Provider Handbook

Provider handbook for Department of Human Services contracted providers

Introduction
The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) is an organization of individuals with a commitment to bettering the lives of Minnesotans. The department, working with many others, helps people meet their basic needs so they can live in dignity and achieve their highest potential. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) is managed by DHS in close partnership with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). Minnesota’s SNAP E&T program is administered by counties, county-contracted providers, state-contracted providers, and tribes, and requires a joint effort between all entities, encouraging maximization of the use of funds and resources available in each local area. Success is built on the foundation of a strong collaborative culture amongst partners.

The Provider Handbook outlines the responsibilities for all providers contracted with the department. The department will update the Provider Handbook periodically and will communicate any changes. The most current version of the handbook is available on Minnesota’s SNAP E&T website.

VISION
Minnesota envisions a SNAP E&T program where Minnesotans with low incomes have clear pathways in developing marketable and in-demand skills, leading to career advancement and self-sufficiency.

MISSION
Through strong partnerships, our mission is to help recipients fully utilize their SNAP benefits, gain the essential skills needed for gainful employment, and successfully transition off public assistance.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PARTNERSHIP
The Department of Human Services Economic Opportunity and Nutrition Assistance division has adopted five guiding principles in an effort to form meaningful and constructive partnerships. We believe that these principles will set a positive tone for working together. They are: Mutual Respect, Open Communication, Joint Problem Solving, Valuing Diversity and adhering to an Ethical Code of Conduct.
### Program contacts

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<th>Name</th>
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<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
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Program overview and policy

Basics of SNAP
The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as food stamps, helps Minnesotans with low incomes get the food they need for nutritious and well-balanced meals. The program provides support to help stretch the household food budget. It is not intended to meet all food needs of the household; it is a supplement.

If approved for the program, a person is issued an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card. It is like a debit card. Each month of eligibility, benefits will be credited to the EBT account. The card can be used to purchase food at stores that display a poster or sign that reads: "We Accept EBT." Grocery stores and convenience stores must sell a variety of foods to be approved to accept EBT. The card also may be used at authorized sites for Meals on Wheels and congregate dining. Many farmers markets also accept EBT.

Applying for SNAP
Household income, expenses, and assets
SNAP eligibility depends on income, expenses, and the number of people in the household. Most types of income are counted. There are many deductions from income that are allowed under SNAP. A county or tribal eligibility worker can provide more information on income limits and deductions.

Screening tool
The screening tool (PDF) asks a few questions to help a person find out if they may qualify for SNAP. The screening tool is only an estimate of eligibility. The only way to know for sure if a person qualifies is to complete the application process. The screening tool is also available in:
Hmong - screening tool (PDF)
Russian - screening tool (PDF)
Somali - screening tool (PDF)
Spanish - screening tool (PDF)

Emergency SNAP
A person may receive food benefits within five days of application if their household meets one of the following criteria:
• Households with monthly gross income less than $150 and liquid assets less than $100
• Migrant or seasonal farmworker households that have low income and $100 or less in liquid assets
• Households in which the combined monthly gross income and liquid assets are less than their monthly housing costs and the applicable standard utility deduction, if applicable.
Application
A person can apply:

- **Online** at ApplyMN.dhs.mn.gov
- **On paper** using the Combined Application Form (PDF) for families and people under age 60; individuals and couples who are 60 or older should use the one-page Senior SNAP Application (PDF). Mail or bring the completed form to your local county or tribal office (PDF).

The Combined Application Form is also available in:

- Hmong - Combined Application Form (PDF)
- Russian - Combined Application Form (PDF)
- Somali - Combined Application Form (PDF)
- Spanish - Combined Application Form (PDF)
- Vietnamese - Combined Application Form (PDF)

When a person’s benefits begin depends on the date the county or tribe receives the application through ApplyMN, or the first page of the paper application. The county or tribe cannot decide if a person will receive benefits until the entire application is completed and required verifications are provided. An eligibility worker will also need to complete an interview with the applicant.

Basics of SNAP Employment and Training

The SNAP E&T program helps SNAP recipients improve their employment prospects and wage potential through participation in job search, training, education or work activities. The goal is to assist participants in obtaining a livable wage, leading toward self-sufficiency.

