

How is Federal Funding Legislation Impacting SNAP (Food Benefits) in CO?

(From the Colorado Department of Health)

- SNAP is a vital program and serves as a lifeline for hundreds of thousands of Coloradans. It addresses hunger, improves overall health and helps people overcome poverty.
- Client impact:
 - Currently, some people receive SNAP without having to meet work requirements. Under the new bill, the number of people required to meet the work requirement will increase. That means that many in our communities could lose benefits.
 - H.R. 1 changes the Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) work requirement age range to those 18-64 (currently 18-54), and changes the exception for those with dependent children to only apply to children under the age of 14.
 - The bill also ends the existing exemptions from work requirements for participants who are homeless, veterans, or under 24 and aged out of foster care at 18.
 - The bill also limits the types of non-citizens who will be eligible to receive SNAP. This means that some people who are in the country legally will lose benefits.
 - At this time, because of the complexity of the provisions of the bill, CDHS is not able to provide exact numbers or estimates as to how many Coloradans could lose their SNAP benefits as a result of the expanded work requirements.
- State budget impact:
 - Currently, the SNAP benefits distributed to Coloradans come from federal dollars - approximately \$120 - \$140 million a month. In the new legislation, Colorado will be responsible for funding a portion of SNAP benefits beginning October 1, 2027. This is based on a quality control metric called a Payment Error Rate (PER). In addition, states will be required to pay a larger percentage of SNAP administrative costs, which we currently estimate as a \$50 million cost per year.
 - This will require money from Colorado to sustain benefits at the same level and compound the already difficult budget situation we face at the state level.
- There is no higher priority for CDHS than empowering Coloradans to thrive, and SNAP is a major way we fulfill that mission.