

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food and Nutrition Service

Agency Information Collection Activities, Comments Request: Understanding States' SNAP Customer Service Strategies

AGENCY: Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice invites the general public and other public agencies to comment on the proposed collection of information for the *Understanding States' SNAP Customer Service Strategies* study. This is a NEW information collection. This study seeks to describe the key characteristics of State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) agencies' customer service strategies through in-depth case studies in up to 9 States, review the current literature on customer service, particularly in government social safety net programs, and identify promising practices in improving, measuring, and monitoring customer service in SNAP.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before June 26, 2023.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be sent to: Melanie Meisenheimer, Office of Policy Support, FNS, USDA, 1320 Braddock Place, 5th Floor, Alexandria, VA 22314; telephone: 703-305-2770. Comments may also be submitted via email to melanie.meisenheimer@usda.gov with "SNAP CS" in the subject line. Comments will also be accepted through the Federal eRulemaking Portal. Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and follow the online instructions for submitting comments electronically.

All written comments will be open for public inspection at the office of the Food and Nutrition Service during regular business hours (8:30 a.m. to 5:00

p.m.), Monday through Friday at Office of Policy Support, FNS, UDA, 1320 Braddock Place, 5th Floor, Alexandria, VA 22314.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval. All comments will be a matter of public record.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Requests for additional information or copies of this information collection should be directed to Melanie Meisenheimer, Food and Nutrition Service: by phone at 703-305-2770 or by email at melanie.meisenheimer@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions that were used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Title: Understanding States' SNAP Customer Service Strategies.

Form Number: Not applicable.

OMB Number: 0584-NEW.

Expiration Date: Not yet determined.

Type of Request: New collection.

Abstract: This is a new information collection request. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is interested in exploring how State agencies define and measure the quality of customer service for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) applicants and participants, particularly strategies that go beyond the minimum requirements set by FNS; and how State SNAP agencies implement and refine their customer service approaches. This study will conduct case studies in up to nine states to understand their approaches to defining, measuring, and improving customer service in SNAP.

FNS has identified three objectives for this study:

(1) Describe how each study State defines and measures good and/or bad customer service for SNAP applicants and participants, particularly those that go beyond the minimum requirements set by FNS.

(2) For each study State, describe how the State SNAP agency implements and refine its customer service approach.

(3) Describe the current research and documentation available about customer service standards and measurement broadly, with a particular focus on government programs and safety net programs.

The study will be conducted through two key components:

(1) Review of existing studies, reports, and data on customer services strategies and approaches.

(2) Case studies in up to nine states with diverse approaches to supporting and monitoring customer service in SNAP.

The research team will collect case study data during two-day in-person site visits to each selected State that will include interviews with State, regional (e.g., call center), and local SNAP staff and key stakeholders, review of relevant documents and reports, and observations of staff interactions with customer service systems.

Affected Public: Respondent categories of affected public and the corresponding study participants will include: State and Local or Tribal Government and business not-for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 116.

The total estimated number of respondents (116) includes: Out of 12 State Agency SNAP Directors contacted, 9 will participate; out of 18 State SNAP Administrative Staff contacted, 18 will participate; out of 14 County and Tribal Government and call center SNAP Directors, 14 will participate; out of 54 County and Tribal SNAP Staff contacted, 54 will participate; and out of 9 business not-for-profit organizations contacted, 18 staff will participate.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: The estimated number of responses per State Government SNAP Director respondent is two: Nine State SNAP Directors will take part in a recruitment call lasting about 20 minutes and an interview lasting approximately 1 hour.

The estimated number of responses per State SNAP Administrative Staff

respondent is two: 18 respondents will take part in a recruitment call lasting about 20 minutes and an interview lasting approximately 1 hour.

The estimated number of responses per Non-profit Organization (Organizations conducting SNAP outreach) is two: 9 respondents will take part in a recruitment call lasting about 20 minutes and 9 respondents will take part in interviews lasting approximately 1 hour.

The estimated number of responses per County and Tribal Government or Call Center SNAP Director is two: 14 respondents will take part in a recruitment call lasting about 20 minutes and an interview lasting approximately 1 hour.

The estimated number of responses per County and Tribal SNAP Staff is one: 54 respondents will take part in an interview or a deskside observation lasting approximately 1 hour.

Estimated Total Annual Responses: 154.

Estimated Time per Response: 1.3 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 119.9 hours (119.0 for responsive participants and 0.9 for nonresponsive participants).

See the table below for estimated total annual burden for each type of respondent, including non-respondents.