The federal government requires each state to develop and implement an employment and training program for SNAP recipients. States have the flexibility to shape the size and scope of their programs. The program requires the development of an annual plan reflective of the service strategies and coordination of services across the state.

In Minnesota, SNAP E&T participant information and services provided are tracked by a statewide data management system known as Workforce One (WF1). Eligibility for SNAP benefits are determined by counties and tribes with the automated eligibility system, MAXIS.

A portion of SNAP recipients are subject to work and time limit provisions, however, all SNAP recipients are potentially eligible to participate in SNAP E&T. The State operates an all-voluntary SNAP E&T program, exempting all work registrants, including Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs), from mandatory participation in SNAP E&T. In a voluntary program, time-limited SNAP recipients (also referred to as ABAWDs subject to the work and time limit provisions) cannot be sanctioned if they choose not to participate in employment and training activities during their three counted months of eligibility. However, these time-limited individuals must work or participate in work activities for at least 20 hours per week to maintain their benefits beyond the three counted months.

Additional program guidance can be found in the Food and Nutrition Service Employment and Training.
SNAP E&T eligibility

An individual can receive SNAP E&T services if they:

- Receive federal food assistance;
- Are age 16 or older (there are additional requirements to serve 16-17 year olds); and
- Report that they have the physical and mental ability to work at least 20 hours per week; and
  - For clients with a verified disability, such as active Supplemental Security Income recipients or temporary workers compensation recipients, client statement or client-provided documentation can be used to determine SNAP E&T eligibility.
- Can participate in SNAP E&T immediately.

An individual cannot receive SNAP E&T services if they receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), in Minnesota this is known as the Minnesota Family Investment Program, or other cash assistance under Title IV such as Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. However, an individual participating in the Diversionary Work Program can participate in SNAP E&T as they are not a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families or Title IV recipient.

A provider can serve an individual as long as they are receiving SNAP and meet the above stated criteria. The participant does not need to be listed in the MAXIS system as the “01” (primary individual on the case) as long as they are part of the food unit.

Able-bodied adults without dependents

Some, but not all, able-bodied adults without dependents are considered time-limited and are eligible for only three months in a 36-month period unless the individual meets the work requirements defined below. The three-month time limit does not apply to individuals who are:

- Receiving cash assistance;
- Under age 18 or 50 years of age or over;
- Residing in a unit with a unit member under the age of 18, even if the unit member is not eligible for SNAP;
- Medically certified as pregnant;
- Exempt from SNAP work registration;
- Currently homeless and lacking access to work related necessities;
- Medically certified as physically or mentally unfit for employment; or
- Residing in a waived area of the state.

Time-limited able-bodied adults without dependents can meet the work requirement by:

- Working 20 or more hours per week in paid employment, averaged monthly (80 hours per
This includes in-kind or unpaid work;

- Participating in and complying with the requirements of an employment and training program for 20 or more hours per week (of which at least half of the hours must be in a qualifying activity); or
- Participating in and complying with the requirements of a workfare program.

More information on qualifying activities can be found here: Minnesota SNAP E&T Components and Activities.

A time-limited participant who has lost SNAP eligibility by exhausting their initial three out of 36 months may qualify for a second three-month period if they have worked or participated in work activities for 80 hours during any 30 consecutive days. The case does not need to be closed prior to becoming eligible again (CM 11.24). This provision does not apply if the person voluntarily quit the job without good cause (CM 28.30.09).

The work requirement does not apply to able-bodied adults without dependents who reside in areas of the state that are granted a waiver of the three-month time limit by the Food and Nutrition Service, or to able-bodied adults without dependents who are included in a state agency’s discretionary exemption allowance, known in Minnesota as Banked Months. SNAP recipients are not required to participate in employment and training activities while receiving Banked Months, but participation is encouraged.

**Provider roles and responsibilities**

Providers are responsible for delivering SNAP E&T services to SNAP recipients. Individuals must participate in SNAP E&T knowingly. It is important for providers to determine a process for documenting program intentionality, which can be done in a variety of ways. When program intentionality is not documented, this may be considered data matching. Data matching occurs when a provider reviews their non-federally funded programming, looking for individuals receiving SNAP, and considers the SNAP recipients to be SNAP E&T participants. In short, participants must be informed of the program, and their choice to opt in must be documented.

