evidence</b> SNAP effectively improves food security and food access, but is limited by the total benefits provided, successful outreach to eligible participants, and applied</p>	Unsuccessful outreach may dissuade future funding	44 45 46 47 48

			<p>waivers. In 2016, SNAP participation was at 85%. Additionally, the USDA Healthy Incentive Pilot (2014 Farm Bill), showed that giving produce incentives led to a 26% increased purchasing of fruits and vegetables. However, the program only reached 5% of eligible SNAP participants. Providing SEBTC SNAP did not result in increased purchases of unhealthy foods, but only modestly improved child nutrition.</p>		
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[Return to Analysis](#)

<b>Table II: Legislation, Regulations &amp; Administrative Policies in Other States</b>						
<b>State</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Key Text</b>	<b>Evidence (Weak/Moderate/Strong)</b>	<b>Potential Consequences</b>	<b>Source</b>
CA	SB 1443 – Food Assistance Program: Eligibility	2020 – No action, re-referred to Com. On RLS	Make all noncitizens, regardless of immigration status, eligible for aid under the Food Assistance Program	<b>Limited Evidence</b> Limited evidence indicating there is not a chilling effect of anti-immigrant restrictive legislation, but immigrants are still more likely to not apply for public benefits than native or natural citizens. Fear of applying is higher if government services like ICE are more active in deporting individuals.	This policy would increase access in theory, but fear of deportation creates uncertainty until research is conducted to present evidence	49 50
CA	AB 1022 – California Antihunger Response and Employment Training (CARET) Act of 2019	2019 – No action, hearing canceled at request author	ABAWD’s who exceeds the federal time limit can receive equivalent benefits under the CARET program	<b>Moderate Evidence</b> Evidence shows SNAP E&T can be effective if the staff members are invested, willing to expand services to meet the needs of participants, can overcome dropout rates and are robust (subsidized employment, education opportunities, job search assistance, offer professional certificates). SNAP E&T participants face notable barriers (health issues, lack of	SNAP E&T staff turnover  High incompleteness rates of employment training	51 52 53 54 55 56 57

				transportation and education) that may be a root cause of their socioeconomic status.		
CA	SB 1073 – Medi-Cal: California Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children	2020 – No action, re-referred to Com. On Health	Bill to meet the demands of accepting recipients through collaboration with WIC, regardless of immigration status and to streamline the process by reducing procedural burdens using the Medi-Cal program	<p><b>Strong Evidence</b> Streamlining processes for government assistance programs can be beneficial</p> <p><b>Limited Evidence</b> Limited evidence indicating there is not a chilling effect of anti-immigrant restrictive legislation, but immigrants are still more likely to not apply for public benefits than native or natural citizens. Fear of applying is higher if government services like ICE are more active in deporting individuals.</p>	This policy would increase access in theory, but, fear of deportation may create uncertainty	58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65
CA	AB 494 – CalFresh: Eligibility: Shelter Expense Deductions	2019 – Ratified	Reported shelter costs from applicant on signed CalFresh (SNAP) application is sufficient for determining applicant’s excess shelter cost deduction *Simplify verification of housing costs and reduce paperwork	<p><b>Strong Evidence</b> Streamlining and simplifying applications and recertifications for participants can increase participation rates. Allowing remote application can remove logistical barriers preventing participants</p>	Online systems have high startup costs	57 58 59 60 61 66 67

				<p>from reapplying. Remote certification can result in more flexible certification timing.</p> <p><b>Moderate Evidence</b> Asset tests increase churning, limit financial security &amp; credit of recipients, and limit the total amount of potential recipients.</p>		
CA	SB 882 – CalFresh	2020 – No action, under submission	Allows recipients to apply, report and recertify in person, via mail, through an online portal or by telephone	<p><b>Strong Evidence</b> Streamlining and simplifying applications and recertifications for participants can increase participation rates. Allowing remote application can remove logistical barriers preventing participants from reapplying. Remote certification can result in more flexible certification timing.</p>	Online systems have high startup costs	58 59 60 61
CA	AB 341 – CalHEERS: application for CalFresh	2019 – No action, died	Allow CalHEERS applications to be synced with CalFresh applications using the same parameters and information to streamline the process for applicants/recipients	<p><b>Strong Evidence</b> Streamlining and simplifying applications and recertifications for participants can increase participation rates. Allowing remote</p>	Online systems have high startup costs	58 59 60 61 68

				application can remove logistical barriers preventing participants from reapplying. Remote certification can result in more flexible certification timing.		
CA	AB 1377 – CalFresh	2019 - Ratified	Require collaboration between state departments to use data collected from CalFresh, Medi-Cal, free and reduced-meals, and EBT to increase enrollment in the CalFresh program	<b>Moderate Evidence</b> Using data and proven strategies can improve enrollment in government assistance programs. However, this is dependent on current policies in place, potential waivers, effort used towards outreach programs and ability to streamline enrollment applications.	Inadequate support for recertification – equivalent support given to encourage enrollment applications should be given towards recertifying a recipient	69 70 71 72
CA	AB 534 Social Services: Access to Food	2019 – No action, died	Collaboration between state departments to support local food hub efforts and develop systems that allow EBT systems on university campuses	<b>Strong Evidence</b> Regional food hubs are more likely to accept EBT, therefore increasing food access. However, food hubs also work with local community organizations (food banks), support food assistance programs, and encourage purchasing of local goods through farmer’s markets.	Meeting long-term demands for institutions (universities and hospitals) can be difficult to achieve during natural disasters or poor harvests	73

CA	SB 173 CalFresh: Postsecondary Student Eligibility: Workstudy	2019 - Ratified	Require DSS to create a standardized form for community colleges and universities to link work study and eligibility for CalFresh	<p><b>Moderate Evidence</b> College students are in a vulnerable position with limited access to government assistance programs or they are unaware due to a lack of outreach and public information</p> <p><b>Strong Evidence</b> Streamlining processes for government assistance programs can be beneficial and is an area needing improvement</p>	-	74 75 76
CA	AB 942 - CalFresh: Restaurant Meals Program	2019 – Ratified	<p>Establish a statewide Restaurant Meals Program</p> <p>*SNAP benefits can be used at qualified restaurants</p>	<p><b>No Evidence</b> There is no evidence evaluating the effect of having a statewide restaurant meals program, or evaluation of SNAP benefits being used for restaurants. For the vast majority of states, SNAP purchases in restaurants are limited to homeless, elderly and disabled individuals.</p>	Individuals may use restaurants as a crutch	77
CA	AB 526 - CalFresh: Enrollment: Institutions of Higher Education	2020 – Active Bill,	Establish outreach program for universities to provide students with information on applying for CalFresh	<p><b>Moderate Evidence</b> College students are in a vulnerable position with limited access to</p>	-	74 75 76

		pending referral		government assistance programs or they are unaware due to a lack of outreach and public information  <b>Strong Evidence</b> Streamlining processes for government assistance programs can be beneficial and is an area needing improvement		
CA	AB 292 - Pupil Nutrition: Free or Reduced-price Meals: Adequate time to Eat	2015 – No action, died	Establish adequate time to eat for students after being served and develop ways to increase their time to eat lunch	<b>Moderate Evidence</b> Students are presented with a limited amount of time to eat, but there is a gap in research indicating what measures would be best to improve this issue.	Tradeoff with limited instruction time or a longer school day	78 79
CA	AB 445 – Child day care facilities: nutrition	2015 – No action, died	Require State DSS to post specific information about reimbursement for child day care providers	<b>No Evidence</b> No evidence found to evaluate the reimbursement procedures or policies  <b>Moderate Evidence</b> CACFP can be beneficial for low-income children for increasing milk and vegetable consumption	-	80 81
CA	AB 1240 – Pupil Nutrition: Free or Reduced-Priced Meals: Breakfast	2015 – No action, died	Make nutritionally adequate breakfast available for all students if at least 40% are	<b>Strong Evidence</b> Universal school meals can increase participation for free-or-reduced eligible	May change educational outcomes	82 83 84

