

## **Simplified Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP)**

### **Overview**

North Carolina's proposed Simplified Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) reinvents the way food assistance is delivered to elderly individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI). SNAP is a simplified version of the Food Stamp Program eligibility determination process. Many Food Stamp Program rules do not apply to SNAP. The SNAP approval requires that all SNAP cases:

- Are one-person households,
- Receive a standard monthly benefit of \$38 or \$62 based on their total shelter (rent/mortgage) cost,
- Are certified for three years, and
- Use the current Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) process.

We are confident that SNAP will provide much needed nutritional assistance to thousands of North Carolinians. Getting nutritional assistance is a SNAP!

### **Who is Eligible?**

The Division of Social Services (DSS) will identify and automatically mail applications to individuals who:

- Receive SSI,
- Are age 65 or older,
- Are not living in an institution,
- Live in North Carolina,
- Purchase and prepare food separately from other household members; and
- Are not currently receiving food stamp benefits.

Note: Clients whose monthly shelter expenses exceed \$250 or monthly medical expenses exceed \$35 may be eligible for higher benefit amounts by applying for the regular Food Stamp Program. Clients may choose to apply for regular food stamp benefits at any time.

There are approximately 33,000 individuals in North Carolina who meet the SNAP criteria.

### **Procedures**

- A simplified application is mailed to individuals who meet the selection criteria.
- Applications must be returned to the local Department of Social Services.
- A second application is mailed automatically if the initial application is not returned within 30 days.
- DSS evaluates returned applications and determines eligibility.
- DSS notifies clients of their eligibility and assigns Certification Periods of 36 months.
- Eligible clients receive an EBT card and PIN instructions.
- Clients whose monthly shelter expenses exceed \$250 or monthly medical expenses exceed \$35 may be eligible for higher benefit amounts by applying for the regular Food Stamp Program. They can apply at a local DSS office.
- SNAP clients are not required to report changes to DSS.
- SDX information is considered verification for SNAP cases.

### **Conversion**

North Carolina's proposal includes converting ongoing regular food stamp cases that meet all SNAP criteria to SNAP cases if the household will receive more benefits through the SNAP Program. There are approximately 11,000 cases that may potentially convert to SNAP cases.