SNAP E&T services include an employability assessment to determine employment and training goals, activities, and case management. The assessment is an in-depth evaluation of employability skills, including, but not limited to, soft skills, employment barriers, and work history. Based on the assessment, the provider and participant selects the appropriate SNAP E&T activities to move the participant toward employment.

Providers are responsible for tracking costs, maintaining records, and invoicing according to federal and state regulations. In the third-party provider reimbursement model, a provider puts forth the cost of program operations, including assessment, case management, SNAP E&T activities, and support
services. Provider funds used to leverage the SNAP E&T program funds cannot originate from a federal source (with the exception of Community Development Block Grant funds) and cannot supplant another funding source. The Minnesota Department of Human Services then reimburses the provider at 50 percent of allowable SNAP E&T expenditures.

**Eligibility verification**
Participant eligibility verification is required prior to enrolling an individual in SNAP E&T and before requesting reimbursement for services each month. A participant must be on SNAP at the time the cost was incurred, regardless of when billing for the service took place. It is the responsibility of the provider to verify participant eligibility each month utilizing the MAXIS eligibility system. If an individual is not receiving SNAP, they cannot participate in SNAP E&T, unless they are open in retention.

In addition to monthly MAXIS verification of SNAP eligibility for each participant, providers can choose to verify SNAP eligibility before providing support services to participants to ensure expenses are eligible for reimbursement.

**Enrollment**
SNAP E&T services may begin as early as the date SNAP eligibility is approved. There are two options for enrolling a participant in SNAP E&T in Workforce One. The MAXIS Generated Program Sequence is a result of a MAXIS generated referral from a county or tribal eligibility worker, where the provider is part of the county or tribe, or is a county or tribal contracted provider. A User Generated Program Sequence is completed without a referral from MAXIS and is most often utilized by third-party providers. For both sequence types, and prior to enrollment, a series of pre-enrollment questions must be answered and information must be entered into Workforce One. The Pre-Enrollment form can be found on Minnesota’s SNAP E&T website. For more information on the User Generated Program Sequence, see the SNAP E&T Workforce One User Guide. This can be found in WF1 under Resources---User How-to Guides.

**Communication**
Providers must relay to the County Agency or Tribal Nation point of contact information that may affect a participant’s program eligibility or benefit amount, such as employment status changes, or when a time-limited participant meets their minimum work requirement.

If the County Agency, Tribal Nation, or provider become aware of circumstances that indicate a participant’s exemption status has changed, inform the other of the change. The eligibility worker will then review the participant’s exemption status. The participant may choose to continue to engage in SNAP E&T.

A general overview of provider roles and responsibilities is illustrated below.
Case management

Participant record
A provider must clearly document all activities and services provided to a participant in Workforce One. In addition, records must also contain information about the assessment, release of information/consent form (if applicable), employment plan, participant engagement, and participant reimbursements. A minimum of one monthly contact must be made and case noted. Documentation must be kept in paper or electronic formats and is reviewed as part of the annual monitoring visit.

Appendix A is a case management checklist. This is a tool to help ensure case management requirements are met, and that documentation is completed and retained for participants. The checklist can also be found on Minnesota’s SNAP E&T website.

Orientation
Orientation to the SNAP E&T program must be provided to all participants. For time-limited participants referred to the program, orientation must be offered within 30 days of benefit approval. The purpose of orientation is to explain participation requirements and possible consequences of not complying, describe available services, and to explain how SNAP E&T can help meet work requirements if applicable. For time-limited participants, orientation must inform the participant of work or work program activities that may enable them to receive more than three months of benefits in a 36-month period. Orientations may be provided either individually or in a group setting. They may be provided through audio-visual methods as long as participants have the opportunity for face-to-face interaction with program staff.

Assessment
A participant must be assessed prior to placement in a SNAP E&T component. An employability assessment should include an in-depth evaluation of employability skills coupled with counseling on how and where to search for employment. The assessment is an allowable SNAP E&T expense, but it is not a SNAP E&T component.