			enrolled at the school are classified as needy	and non-eligible populations. The evidence suggests the increased participation may be related to decreased stigma for eligible recipients, while the cost could be a determining factor for those exceeding the income guideline.		
CA	AB 1321 – Nutrition Incentive Matching Grant Program	2015 – Ratified	<p>Collect matching funds from a specified federal grant program and public/private sources to encourage the purchase and consumption of California fresh produce</p> <p>*Grants go to qualified consumer incentive entities</p>	<p><b>Moderate evidence</b> Placing emphasis on local purchasing can be effective, but the success hinges on policy implementation, the degree of outreach (<b>only 5% of SNAP participants successfully reached on average</b>), and feasibility for consumers (transportation, variety of foods offered, and amount of money through incentives).</p>	<p>Establishing standards (food safety &amp; insurance) could induce prohibitive costs for producers</p>	<p>47 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94</p>
CA	AB 2054 – Nutrition Assistance: Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer for Children	2016 – No action, died	Design and implement Summer EBT for children in eligible households	<p><b>Strong Evidence</b> Sufficient evidence suggesting summer EBT can effectively reduce food insufficiency</p> <p>*Still a pilot program</p>	Picking SNAP vs. WIC criteria for food purchasing may bring unintended results (increased food waste, increased sugar-sweetened beverage purchasing, etc.)	<p>95 96</p>

CA	AJR 35 - SNAP: Cash-out Policy	2016 – Chaptered	Alter federal cash-out policy to maximize benefits for newly eligible individuals and mitigate harm to low SES families who could be made ineligible for certain benefits under a program without the cash-out policy	<p><b>Moderate Evidence</b> This policy would allow more households to be eligible and receive benefits, however, some households would render as ineligible, and some households receiving benefits may receive less than they originally did</p> <p><b>Moderate Evidence</b> Cash-out policies are not better or worse than coupon/EBT equivalents, but they do carry specific benefits (the ability to spend on educational expenses or medical necessities)</p>	<p>High administrative costs to deliver the value of the benefits</p> <p>Seniors and vulnerable families may face barriers to applying for CalFresh (SNAP)</p>	97 98
CA	AJR 29 – Senior Nutrition Services and Programs: Funding	2014 – Chaptered	Request to Congress and the President of the United States to restore federal funding cuts to senior nutrition programs and exempt them from further budget cuts	<p><b>Moderate Evidence</b> Evidence shows senior nutrition programs can improve food access (reduction in food security), nutrition status (reduction in malnutrition), and bring alternate benefits (fall reduction, social/mental health aspects)</p>	Ineffective outreach may lower effectiveness of program	99 100 101

CA	AB 1872 – Child Day Care Facilities: Nutrition	2012 – Vetoed by Governor	Family day care homes required to provide meals and snacks that meet certain nutrition standards	<p><b>Weak Evidence</b> Policies at best create a modest positive change to nutrition for children</p> <p><b>Moderate Evidence</b> Nutrition in ECE (Early care and education) has improved over time, but still has room to grow</p>	Budget constraints meeting healthy standards	102 103
FL	HB 521 – School Food and Nutrition Services	2020 – No action, Ways & Means Committee	Provide tax credits for certain farmers, revise rate of reimbursement for free & reduced meals, removes exemption from requirement to implement free breakfast, provides funding for certain breakfast meals, allot additional reimbursement resources for school meals, and conduct food access study	<p><b>No Evidence</b> No evidence found for tax credits for farmers related to school nutrition. Only evidence for donation tax incentives.</p> <p><b>Strong Evidence</b> Universal school meals can increase participation for free-or-reduced eligible and non-eligible populations. The evidence suggests the increased participation may be related to decreased stigma for eligible recipients, while the cost could be a determining factor for those exceeding the income guideline.</p>	May not change educational outcomes	82 83 84 104 105 106

FL	HB 47 – SNAP Restrictions	2018 – No action, withdrawn	Requires DCF to request a waiver for prohibiting the purchase of soft drinks with SNAP benefits	<p><b>No Evidence</b> There is no evidence evaluating the effect of purchasing store brand items only.</p> <p><b>Weak Evidence</b> There is a lack of conclusive evidence suggesting prohibiting foods would be beneficial or harmful. One side of the argument has valid claims that efforts could be made to improve diets of SNAP recipients, yet the FNS noted serious concerns with implementation and feasibility.</p>	<p>Restrictions may not bring intended results due to informal workarounds</p> <p>Potential backlash from corporations for lower sales revenue</p>	107 108 109 110
FL	SM 1016/ HM 847 – SNAP Restrictions	2018 – No action, Children, Families, and Elder Affairs	Urges congress to prohibit the use of SNAP benefits for purchasing soft drinks	<p><b>No Evidence</b> There is no evidence evaluating the effect of purchasing store brand items only.</p> <p><b>Weak Evidence</b> There is a lack of conclusive evidence suggesting prohibiting foods would be beneficial or harmful. One side of the argument has valid claims that efforts could be made</p>	<p>Restrictions may not bring intended results due to informal workarounds</p> <p>Potential backlash from corporations for lower sales revenue</p>	107 108 109 110

				to improve diets of SNAP recipients, yet the FNS noted serious concerns with implementation and feasibility.		
FL	CS/HB 103/SB 284 – Transactions in Fresh Produce Markets	2016 – Ratified	Authorize certain operators of farmers’ markets, community farmers’ markets, etc. to accept EBT to improve SNAP usage	<b>Moderate evidence</b> Incentives, providing a broader range of healthy food instead of fresh food and education/cooking classes in conjunction are effective in purchasing of foods. This type of policy is strongly dependent on the successful outreach to participants. On average, 5% of SNAP participants are successfully reached.	Low or unsuccessful outreach  Transportation barriers for consumers	23 24 25 26 27 47
OH	Chapter 4000 – Special Program, Ohio Works Now	2017 – Effective	Provides additional food assistance benefits to SNAP assistance groups with minor children and employed parents to help offset the cost of being employed. This program is part of the temporary assistance for needy families program.	<b>Weak Evidence</b> Evidence shows that outreach of this program is poor, but the potential impact is high (similar to TANF)	Non-standardized application processes skew results	111
SC	HB 3250 – Fruit and Vegetable SNAP Grant Program	2019 – No action, in House Committee	Provide additional benefits to purchase more fresh fruits and vegetables at local grocery stores and farmers’ markets	<b>Moderate evidence</b> Incentives providing a broader range of healthy food instead of fresh food and education/cooking classes in conjunction are	Low or unsuccessful outreach	23 24 25 26 27 47