BILLING CODE 6410-30-P

Respondent Description	Activity	Sample Size	RESPONDENTS					NON-RESPONDENTS				
			Estimated Number of Respondents	Frequency of Response (Annually)	Total Annual Responses	Average Hours per Response	Subtotal Estimated Annual Burden (Hours)	Estimated Number of Non-Respondents	Frequency of Response	Total Annual Responses	Average Time per Response (Hours)	Subtotal Estimated Annual Burden (Hours)
County and Tribal Government and call center SNAP Directors	Site visit: Recruitment	14.0	14.0	1.0	14.0	0.3	4.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.2
County and Tribal Government and call center SNAP Directors	Site visit: Interview	14.0	14.0	1.0	14.0	1.0	14.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.0
County and Tribal SNAP Staff	Site visit: Semi-structured interviews & observations	54.0	54.0	1.0	54.0	1.0	54.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	54.0
Subtotal State and Local		98.0	95.0	7.0	136.0	-	107.3	3.0	1.0	3.0	0.3	108.2
GRAND TOTAL		116.0	113.0	9.0	154.0	-	119.0	3.0	1.0	3.0	0.3	119.9

Tameka Owens,

Deputy Administrator, Food and Nutrition Service.

[FR Doc. 2023-08767 Filed 4-25-23; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-30-C

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food and Nutrition Service

Agency Information Collection Activities, Proposed Collection: Request for Comments on How Have SNAP State Agencies Shifted Operations in the Aftermath of COVID-19? (SNAP COVID Study)

AGENCY: Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice invites the general public and other public agencies to comment on this proposed information collection. This is a new information collection for the contract of the study titled “How Have Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) State Agencies Shifted Operations in the Aftermath of COVID-19? (SNAP COVID study)”. The purpose of the SNAP COVID study is to help FNS develop a comprehensive understanding of how SNAP agencies have adapted their operations and norms during the COVID-19 pandemic and increased their preparedness for another major disruption.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before June 26, 2023.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be sent to Amanda Wyant, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1320 Braddock Place, 5th floor, Alexandria, VA 22314. Comments may also be submitted via email to Amanda.Wyant@usda.gov. Comments will also be accepted through the Federal eRulemaking Portal. Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and follow the online instructions for submitting comments electronically.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval. All comments will be a matter of public record.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Requests for additional information or copies of this information collection should be directed to Amanda Wyant at 703-305-7537.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Comments are invited on: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the

agency’s functions, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency’s estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions that were used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Title: How Have SNAP State Agencies Shifted Operations in the Aftermath of COVID-19? (SNAP COVID study).

Form Number: N/A.

OMB Number: 0584-NEW.

Expiration Date: Not yet determined.

Type of Request: New collection.

Abstract. As the cornerstone of the nation’s nutrition safety net, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides monthly benefits to households with low incomes to reduce food insecurity and improve health and well-being. The COVID-19 pandemic and its economic fallout created extraordinary challenges for SNAP and the broader safety net as whole. To keep processing applications and issuing benefits, SNAP agencies had to pivot sharply to adapt their core operations and deliver services primarily or entirely virtually. Drawing on both new and existing waivers and policy options in this uncharted environment required a host of complicated decisions and choices on the part of State SNAP agencies. The study titled “How Have SNAP State Agencies Shifted Operations in the Aftermath of COVID-19? (SNAP COVID study)” will provide the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) with a comprehensive picture of how State SNAP agencies responded to the pandemic, including their decision-making processes, experiences with program changes in the short and long terms, and how these experiences have prepared States for major disruptions in the future.

The SNAP COVID study will provide information about State SNAP agencies’ experiences with the wide range and mix of operational changes made in response to the evolving pandemic. This gives FNS and State SNAP agencies an important opportunity to assess what did and did not work and why; to describe the decision-making processes that led to States’ responses to date and their plans for the period after the public health emergency; to identify

changes that are here to stay for the foreseeable future; and to consider the lessons learned to inform continued program improvement and increase preparedness for any future disruptions that affect service delivery.

The study will gather detailed data from all 53 State SNAP agencies via a web-based survey and will conduct case studies in five States. In each of the five site visit States, the study team will conduct interviews with State and local SNAP staff and collect individual-level application and case records and/or aggregate performance data. These data will provide insight on how key metrics such as SNAP caseload size and composition changed after the implementation of program changes. The study team will systematically collect publicly available documents through FNS and web searches to inform the development of data collection instruments for the survey and site visit interviews. The team will use these along with non-public documents (for example, State policy guidance) we will collect from States to confirm and clarify survey responses.

Affected public. Members of the public affected by the data collection include State, local, and Tribal governments from 53 State SNAP agencies. Respondent groups identified include: (1) State or territory agency directors; (2) State or territory data and IT staff; (3) State or territory operations and policy staff; (4) Local directors; (5) Local agency supervisors; (4) Local agency frontline staff.

A survey will be conducted with all 53 State SNAP agency directors and staff. Case studies will be conducted with five of the States, affecting State and local SNAP agency directors and staff.

Estimated number of respondents. The total estimated number of unique respondents for both the pretest and study data collection activities is 284, with four nonrespondents. There are 243 State level staff who will participate. This includes 53 State or territory SNAP directors; 127 State or territory SNAP policy and operations staff; 5 State or territory data staff; and 58 State or territory IT staff. There are 41 local level staff who will participate in the study: 11 local SNAP agency directors; 15 local SNAP agency supervisors, and 15 local SNAP agency frontline staff.

The State or territory SNAP agency directors include respondents from 53 U.S. States and territories (50 U.S. States, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Guam). Each State or territory SNAP agency director may designate up to three staff to complete