The purpose of an assessment is to collect and evaluate information to identify a participant’s employment goals, barriers, and support service needs. It should be individualized and completed in an interactive face-to-face meeting with the participant. The information collected from this assessment is the basis for the employment plan. The assessment may consider:
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- **Literacy level (see NOTE below)** - standardized tests, one-on-one interview/observations (i.e. participant’s ability to read and complete forms in case file);
- **Communication skills (including English language proficiency)** - standardized test, one-on-one interview;
- **Education** - questionnaire, resume or one-on-one interview;
- **Employment history** - questionnaire, resume or one-on-one interview;
- **Employment related skills, abilities, and interests** - questionnaire, one-on-one interview, or online assessment;
- **Employment barriers and steps necessary to overcome barriers** - questionnaire or one-on-one interview.

The state does not require that a particular form be used for recording the results of the assessment. Providers may develop and utilize their own forms for this purpose or may record relevant information in a standard location in the case record.

**NOTE:** Literacy testing may be routinely included as part of the assessment, but is not required. The provider should use available information about the participant (for example, how applications and other forms are completed, the participant’s speech, participant disclosure, reports from other sources) to determine the participant’s literacy and reading capabilities. The participant’s literacy capabilities should be a factor in determining appropriate activities.

**Employment plan**

An employment plan must be completed for each SNAP E&T participant. The employment plan shall be the result of assessing each participant’s career goals, employability skills, and barriers. An employment plan may be in paper form, or created electronically in Workforce One. A plan from another employment and training program may also be utilized. If the plan is in paper form, or a plan from another program is utilized, this must be indicated in Workforce One. The employment plan must be updated and revised as the participant’s circumstances change, but not less than once per year.

At a minimum, an employment plan must contain:

- Date the plan was created;
- Proposed employment and training activities;
- Employment goal(s);
- Participant signature; and
- Any other information relevant to employment and training.

For time-limited participants, it is expected that the **SNAP E&T Plan (DHS-6020)** or a plan with comparable information be used. The plan needs to outline how a participant can meet the work requirements to earn additional months of benefits.

**Case notes**

A participant record recounts the story of the activity(ies) the participant is engaged in and the services provided. Regular case notes provide documentation of the details and rationale for these activities and services. A SNAP E&T case note must be entered in Workforce One at a minimum of once per
At minimum, case notes must contain the following:
- Date of the event
- Category or purpose of contact (intake, employment/service plan, check-in, etc.)
- Summary of correspondence

It is important that documentation be done in an objective and fact-based manner with the understanding that case notes may be reviewed and used by other providers and professionals, as well as by the participant.

Case notes about medical information should contain only the minimum necessary information. The following are best practices when documenting this type of information:
- Rarely include an actual diagnosis.
- Use general language.
- Examples include: “Medical condition present. See case file.” or “Medical condition restricts activities. See case file.” Or “Mental health condition restricts activities. See case file.”

Remember, if it is not documented, it never happened.

**Participant reimbursements**
SNAP E&T expenses must be directly related to an approved component. Costs must also be reasonable and necessary. A cost is reasonable if, in its nature and amount, it does not exceed that which a prudent person would pay under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the cost. Necessary costs are incurred to carry out essential functions, cannot be avoided without adversely affecting program operation, and do not duplicate existing efforts.

Documentation of participant reimbursement(s), also referred to as support services, must be on file and listed in Workforce One under Support Services. If the rationale of the support service is questionable, case note why it was determined to be reasonable and necessary. Providers are encouraged to contact state SNAP E&T staff to request review of unusual requests.

See [Guidance on Costs and Reimbursements](#) for a complete list of allowable expenses.

**Opening and closing activities**
An activity must only be opened when a participant is actively engaged in that activity, not just assigned to it. Likewise, the activity must be closed when the participant is no longer engaged. Determine at this point whether or not the person record should be exited.

**Exiting a person from the program**
Exit the person’s SNAP E&T record in Workforce One within 30 days of SNAP closure (or as soon as the
benefit end date is known if beyond 30 days), unless they are open in the Retention activity. The exit date must be backdated to the last day of the month SNAP benefits were received. For example, a November closure would have an exit date of October 31.