				effective in purchasing of foods. This type of policy is strongly dependent on the successful outreach to participants. On average, 5% of SNAP participants are successfully reached.		
SC	S 639/H 3322 – General Bill	2019 – No action, out of House Committee	General bill covering crime; section 43-5-1191 would exempt individuals from eligibility restriction related to drug convictions	<b>Strong Evidence</b> A ban on benefits for benefit programs such as SNAP may increase recidivism due to the lack of support outside of the penal system. A ban can negatively affect children and households. Full bans are strongly associated with negative effects, but modified bans are more flexible and come with varied results. However, Oregon and Minnesota state-sponsored support programs reduced recidivism by 83%.	Inconsistent policies may create confusion about benefits accessibility and eligibility	40 41 42 43
SC	H3314 – SNAP Drug Testing	2017 – No action, in House committee	Limits SNAP recipient from receiving benefit if tested positive for illegal drugs until an established period of time is over unless the individual has completed a substance abuse treatment program	<b>Strong Evidence</b> A ban on benefits for benefit programs such as SNAP may increase recidivism due to the lack of support outside of the penal system. A ban can negatively affect children	Inconsistent policies may create confusion about benefits accessibility and eligibility	40 41 42 43

				and households. Full bans are strongly associated with negative effects, but modified bans are more flexible and come with varied results. However, Oregon and Minnesota state-sponsored support programs reduced recidivism by 83%.		
SC	H 4237 – Child Hunger Resolution	2017 – Adopted	Encourage eligible schools to maximize access to healthy meals at no cost for children by adopting the Community Eligibility Provision of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act	<p><b>Moderate evidence</b> Analyses found purchasing fruits and vegetables in bulk was 17% cheaper than low-volume purchases. Lacks data on labor and meal production costs.</p> <p><b>Moderate evidence</b> Farm to school programs may positively affect local economies (job creation, increased purchase of local foods, etc.)</p>	<p>Depend on definition of healthy – students may not eat certain foods and contribute to increased food waste</p> <p>Variable costs for food (logistics and harvest seasons) depending on the geographic region</p>	112 113 114
SC	S 920 – SNAP Adjustment	2017 – No action, in Senate Committee	Prohibits DSS from applying for, seeking, accepting or renewing a waiver of work requirements for a person applying for or receiving SNAP benefits	<p><b>Moderate Evidence</b> While work requirements do result in a modest increase of employment, the increase comes at a notable loss. It is estimated only 1 out of 5 SNAP recipients losing benefits become employed. More</p>	<p>Actively searching for employment does not count as working</p> <p>Adversely affect populations in the greatest time of need (Great Recession)</p>	8 9 10 11 12

				than half a million SNAP recipients lost benefits over a four-year period (2013 to 2017). The distribution and usage of SNAP benefits can result in a 1.73-1.79 GDP equivalent, resulting in a relatively stronger economy.	College students are not exempt from ABAWD work requirements  Negatively affect local economies due to decreased spending	
SC	S 921 – SNAP Adjustment	2017 – No action, in Senate Committee	Requires an individual applying or reapplying for SNAP benefits to comply with DSS Child Support Services	<b>Weak Evidence</b> No evidence of the effectiveness for removal of SNAP based on child support. Evidence suggest child support increases over time as the parent’s ability to pay increases. Further evidence suggests support from assistance programs can increase the amount of child support given. Non-custodial parents may face notable barriers preventing them from making child support payments; reducing their food security will likely have more detrimental effects than overall benefits.	May negatively affect informal child support arrangements	18 19 20 21 22
SC	S 922 – SNAP Adjustment	2017, No action, in	Prohibits DSS from setting stricter financial limits than	<b>Moderate Evidence</b>	-	65 66

		Senate Committee	federal limits to determine eligibility for SNAP benefits	Asset tests increase churning, limit financial security & credit of recipients, and limit the total amount of potential recipients.		
SC	H 4409 – SNAP Requirements	2016 – No action, in House Committee	Establish definitional terms, eligibility requirements, limit the allowable time for SNAP benefits for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD) to 36 months, require, require ABAWDs to receive employment training	<p><b>Weak Evidence</b> Little to no evidence supporting further restrictions on ABAWD policy is effective. However, reasonable evidence shows that this type of policy restricts access for participants.</p> <p><b>Moderate Evidence</b> Evidence shows SNAP E&amp;T can be effective if the staff members are invested, willing to expand services to meet the needs of participants, can overcome dropout rates and are robust (subsidized employment, education opportunities, job search assistance, offer professional certificates). SNAP E&amp;T participants face notable barriers (health issues, lack of transportation and</p>	SNAP E&T staff turnover  High incompleteness rates of employment training	51 52 53 54 55 56 57

				education) that may be a root cause of their socioeconomic status.		
SC	H 4410 – SNAP Waivers	2016 – No action, in House Committee	Allows DSS to apply for SNAP waivers that promote nutritious diets (including waivers that restrict allowable food choices)	<p><b>Moderate evidence</b> Incentives providing a broader range of healthy food instead of fresh food and education/cooking classes in conjunction are effective in purchasing of foods. This type of policy is strongly dependent on the successful outreach to participants. On average, 5% of SNAP participants are successfully reached.</p> <p><b>Weak Evidence</b> There is a lack of conclusive evidence suggesting prohibiting foods would be beneficial or harmful. One side of the argument has valid claims that efforts could be made to improve diets of SNAP recipients, yet the FNS noted serious concerns with implementation and feasibility.</p>	Low or unsuccessful outreach  Restrictions may not bring intended results due to informal workarounds	23 24 25 26 27 47 107 108 109 110
SC	H 4411 – SNAP Purchase Limitations	2016 – No action, in	Require SNAP recipients to purchase food or drink items	<p><b>No Evidence</b> There is no evidence evaluating the effect of</p>	Restrictions may not bring intended results	107 108 109

		House Committee	that are store brand only with SNAP benefits	<p>purchasing store brand items only.</p> <p><b>Weak Evidence</b> There is a lack of conclusive evidence suggesting prohibiting foods would be beneficial or harmful. One side of the argument has valid claims that efforts could be made to improve diets of SNAP recipients, yet the FNS noted serious concerns with implementation and feasibility.</p>	<p>due to informal workarounds</p> <p>Potential backlash from corporations for lower sales revenue</p>	110
TX	HB 251 - SNAP Eligibility Exclusions	2019 – No action, pending in committee	Excludes select resources when determining eligibility for SNAP (liquid resources, assets in a school-based account, motor vehicle ownership)	<p><b>Moderate Evidence</b> Asset tests increase churning, limit financial security &amp; credit of recipients, and limit the total amount of potential recipients.</p>	-	65 66
TX	HB 285 - SNAP Work Requirements & Employment Training (E&T)	2019 – No action, considered in calendars	An individual between the ages of 18 and 50 without dependents and a disability must receive SNAP employment and training services unless they have a waiver	<p><b>Moderate Evidence</b> Evidence shows SNAP E&amp;T can be effective if the staff members are invested, willing to expand services to meet the needs of participants, can overcome dropout rates and are robust (subsidized employment, education</p>	<p>SNAP E&amp;T staff turnover</p> <p>High incompleteness of employment training</p>	51 52 53 54 55 56

				opportunities, job search assistance, offer professional certificates). SNAP E&T participants face notable barriers (health issues, lack of transportation and education) that may be a root cause of their socioeconomic status.		
TX	HB 1218/ SB 582 – SNAP Distribution	2019 – Ratified	Establish a standard schedule for SNAP benefits to be evenly distributed each month	<p><b>Strong Evidence</b> Reasonable evidence shows SNAP participants are more likely to experience periods of no eating or limited eating within a monthly cycle due to bulk purchasing early in the cycle.</p> <p>*Strong evidence, but does need future research to analyze dietary and purchasing behavior of SNAP recipients</p>	-	115 116
TX	HB 1250/ SB 671 – EBT Cards	2019 – No action, referred to Human Services	Requires the card to display the name, and a photograph of the SNAP recipient; display the Fraud hotline number; display the website address for fraud	<p><b>Moderate Evidence</b> Lack of evidence indicating a photograph on an EBT card is effective, reduces fraud or acts as intended. The FNS has rigorous quality control leading to improved</p>	Extra barrier that may not act as intended – most cashiers do not request to look at the photo for debit/credit cards	117 118 119

