

***New Mexico Human Services Department
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
(SNAP) Update***

**Presentation to the Legislative Health and Human
Services Committee**

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New Mexico Human Services Department

Highlights for Today's Discussion

1. **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Caseload Growth**
2. **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Funding**
3. **State Supplemental Benefits for Elderly or Disabled New Mexicans**
4. **New Mexico Combined Application Project (NMCAP)**
5. **House Memorial 1 from Special Legislative Session 2008 - Expand New Mexico Food Stamp Enrollment**



Snap Caseload Growth

- ◆ 29.8% increase in SNAP enrollment from June 2008 to June 2009
- ◆ Total SNAP enrollment in June 2009
 - 127,141 cases
 - 308,416 individuals, of which 153,226 were children
 - \$39,203,201 in federal benefits paid in June
- ◆ \$260,252,598 total benefits paid in FY08
- ◆ \$359,088,815 total benefits paid in FY09
- ◆ SNAP 2006 Participation Percentage (USDA survey)
 - 71% of eligible individuals participating in the program



ARRA Funding

- ◆ Estimated \$172,000.0 in additional SNAP benefits (depends on enrollment)
 - \$2,200.0 million in administrative funds available to New Mexico for two federal fiscal years (FY09 and FY 10)
- ◆ SNAP benefits increased April 1, 2009 by 13.6% through ARRA funds.
 - Family of three receiving \$250 in benefits increased to \$313 (increase of \$63 a month).
- ◆ Increase in SNAP benefits provides instant economic stimulus through a direct infusion of funds into the economy.
 - Every \$5 in SNAP benefits generates \$9.20 in economic activity, benefiting individuals, New Mexico food stores and other related businesses.



ARRA Funding

- ◆ Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) – Suspension of the time limit for receiving benefits for not meeting the work requirement.
 - This provision eliminates the caseworker tracking requirements also, which helps with managing the increased caseload.
- ◆ Administrative funds are being use to hire additional staff statewide to manage increased caseload.



State Supplemental Benefits for Elderly or Disabled New Mexicans

- ◆ State Supplement for elderly or disabled New Mexicans receiving less than \$30 in federal SNAP benefits.
 - Supplement assures that elderly citizens receiving at least \$30 monthly in SNAP stamps.
 - \$625,000 in GF dollars
 - 3,148 cases in May 2009
- ◆ Due to the increase in the minimum monthly benefit to \$16 in the Federal SNAP allotment from ARRA funds, beginning in April 2009, many elderly individuals were no longer eligible for State SNAP Supplemental benefits.



New Mexico Combined Application Project (NMCAP)

- ◆ Social Security Income (SSI) recipients can receive SNAP benefits without completing a separate application at HSD Income Support Division offices.
 - Benefit amounts of either \$70 or \$93 per month.
 - Project began in April 2009.
- ◆ Who is Eligible
 - One and two-person SSI recipient households who do not live with their minor children and are 22 years of age or older. Recipient can live with their spouse but both must be on SSI.
 - Examples of eligible individuals
 - A SSI recipient living alone
 - A married couple living together and both on SSI
 - Two people living together but not married and both on SSI
 - A SSI recipient living with others who are not his/her minor children or ineligible SSI spouse
 - Must not be receiving an earned income



New Mexico Combined Application Project (NMCAP)

- ◆ How it works
 - HSD retrieves the names of all new SSI recipients from the Social Security Administration (SSA) State Data Exchange (SDX), identifies those eligible, and mails them an application.
 - Simple application: Name, Address, Income
 - To enable us to give the maximum benefit we also ask:
 - Amounts paid for shelter expenses*
 - Amount of out-of-pocket Medical Expenses*
 - The individual must complete and sign the application.
 - The application can be mailed, faxed, or dropped off at the local SSA office, ISD office or the CAP unit in Bernalillo.
 - No interview is required for either the initial application or recertification.
 - Once approved, the certification period is for 36 months, with no interim contact required.
 - Changes to the household will be based on information from the SDX database.



House Memorial 1

- ◆ House Memorial 1 - Expand New Mexico Food Stamp Enrollment
 - Passed in Special Legislative Session 2008
 - Sponsored by Speaker Ben Lujan
- ◆ Asks the Department to conduct 5 activities to increase SNAP enrollment.
 - Outreach
 - Use community partners and organizations to assist with SNAP enrollment
 - Raise or eliminate the financial asset limit
 - Use telephone eligibility interview and further simplify enrollment process
 - Provide information in English and Spanish for all low-income comprehensive tax rebate client on SNAP eligibility and how to apply



House Memorial 1

- ◆ Outreach
 - Targeted outreach is being conducted in Taos, San Juan, Luna and Bernalillo Counties, using a variety of innovative strategies including:
 - Mobile Outreach RVs in Taos and San Juan
 - Participation in community wellness events and partnering at Medicaid Outreach Events
 - Conducting poverty simulation workshops for ISD Offices and community organizations

- ◆ Community partners and organizations to assist with SNAP enrollment
 - Participation in NM Collaboration to End Hunger
 - Participation in the Food Stamp Working Group
 - Recommendations from Working Group
 - Expand the waiver of face to face interview
 - Expand categorical eligibility
 - Exclude child support expense from the income determination
 - Allow select populations to use SNAP benefits to purchase hot and prepared meals
 - Low Income Tax Credit Rebate mailing to low income target population in English and Spanish



House Memorial 1

- ◆ Raise or eliminate the financial asset limit
 - The Department is researching the feasibility of the options regarding expanded categorical eligibility and the impact on New Mexico.
- ◆ Use telephone eligibility interview and further simplify enrollment process
 - New Mexico has expanded the definition of hardship for attending the initial interview for SNAP benefits, enabling many more participants to conduct their initial interview by telephone.
 - Regulation went into effect August 2008
 - New Mexico also has a Food and Nutrition Services waiver of the face to face interview at recertification.
 - 69% of 26,000 households from October 2008 – January 2009 recertified their SNAP benefits telephonically



House Memorial 1

- ◆ Provide information in English and Spanish for all low-income comprehensive tax rebate clients on SNAP eligibility and how to apply
 - HSD partnership with Taxation and Revenue Department (TRD)
 - TRD mails information in English and Spanish about SNAP to all New Mexicans who receive a tax refund.
 - HB 590, passed in 2009 Regular Legislative Session allows TRD to provide HSD with data to target outreach to low income households.