Also exit the person’s SNAP E&T record in Workforce within 30 days of non-engagement. The record should be exited within 30 days of failed contact and a corresponding exit date entered. If the participant is time-limited or is a SNAP eligible student based on enrollment in SNAP E&T, the employment counselor must also communicate this with the county or tribal point of contact.

**Collaboration**

**Co-enrollment**
Participants can be served by more than one provider. For example, one provider can work with another to help the same participant achieve their individual employment plan goals, while each delivering a different service.

It is the provider’s responsibility to coordinate services for co-enrolled participants to prevent duplication of service. Duplication of service means an individual receives the same service from more than one provider at the same time. It is best practice for both providers to retain a written co-enrollment plan in the participant’s file, or in Workforce One.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services encourages SNAP E&T providers to collaborate and make referrals for services that they do not have available. For example, when a participant nears the end of their vocational training goals, the provider may refer the participant to another provider to offer job search if the current provider does not have adequate job search assistance available. Each partner serving that participant can receive reimbursement for allowable expenditures that are not duplicative.

**Sharing of information**

Providers contracted directly with the State are considered to be part of the “welfare system” for the purpose of serving SNAP recipients in SNAP E&T. Participant information based on business need can be shared between counties, tribes, and all SNAP E&T providers without a separate release of information. Coordination between providers is essential, especially for time-limited participants.

**Limited-English proficiency**

All forms and services to the participant must be communicated in the individuals preferred language.

**Operations**

**Components**
SNAP E&T components are services or activities designed to help SNAP recipients gain skills, training, or work experience that will increase their ability to obtain regular employment and achieve self-sufficiency. Minnesota offers all federal program components, which have been broken down into specific activities. The table below shows the relationship between these components and activities. For definitions of each activity, see [SNAP E&T Components and Activities](#).
States are required to submit SNAP E&T program activity reports to Food and Nutrition Services that provide actual counts of E&T participation. Therefore, an activity must only be opened in Workforce One when a participant is actively engaged in that activity, not just assigned to it. Likewise, the activity must be closed when the participant is no longer engaged.

For more information, refer to the Workforce One User Manual for SNAP E&T, which can be found in Workforce One under Resources.

The term “component” is the federal term for what Minnesota refers to as an “activity.”

**Component to activity**
Components found on the Minnesota SNAP E&T website correspond to a specific activity listed in Workforce One and are shown in the following table.

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<th>Federal Component Name</th>
<th>WF1 Activity Name</th>
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<td>Satisfactory Progress</td>
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**Participation hours**
Participation hours must be tracked by activity in Workforce One for time-limited participants.

For the educational programs component, input the number of activity hours based on the number of
hours the participant is expected to participate, not on credit hours. For example, if a participant attends vocational training for six hours per week and has an estimated 10 hours of homework or study time per week, the vocational training should show 16 hours per week.

**Monitoring**

Grantees are monitored to ensure compliance with the Minnesota Office of Grants Management policies and procedures, to determine contract compliance, and to ensure that federal rules and regulations are maintained.

SNAP E&T grantees can expect:

- Monitoring that follows guiding principles of: mutual respect, open communication, joint problem solving, valuing diversity and an ethical code of conduct.
- An on-site visit, determined at a mutually agreeable time with a minimum of two weeks’ notice.
- On site visit will review the provider’s work plan, budget, goals and outcomes. A review of client eligibility and a fiscal reconciliation will occur. A sample size of the caseload will be reviewed to determine client eligibility for SNAP and subsequent employment and training services will be reviewed. Fiscal reconciliation will also use a sample size of a random pull of one to two months of invoices to determine allowability of costs and reimbursements requested.
- Forms will be shared in advance of the visit for preparation purposes.
- A report following the visit will be issued within 45 days detailing any findings and a timeline for any follow up needed.
- Per the Office of Grants Management, at least one monitoring visit must be conducted before final payment is made on all state grants over $50,000, and at least annual monitoring visits on grants of over $250,000. New grantees receive a monitoring visit during the first year of the grant cycle. More visits may be scheduled at the discretion of the Minnesota Department of Human Services if additional assistance is required, for example, or if key staff turnover occurs.

**Secure email**

Email containing sensitive or private information must be sent via a secure email portal. Do not send social security numbers via email.