			*Photograph may be exempt under certain conditions	eligibility accuracy, payment accuracy, reduction in fraud cases and benefits trafficking as well as stores allowing trafficking. Fraud reduction should use a system approach rather than blaming one particular party as fraudulent activity is multifactorial.	Extra expense to take photos and adequately print them on cards	
TX	HB 1483 – SNAP Self-Sufficiency Pilot Program	2019 – Ratified	Pilot program designed to help eligible SNAP recipients with obtaining employment, reducing debt-to-income ratio, and implement a graduated program to develop self-sufficiency	<b>Moderate Evidence</b> Evidence shows SNAP E&T can be effective if the staff members are invested, willing to expand services to meet the needs of participants, can overcome dropout rates and are robust (subsidized employment, education opportunities, job search assistance, offer professional certificates). SNAP E&T participants face notable barriers (health issues, lack of transportation and education) that may be a root cause of their socioeconomic status.	SNAP E&T staff turnover  High incompleteness rates	51 52 53 54 55 56 120

				*This Texas program has high potential and plans to wean participants off SNAP benefits instead of automatic disqualification when earning a certain salary/wage		
TX	HB 2335/ SB 981 – Disaster SNAP	2019 – Ratified	Establish points of contact, plan of action, roles & responsibilities of D-SNAP in the event of an emergency	<b>Strong Evidence</b> The Food Research & Action Center highlight the key steps and stakeholders required to streamline application and distribution in order to mitigate potential damages from both a natural disaster and pandemic. For proper implementation, a strategy is required to effectively meet the needs of the people. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic, Hurricane Katrina, Matthew, Harvey, Florence and more have proven the importance of disaster safety nets.	-	121 122
TX	HB 3524 – Simplified SNAP Recertification	2019 – No action, referred to Human Services	Allows an individual to complete recertification requirements through telephone instead of in-person	<b>Strong Evidence</b> Streamlining and simplifying applications and recertifications for participants can increase participation rates.	Online systems have high startup costs	58 59 60 61

				Allowing remote application can remove logistical barriers preventing participants from reapplying. Remote certification can result in more flexible certification timing.		
TX	HB 3541/SB 1834 – Texas-Grown Produce SNAP Pilot Program	2019 – Ratified	Pilot program to incentivize the purchase of Texas-grown fruits and vegetables with SNAP benefits	<b>Moderate evidence</b> Placing emphasis on local purchasing can be effective, but the success hinges on policy implementation, the degree of outreach (only 5% of SNAP participants successfully reached on average), and feasibility for consumers (transportation, variety of foods offered, and amount of money through incentives).	Establishing standards (food safety & insurance) could induce prohibitive costs for producers  Local foods are dependent on the season	47 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94
TX	HB 4364 – SNAP Purchase Limitations	2019 – No action, referred to Human Services	Prohibit the purchase of energy drinks, milk products, sweetened beverages, candy, potato/corn chips, and cookies	<b>Weak Evidence</b> There is a lack of conclusive evidence suggesting prohibiting foods would be beneficial or harmful. One side of the argument has valid claims that efforts could be made to improve diets of SNAP recipients, yet the FNS noted serious concerns	No clear standards on healthy food  Restrictions may not bring intended results due to informal workarounds  Increased cost of burden for stores and the USDA/FNS for	107 108 109 110

				with implementation and feasibility.  *As a response, USDA/FNS has funded several studies looking at healthy food access instead of prohibiting select foods.	successful implementation	
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<b>Table III: Programs, Initiatives &amp; Organizations in the United States</b>					
<b>Program Title</b>	<b>Agency or Organization</b>	<b>Key Text</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Source</b>
Technology Improvement Grants	Food and Nutrition Service - USDA	Grants to improve efficiency and customer service of agencies administering SNAP  *FNS normally gives these grants out each year with different agencies.	<p>Florida Department of Children and Families, Economic Self-Sufficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchased software to improve data entry and application processes</li> <li>• Developed video for those who are deaf and hard of hearing</li> </ul> <p>Oklahoma Department of Human Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved technology for mobile device use, allowing for on-location and remote usage to speed up applications</li> </ul> <p>Oregon Department of Human Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded Employment and Training services in new locations and created partnerships to serve current and former military service members, and Native Americans.</li> </ul> <p>Steuben County Department of Social Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased access in a rural county by creating more workstations</li> </ul>	Successfully receiving the grant over other agencies	123
FINI (Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive) Grant Program	Food and Nutrition Service; National Institute of Food and Agriculture - USDA	Incentivize fruit and vegetable purchasing by SNAP recipients	<p>Wholesome Wave Georgia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide local produce through Georgia Fresh for Less incentive Program, and develop “e-incentive” technology to improve access to other sites</li> </ul> <p>The Arkansas Coalition for Obesity Prevention</p>	-	124 125 126

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double Up Food Bucks Program designed to match SNAP recipients for fruit and vegetable purchases</li> </ul> <p>Fresh Bucks EBT Incentive Program (North Carolina)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase number of local markets where SNAP can be used</li> <li>• Use effective outreach methods to improve fruit and vegetable purchases (partnership with farmers markets and grocery stores)</li> </ul> <p>Financial Incentives to Encourage Fruit and Vegetable Consumption by SNAP Recipients across North Carolina</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Match funds for SNAP recipients purchasing fruit and vegetables up to \$40 at Food Lion</li> </ul>		
Meals-to-You	Meals-to-You	Deliver 20 food boxes (10 breakfast, 10 lunch) to students while schools are closed from COVID-19	<p>Successfully shipped boxes to 15 states during COVID-19. 20 states are currently enrolling to receive food.</p> <p>A box provides a balanced nutritional profile for students such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protein: Milk, Hummus, Chicken Salad, Cheese</li> <li>• Whole Grains: Tortilla chips, Oatmeal Bars, Cereal</li> <li>• Vegetables: Salsa cup, Marinara Cup, 100% Vegetable Juice</li> <li>• Fruit: Applesauce, Raisins, Fruit Cup, 100% Fruit Juice</li> </ul>	<p>Managing applications</p> <p>Logistics with delivery and school districts</p>	127
SNAP Online Pilot Program	SNAP Program - USDA	Allow online purchasing of food to SNAP households	Currently, Alabama, Arizona, California, Iowa, Nebraska, New York, Oregon and Washington participate in online SNAP. The retailers include Amazon and Walmart along with several smaller chains (e.g., ShopRite).	Each state SNAP program presents unique challenges –	128

				difficult to standardize	
Food and Nutrition Services Employment and Training Program	NCDHHS & NCDSS	Creates opportunities to secure jobs and acquire a livable wage	<p>Operates in 13 counties and established 9 partnerships for 2020 (NC Community College Systems Office, Goodwill of Southern Piedmont, Green Opportunities, Goodwill of Northwest NC, Goodwill of Central NC).</p> <p>This program has a 50-50 reimbursement; reimbursing 50% of SNAP E&amp;T Funds to financially support it.</p> <p>The program is looking to expand by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a case management system</li> <li>• Partner with counties offering realistic work, job training and apprenticeships</li> <li>• Building a stronger network/partnership</li> <li>• Expanding the partnership with the community college system</li> </ul>	Reliant on steady and worthwhile jobs in all 100 counties of North Carolina to meet the needs of the people	129
SNAP/FNS Employment and Training Programs (E&T) – North Carolina	SNAP; Food and Nutrition Service – USDA	Assist participants with finding a job, developing marketable skills and acquiring apprenticeships to get a sustainable job	<p>Buncombe County</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long-term countywide partnerships allow flexibility in job opportunities for participants. The program is identifying apprenticeships that pay while working to allow participants greater security.</li> </ul> <p>Chatham County</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant reimbursement for transportation and childcare promote flexibility for participants. Chatham County notes communication is vital (coordination, networks, and other programs like WIOA).</li> </ul> <p>Moore County</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant reimbursement for transportation and childcare promote flexibility for participants.</li> </ul>	<p>Participants are ineligible for SNAP benefits after receiving a job</p> <p>Childcare may be unsustainable</p> <p>Maintaining retention of participants</p>	130

			<p>Partnership with NC Works brought in additional resources.</p> <p>Wilson County</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participant reimbursement for transportation and childcare promote flexibility for participants. Outreach and establishing partnerships was the most important step for having employers that participants could work for.</li> </ul>		
Team Nutrition Training Grant for Innovate State Training Programs	Food and Nutrition Service – USDA	Grants to support state agencies in expanding state-developed training programs trying to improve school meal quality	<p>Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement culturally relevant training to 400 school nutrition professionals over 39 school sites using live training. Program will assess meal quality and acceptability with photographs and student surveys. Meal nutrition assessment will be identified with the Healthy Eating Index.</li> </ul> <p>Montana Office of Public Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand Montana Cook Fresh Institute Pilot Program to reach 20 underserved school food authorities. Training will be provided to school nutrition directors, managers, and culinary specific training to school nutrition staff. Supplemental training will be delivered for procuring foods and improving perceptions of school meals. Evaluations are set after implementation: culinary training evaluations, meal quality implementation, a School Meal Quality Assessment Tool and using student focus groups.</li> </ul> <p>Pennsylvania Department of Education</p>	-	131

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand piloted culinary training program and project PA Mentoring Program to train 150 school food service directors. Additionally, Pennsylvania will provide sub-grants to 20 schools for further culinary training. This program will use a mixed-methods evaluation: surveys, interviews, and menu assessment.</li> </ul> <p>Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand Goal Oriented Achievement Learning Skills training certificate program to train 180 school nutrition professionals and 60 underserved school food authorities. This program will evaluate its effectiveness: staff training assessments, student surveys, participation rates and assessing production records.</li> </ul>		
Team Nutrition E-STAR Training Grants for State Agencies	Food and Nutrition Service - USDA	Support state agency implementation of job training programs to improve the quality of school meals through the E-STAR training program	Michigan Department of Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement E-STAR Training Program to help school nutrition managers with developing goals, implementing action plans, and evaluating the outcomes.</li> </ul>	-	132
USDA WIC Telehealth Innovations Project	Tufts University; USDA	Test and evaluate telehealth for the WIC Program	Tufts University will test and evaluate telehealth's effectiveness for WIC, and they will award state agencies to implement telehealth.	Dependent on the IT infrastructure of each WIC department/c clinic	133
FY 2017 WIC Special Project Grants	Food and Nutrition	Full and Mini Grants to support WIC state agencies to develop,	Arizona eWIC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver nutrition education online and use EBT to reduce the burden for recipients</li> </ul>	IT barriers for Chatbot and	134

	Service - USDA	implement and evaluate new methods of service	<p>Educating Partners in the Delivery of WIC Secondary Nutrition Education (Arkansas)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide at home nutrition education, lactation education and breastfeeding nutrition education to new mothers through the Arkansas STAR Health maternal home visiting program</li> </ul> <p>Chat with WIC: Innovating WIC Services with a Chatbot (Texas)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a WIC Chatbot to give participants 24/7 communication about eligibility and the Chatbot can make appointments automatically for a recipient</li> </ul> <p>Optimizing WIC Nutrition Services in Collaboration with South Dakota State University Expansion: Cooking Class Curriculum for WIC Participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create focused nutrition education classes to improve cooking skills and nutrition knowledge</li> </ul>	preventing glitches/accidents	
Mobile Technology for Child Nutrition Innovation Laboratory	Food and Nutrition Service - USDA	Develop mobile technology-based solutions to improve services, particularly solutions integrating behavioral economics	Lack of follow-up information, awardees, or projects.	-	135
Summer Food for Children Demonstrations	Food and Nutrition Service - USDA	Develop and test methods for improving food access for low-income children	<p><b>The Enhanced Summer Food Service Program</b></p> <p>Results shows mixed results. Participation increased in certain states and may have reached an audience that previously lacked food access, but limited information on the difference in food security for participants.</p> <p>Extending Length of Operative Incentive</p>	Traditional WIC benefit redemption system limited	136 137 138 139

		during the summer months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50 cents compensation per lunch served to extend length of school food operations</li> </ul> <p>Activity Incentive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offered grants to fund recreational activities to achieve a higher participation</li> </ul> <p>Meal Delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivered breakfast and lunch to homes or near local drop-off sites</li> </ul> <p>Backpack demonstration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided food packs with meals to children for consumption when SFSP sites were unavailable</li> </ul> <p><b>Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer for Children</b>  Provided monthly benefits to children (who were eligible for free or reduced-price meals) under the SNAP or WIC program. The Study compared the impact of \$30 and \$60.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing benefits lowered the prevalence of very low food security and food insecurity at comparable rates, however, providing \$60 had a larger impact (3.6% difference).</li> <li>• EBT resulted in higher redemption than the traditional WIC model.</li> <li>• Families bought more fruits and vegetables and whole grains with the \$60 benefits group compared to the \$30 benefits group.</li> <li>• Participants redeeming benefits under the WIC model had a stronger impact on child nutrition, likely due to the stricter standards.</li> </ul>	participants' usage	
Healthy Incentives Pilot (HIP)	Food and Nutrition Service – USDA	Test and evaluate the impact of financial incentives for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HIP participants consumed more fruits and vegetables compared to nonparticipants (26%).</li> </ul>	Large cost was the startup cost (design and	140

		healthy foods at the point-of-sale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retailers reported no difficulty working with the pilot program and increased their supply as a response to increased demand.</li> </ul>	developing an adequate system for EBT)	
Child Nutrition Program, Inc.	Child Nutrition Program, Inc.	Prevent child hunger and support childcare providers – sponsor of CACFP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide more than 24,000 meals per day across 40 counties in North Carolina</li> <li>• Assist childcare providers with funding eligibility</li> <li>• Ensure providers are compliant with regulations</li> <li>• Provide training to providers</li> </ul>	-	141
Meal Services Program	Child Care Services Association	Provides two meals and one snack per day to children enrolled in child care centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchasing in bulk allows centers to purchase food at reasonable rates</li> </ul>	Outreach should be conducted for areas with high food insecurity	142
Eat Smart, Move More Movement	Eat Smart, Move More North Carolina; NC State SNAP-Ed	Statewide movement trying to promote a healthy lifestyle	Use a multi-faceted evidenced-based approach along with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and surveillance system data to address overweight and obesity	-	143
Steps to Health	NC State SNAP-ed	Help participants make healthy choices with their financial constraints and promote physical activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2015, Steps to Health reached more than 8,500 participants across 66 counties in North Carolina</li> <li>• Fruit and vegetable consumption increased between pre and post program implementation</li> <li>• Targets policy, system and environmental changes to positive impact participants</li> </ul>	-	144
SNAP-Ed Connection	Food and Nutrition Service – USDA	Improve communication and connections among SNAP-Ed programs	Program used by SNAP-Ed staff to share information, best practices and how to better the program. Additionally, this program offers training and resources (photographs, recipes, evaluation tools).	-	145

Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)	FMNP; WIC; Food and Nutrition Service – USDA	Provide incentives for shopping at farmers markets to increase fruit and vegetable consumption	In 2017, nearly 17,000 farmers participated (3,300 farmers' markets and 2300 roadside stands).	Locations may be out of the way for participants	146
Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)	SFMNP; Food and Nutrition Service	Improve access to food for low-income seniors	In 2017, nearly 19,000 farmers participated (3,6000 farmers' markets, 2500 roadside stands and 94 CSAs).	Locations may be out of the way for participants	147
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)	FFVP; Food and Nutrition Service	Provide fresh produce to eligible children in elementary school	Schools are reimbursed \$50 to \$75 per student for each school year the student participates. The program increased fruit and vegetable consumption by 0.32 cups compared to students who did not participate in the program. Schools participating in the program provided more nutrition education, healthy lifestyle promotion and activities.	The program did not lower consumption of less nutritious foods for students participating in the program	148

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<b>Table IV: Organizations, Programs &amp; Contacts</b>			
<b>Organization</b>	<b>Work</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Partnerships</b>
Food and Nutrition Service	All federal and state food and nutrition programs  Meals-to-you	Headquarters <a href="https://www.fns.usda.gov/contact-us">https://www.fns.usda.gov/contact-us</a>  FNS National Office Contacts <a href="https://www.fns.usda.gov/fns-national-office">https://www.fns.usda.gov/fns-national-office</a>  FNS Regional Offices Contacts <a href="https://www.fns.usda.gov/fns-regional-offices">https://www.fns.usda.gov/fns-regional-offices</a>	Meals-to-you <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USDA</li> <li>• Baylor University Collaborative on Hunger and Poverty</li> <li>• McLane Global</li> <li>• PepsiCo</li> </ul>
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services	SNAP	<p>Connie Dixon SNAP-Ed Program Coordinator 919-527-6319</p> <p>Ann Rollins Poe Center Executive Director 919-231-4006 Ext. 302 <a href="mailto:a.rollins@poehealth.org">a.rollins@poehealth.org</a></p> <p>Rachel Pohlman, MPH, RD, LDN Poe Center Nutrition and Physical Activity Director 919-231-4006 Ext. 314 <a href="mailto:r.pohlman@poehealth.org">r.pohlman@poehealth.org</a></p> <p>Henrietta Zalkind Down East Partnership for Children Executive Director 252-985-4300 Ext. 209 <a href="mailto:hzalkind@depc.org">hzalkind@depc.org</a></p> <p>Debra Lanham Down East Partnership for Children R&amp;D Director 252-985-4300 Ext. 240 <a href="mailto:dlanham@depc.org">dlanham@depc.org</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alice Aycock Poe Center for Health Education</li> <li>• Down East Partnership for Children</li> <li>• Durham County Health Department</li> <li>• East Carolina University</li> <li>• NC A&amp;T University</li> <li>• NC State University</li> <li>• Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest NC</li> <li>• University of North Carolina Chapel Hill</li> <li>• University of North Carolina Greensboro</li> </ul>

	<p>Barbara Rumer Durham County Health Department Community Nutrition Program Manager 919-560-7789</p> <p>Suzanne Lazoricks East Carolina University <a href="mailto:lazoricks@ecu.edu">lazoricks@ecu.edu</a></p> <p>Carinthia Cherry NC A&amp;T University <a href="mailto:cacherry@ncat.edu">cacherry@ncat.edu</a></p> <p>Lindsey Haynes-Maslow, Ph.D., MHA Assistant Professor &amp; Extension Specialist NC State University <a href="mailto:lmmaslow@ncsu.edu">lmmaslow@ncsu.edu</a></p> <p>Jayne McBurney, MS Program Coordinator <a href="mailto:Jayne_mcburney@ncsu.edu">Jayne_mcburney@ncsu.edu</a></p> <p>Kina Charles Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest NC <a href="mailto:kcharles@secondharvest.org">kcharles@secondharvest.org</a></p> <p>Daniella Uslan Food, Fitness, and Opportunity Research Collaborative University of North Carolina Chapel Hill <a href="mailto:Daniella.uslan@unc.edu">Daniella.uslan@unc.edu</a></p> <p>Arthur Murphy Recipe for Success</p>	
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		University of North Carolina Greensboro <a href="mailto:admurhpy@uncg.edu">admurhpy@uncg.edu</a>	
Nutrition Services Branch – NC DHHS: DPH	WIC WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program CACFP	WIC Program 919-707-5800  WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program 919-707-5800  CACFP 919-707-5799	-
Child Care Services Association	Meal Services Program	Child Care Services Association 919-967-3272  Marsha Basloe President <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/in/marsha-basloe-858a447/">https://www.linkedin.com/in/marsha-basloe-858a447/</a>  Linda Chappel Sr. Vice President, Triangle Area Child Care Resource and Referral Services <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/in/lindachappel/">https://www.linkedin.com/in/lindachappel/</a>	-
Eat Smart Move More North Carolina	Eat Smart Move More North Carolina	ESMM NC Directory <a href="https://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/directory/index.php">https://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/directory/index.php</a>  ESMM NC Coordinator <a href="mailto:info@EatSmartMoveMoreNC.com">info@EatSmartMoveMoreNC.com</a>	Partnerships listed in directory

## COVID-19 Waivers & Flexibilities

Table V: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program <sup>1,2,3,4,5,6</sup>		
Request	Primary Function	States
SNAP Flexibility for Quality Control Interviews	Allow states to conduct quality control telephone interviews instead of in-person	CA, FL, NC, SC, TX
QC Case Review Extension	Extend deadline for quality control cases	CA, FL, NC, SC, TX
Adjustments to Interview Requirements	FNS will allow three adjustments: not requiring household to complete an interview prior to approval if the applicant is verified; not offering in-person interview to any household application or recertification; not requiring households eligible for expedited service to complete an interview if the applicant's identify is verified	CA, FL, NC, OH, SC, TX
Emergency Allotments to Current SNAP Households	Emergency allotments to SNAP households in North Carolina. This increases the household's current monthly benefits to the maximum monthly benefit for a household of that size. SNAP recipients receiving the maximum amount remain unchanged.	CA, FL, NC, OH, SC, TX
Extended Certification Periods; Waive Periodic	Approval to extend certification periods and adjust periodic reporting requirements for ongoing SNAP participants – may extend certification for households scheduled to expire in March, April or May 2020 for 6 more months	CA, FL, NC, OH, TX
Telephonic Signature	Allows SNAP applicants to verbally agree as a telephonic signature when signing the application	CA
Suspend Student Eligibility Rules	Waive restrictions on student eligibility; provide emergency allotments that exceed the maximum monthly amount for a household size  *waiving State responsibility to reduce or terminate benefits when a household is ineligible; expediting all applications; waive requirements to use documentary evidence as primary source of verification; waive requirements to verify gross non-exempt income	Mass Denial
Exclude Unearned Income	Exclude unearned income for eligibility of SNAP applicants	Denied CA, OH
Suspend Claim Collection	Suspend collection for SNAP overpayments and delinquency determination for households affected by the suspension  *Alleviate financial burden caused by COVID-19	NC
Temporary Suspension of claims	Suspend certain SNAP regulations to promote flexibility with establishing or disposing new claims; not requiring active collection of SNAP overpayments	NC, OH, SC, TX

	and not classifying delayed payments from the suspension as delinquency	
Pandemic EBT	Temporary assistance program for households (SNAP and non-SNAP recipients) with children who are affected by school closures from COVID-19.	CA, FL, NC, OH, SC, TX
Suspend In-Person Application Submission; Suspend In-Person Verification Submission	Allows individuals to apply through: online portals, mobile applications, mail, telephone or fax.	OH
Suspension of IEVS	Suspend the Income and Eligibility Verification System for ongoing SNAP households	CA, OH
Waive Fair Hearing Timelines	Allow state flexibility with fair hearing timeframes.	NC, OH

**Table VI: Child Nutrition Programs**<sup>1,2,3,4,5,6</sup>

Request	Primary Function	States
Summer Meals Non-congregate Feeding	Allows Summer Food Service Program and National School Lunch Program Seamless Summer Option sponsors to serve meals in a non-congregate setting as well as at schools closed by COVID-19.	CA, FL, NC, OH, SC, TX
Meal Times	Waive meal service time requirements to best fit local populations.	Nationwide
Non-congregate Feeding	Allow National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program and Summer Food Service Program to serve meals outside of the normal setting as a result of COVID-19.	Nationwide
Afterschool Activity	Allows serving afterschool snacks and meals outside of a structured environment and without an educational purpose.	Nationwide
Nationwide Meal Pattern Waiver	Waives requirements serving meals that meet the meal pattern requirements during a public health emergency.	FL, NC, OH, SC, TX
Nationwide Parent/Guardian Meal Pickup Waiver	Allows parents/guardians to pick up meals for their children from schools without requiring the child	CA, FL, NC, OH, SC
Nationwide Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Data Waiver	Extends Community Eligibility Provision deadline for the 2020-2021 school year including election, notification and reporting.	CA, FL, NC, OH, SC
CACFP Sponsor Monitoring Requirements Waiver	Waives monitoring requirements for NSLP, NSBP, CACFP and SFSP.	CA, FL, NC, OH, SC, TX
Area Eligibility SFSP/SSO	Maintain food access for children through school meals, lift restrictions on site eligibility requirements, and waive requirement for open sites so they no longer have to be in an area where 50% or more of NSLP participants are eligible for free or reduced lunch	CA, FL, NC, OH, SC, TX
60 Day Reporting Waiver	Reimbursement deadline extension for all state agencies, school food authorities and organizations –	CA, FL, NC, OH, SC, TX

	applies to NSLP, NSBP, CACFP and SFSP (Summer Food Service Program)	
SFSP/SSO Meal Service Times (Regular Summer)	Waivers meal time restrictions in the SFSP and SSO (National School Lunch Program Seamless Summer Option)	FL, NC, SC, TX
SFSP Offer Versus Serve (Regular Summer)	Waive requirements for OVS (Offer Versus Serve) for School Food Authorities operating as SFSP sponsors to ease menu planning, food procurement and food waste.	FL, NC, TX
SFSP First Week Site Visits (Regular Summer)	Waives initial site visit requirement for SFSP sponsors – applies to sponsors in good standing that have successfully participated in CACFP or NSLP prior.	CA, FL, NC, TX
SFSP/SSO Closed Enrolled Sites (Regular Summer)	Waive requirements on participant income eligibility applications (determine if 50% of children are eligible for free or reduced lunch) for SFSP and SSO.	CA, FL, NC, OH, SC, TX
Local School Wellness Policy Triennial Assessment	Waives requirements for triennial assessment of local school wellness policies if schools are unable to finish them due to COVID-19.	CA, FL, NC, SC, TX
Food Service Management Company Contract	Waives food service management company contract requirements for state agencies, school food authorities and SFSP sponsors – companies may use an emergency noncompetitive procurement to get an extension	CA, FL, NC, SC, TX
Extended Unanticipated School Closures	Removes limitations of SSO and SFSP operations during unanticipated school closures from October through April to create a smoother transition to traditional summer options	CA, FL, NC, SC, TX
Child and Adult Care Food Program Reimbursement Rate	Provides extension with previously approved applications, but child care centers must still comply with eligibility requirements	FL, NC
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Parent Pickup	Allows parents to pick up FFVP foods for their children	CA, TX
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program at Alternate Sites	Allows FFVP foods to be distributed from non-elementary school sites	CA

**Table VII: USDA Foods Programs**<sup>1,2,3,4,5,6</sup>

<b>Request</b>	<b>Primary Function</b>	<b>States</b>
Disaster Household Distribution	Approves USDA Foods from TEFAP (The Emergency Food Assistance Program) to be used during COVID-19.  *Can not serve more than 225,000 individuals over a 30-day period. Larger households can receive additional food packages.	NC, OH

Entitlement Waiver for SY 20-21	Allows states to use the previous school year data for number on lunches served to decide what the state is entitled to for financial backing.	NC, OH
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<b>Table VIII: WIC Program</b> <sup>1,2,3,4,5,6</sup>		
<b>Request</b>	<b>Primary Function</b>	<b>States</b>
Physical Presence Waiver (includes lab work)	Grants WIC clinics ability to waive the physical presence requirement (including anthropometry and bloodwork) to reduce the risk during the COVID-19 epidemic.	CA, FL, NC, OH, SC, TX
Medical Documentation Waiver	Waivers medical documentation to allow participants up to 2 months of benefits, but does not apply for new applicants	FL, TX
Minimum Stock	Waives minimum stock requirement for authorized WIC vendors.	OH, SC
Remote Benefit Issuance Waiver	Allows WIC clinics to remotely issue benefits to any participant, guardian or proxy if the participant is scheduled for a nutrition education or already has a subsequent certification appointment.	CA, FL, NC, SC, TX
Four Month Issuance Waiver	Allows WIC agencies to issue four months of benefits at once.	OH, TX
Separation of Duties	Removes limitation so a single employee can determine eligibility for all certification criteria and issuing benefits for a recipient	FL, OH, TX
Rollover Benefits	Allows or allows benefits to rollover into a subsequent month	Denied FL
Food Package Substitution Waiver	Allows certain substitutions for products: participants can substitute milk for any fat content, participants can purchase whole grains in package sizes up to 24 oz when 16 oz are unavailable, participants can substitute juice container sizes if they are 100% fruit or vegetable juices.	CA, FL, NC, OH, SC, TX
Compliance Investigations	Waives requirement of compliance investigations on at least 5% of participating vendors.	CA, NC, SC
Routine Monitoring	Waives routine monitoring requirement of a minimum of 5% of the number of vendors authorized to survey the level of fraud and errors	CA
Extended Certification	Approves extension for certification period for a child receiving Food Package IV category  *Does not approve for pregnant women, infants or children receiving Food Package III – transition periods are times when the participant is “medically fragile”	CA, FL, NC
Extension of approve Waivers	Extends waiver approvals through June 30 <sup>th</sup> for all WIC state agencies.	CA, FL, NC, OH, SC, TX

Non-Retail 2 Month Issuance	Allows WIC agencies to issue two months of exempt infant formula.	FL, SC
Local Agency Monitoring	Postpones onsite monitoring reviews of local agencies.	CA, FL, OH, SC, TX
FMNP Training	Allows initial training of farmers and farmers' market managers to be remote.	NC, OH, SC
Vendor Onsite Preauthorization	Postpones an onsite visit prior to a vendor's initial authorization	CA, OH

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<b>Table IX: Natural Disaster Federal Food Assistance Program Waivers &amp; Flexibilities</b> <sup>7,8,9,10,11,12</sup>		
<b>State</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Action</b>
CA	California Power Outages	<p>SNAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waiver allowed 60% of replacement for one-month of benefits lost from power outages.</li> </ul> <p>Child Nutrition Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inability to meet meal requirements and food spoilage caused FNS to approve waiver for school food authorities to serve meals that do not meet meal pattern requirements.</li> </ul>
CA	California Earthquake	<p>Child Nutrition Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waiver allowed flexibility in meal patten requirements for school food authorities and the SSO affected by earthquakes.</li> </ul>
CA	Camp, Hill and Woolsey Fires	<p>D-SNAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approved D-SNAP in select zip codes and counties.</li> </ul> <p>SNAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approved waiver for affected counties to make a request for SNAP benefit replacements and allow hot foods to be purchased at SNAP authorized retailers.</li> </ul> <p>DHD (Disaster Household Distribution Program)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Served up to 8,000 people with food boxes for nearly two weeks.</li> </ul> <p>Child Nutrition Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allowed serving meals that do not meet requirements and reimburse those meals.</li> </ul>
CA	Carr Wildfire	<p>SNAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allowed hot foods to be purchased with SNAP benefits, replacement benefits without having to appear at a local SNAP office and signing an affidavit.</li> </ul> <p>Child Nutrition Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disaster waivers allowed affected schools to claim all school lunch and breakfast meals at the Free Reimbursement Rate. Also allowed flexibility with SFSP and site location to increase food access.</li> </ul>

CA	Wildfires and Mudslides	<p>SNAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waived 10-day reporting requirement for SNAP regulations. Issued mass 60% SNAP benefit replacement for select zip codes. Also approved D-SNAP due to combined effect from multiple wildfires and mudslides in a short time-period. Allowed purchasing of hot foods with SNAP benefits.</li> </ul>
FL	Hurricane Michael	<p>D-SNAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approved D-SNAP for select counties.</li> </ul> <p>SNAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approved waiver allowing affected SNAP households to purchase hot foods and items with SNAP benefits.</li> <li>• Mass replacement waiver to help mitigate food loss from Hurricane Michael.</li> </ul> <p>Child Nutrition Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Florida’s Major Disaster Declaration caused waiver approval for CACFP to serve meals that do not meet the program requirements. Allowed select counties to provide reimbursable school meals.</li> </ul>
FL	Hurricane Irma	<p>SNAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approved disaster household distribution program for 39 counties after a Presidential Declared Emergency. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Served approximately 296,000 households for up to 4 weeks with a 25-30 pound food package.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Waived SNAP regulations to allow purchase of hot foods and hot ready-to-eat foods with SNAP benefits, extended certification periods and waived periodic reporting requirements.</li> <li>• Approved Evacuee Policy (similar to Texas).</li> <li>• Mass replacement for 40% of SNAP benefits lost to Hurricane Irma.</li> <li>• Implemented D-SNAP, allowing eligible households to receive two months of benefits.</li> </ul> <p>Child Nutrition Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All students in affected areas could receive free school meals through the NSLP. Schools had increased flexibility on meals served, could operate SFSP during the school year without education or enrichment, schools not directly impacted could use their commodity foods to create plated meals for shelters, increased flexibility for CACFP in terms of food served and meal requirements while being reimbursed.</li> </ul> <p>WIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substituted fresh fluid milk for powdered milk, and if stores ran out of frozen juice, participants could substitute for shelf-stable juice.</li> </ul>
NC	Hurricane Dorian	<p>SNAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mass Replacement for selected counties allowing households to receive a 30% replacement for food lost during the storm for one month’s benefits.</li> <li>• Issued SNAP Benefits of the following month early.</li> </ul>

NC	Hurricane Michael	<p>SNAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waiver to allow households to request replacement SNAP benefit to cover food lost from the hurricane</li> </ul>
NC	Hurricane Florence	<p>D-SNAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approved D-SNAP and expanded to 33 counties total in response to Hurricane Florence.</li> </ul> <p>SNAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FNS allowed purchasing of hot foods with SNAP benefits, extended certification periods and waived periodic reporting requirements in all counties of North Carolina to provide improved flexibility.</li> <li>Provided a waiver to replace 60% of SNAP benefits for one month's benefits</li> </ul> <p>Child Nutrition Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools and facilities could be declared as emergency shelters and operate under the CACFP.</li> <li>FNS allowed schools to serve meals that do not meet menu or meal pattern requirements in select counties. All students in the selected counties were eligible to receive free school meals through NSLP and NSBP. FNS also approved school reimbursement during this time.</li> <li>Allowed school food authorities to operate SFSP at school and non-school sites to improve food access. Also allowed children to take meals home as an option.</li> </ul> <p>WIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace participant food benefits for the month of September.</li> </ul>
NC	Tornado and Severe Storms	<p>D-SNAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approved one-month D-SNAP to recipients impacted by the natural disaster but were not allowed more than the maximum allotment for a household size.</li> </ul>
OH	Tornadoes and Power Outages	<p>SNAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waived timely reporting of food loss for households in Montgomery County.</li> </ul>
SC	Hurricane Dorian	<p>SNAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waiver allows affected households to receive a 20% replacement for households issued benefits between Sept. 1-5, 2019 and 30% for households between 19-31, 2019 from Hurricane Dorian.</li> </ul>
SC	Hurricane Florence	<p>Child Nutrition Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disaster waiver allows flexibility to assist schools impacted by Hurricane Florence. Designated schools can serve breakfast and lunch while being reimbursed without meeting the meal requirements.</li> </ul> <p>SNAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waiver allows request to replace SNAP benefits lost due to Hurricane Florence.</li> </ul>
TX	Severe Storms and Flooding	<p>SNAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows requests for replacement of one-month worth of SNAP benefits lost by severe storms and flooding</li> </ul>

TX	Hurricane Harvey	<p>SNAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waived periodic reporting requirements for affected households, extended certification periods and approved hot food purchases with SNAP benefits.</li> <li>• Issued mass replacement for select counties for items destroyed from Hurricane Harvey. Issued more SNAP benefits to the same counties after receiving a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Presidential Major Disaster Declaration allowed SNAP recipients to receive benefits for one month if they evacuated to another state and did not receive their original month worth of benefits.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• FNS approved 2 months of D-SNAP benefits.</li> </ul> <p>USDA Foods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FNS allowed Texas to use the TEFAP to provide meals to people who could not reach larger organizations.</li> <li>• Texas and Salvation Army used USDA Foods to prepare and serve 100,000 meals.</li> <li>• FNS approved waiver, allowing Commodity Supplemental Food Program two-month supply packages using Houston and Beaumont food banks.</li> <li>• FNS approved Texas to operate a Disaster Household Distribution Program to address food needs.</li> <li>• Distributed to over 23,000 households over a 4-week period.</li> </ul> <p>Child Nutrition Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FNS approved waivers for program flexibilities (meal pattern requirements and provide meals at no charge to students) with NSLP, SBP, SFSP, CACFP and CSFP. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Approved non-congregate feeding through the NSLP’s State Systems Office, allowed two schools to be used to claim meals, waived timeline requirements for corrective actions and area eligibility requirements for SFSP.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• FNS allowed affected schools participating in the Community Eligibility Provision to recalculate their identified student percentage to capture a more accurate number of students.</li> </ul> <p>WIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FNS approved substitution of WIC-approved items (fluid milk, bread and eggs) for a 3-week period.</li> </ul>
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