**Workforce One**

Workforce One is a web-based client management application used by nearly 2,000 state, city, county, tribal, and non-profit employment and training providers to track employment and training services for more than 100,000 customers across Minnesota's One Stop network. Workforce One was created through a partnership between DHS and DEED and is maintained by MNIT-DEED.

Having accurate and timely participant information within Workforce One is critical. As participants are co-enrolled in multiple programs, the system supports the coordination of services, monitoring of programs, and reporting and tracking of information.

Below is a general process flow chart describing the county/tribal and provider relationship for SNAP.
E&T participants:

Records retention

The records retention policy for SNAP E&T follows Bulletin #18-85-01 County Human Services General Records Retention Schedule. For the purpose of this program, agencies may choose an electronic or paper format. This includes the Workforce One Electronic Document Storage or a provider specific electronic storage system. At this time, there is no requirement to use or store specific documents in the WF1 Electronic Document Storage (EDS) system for SNAP E&T.

The SNAP ET Workforce One User Guide addresses all operations within the management information system. The SNAP ET Workforce One User Guide can be found in Workforce One under “Resources.”

Training

Workforce One training will be provided during the onboarding process and throughout the contract period, as needed.

Access to Workforce One must be requested and approved by a supervisor and the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development’s Workforce One staff. Access forms may be found on the Workforce One homepage; forms and directions to request access can be found in the SNAP ET Workforce One User Guide.

MAXIS

MAXIS is the computer system used by state and county workers to determine eligibility for public
assistance and health care programs. For cash assistance and food programs, MAXIS also determines the appropriate benefit level and issues benefits. Access to MAXIS Inquiry will be granted for providers contracting directly with the Minnesota Department of Human Services. At this time, the department is limiting the number of SNAP E&T staff with MAXIS access to five individuals. If a provider indicates a need for more than five staff members to access MAXIS, they should contact their state SNAP E&T grant manager. This request will be taken under consideration on a case-by-case basis.

**Gaining MAXIS Inquiry Access**

Access to the MAXIS eligibility system allows employment service providers to verify participants’ SNAP eligibility each month. It is the provider’s responsibility to ensure that access is secured and maintained. Workers must complete the following steps to gain access:

1. Request a [Unique Key](#).
2. Contact Ashley Snyder at ashley.snyder@state.mn.us to request enrollment in MAXIS Inquiry Access Training for employment service providers.
3. Prior to completion of the MAXIS Inquiry Access Training, the online data privacy courses must be taken.* The required course sequence can be found at [Handling MN Information Securely](#).

For questions regarding the course sequence, contact HIPAA.Training@state.mn.us.

*It is important to note that users must log in with their work email and register using their information (and not as a “Guest”) for the training to be credited to them. When registering, individuals must identify an “Affiliation” and should choose the county in which their agency resides.

4. Attend MAXIS Inquiry Access Training. The training is held at the Minnesota Department of Human Services office at 444 Lafayette Road North, St. Paul, Minnesota 55155.

   Trainings are scheduled from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. **Participants must attend the entire training to be granted access to the MAXIS system.** The training provides information for employment service providers working with SNAP E&T as well as the Minnesota Family Investment Program and Diversionary Work Program.

5. Once an individual has completed the online training, contact Ashley Snyder, the Minnesota Department of Human Services SNAP E&T MAXIS security liaison, at ashley.snyder@state.mn.us. The security liaison will submit a request to create a MAXIS user name and password for you.

**Fiscal**

**Budgets**

Budgets must be submitted with each provider’s work plan. Funds cannot be moved from administration to support services or vice versa without approval from the contract manager. Budgets are only approved after Food and Nutrition Service approves the Minnesota Department of Human
Provider Handbook

Services’ Annual SNAP E&T State Plan and budget.

**Cost allocation methodology**
All providers must provide a cost allocation methodology along with their work plans each year.

**Budget modifications**
All budget modification requests must be submitted as soon as possible to the contract manager. Budget modifications that require a contract amendment should be requested no later than July 1 for each federal fiscal year.

**Budget tips**
- Include a projected one year budget for the services that will be provided.
- The SNAP E&T program requires up-front funding from non-federal (with the exception of the Community Development Block Grant), eligible sources, in order to receive 50 percent reimbursement for SNAP E&T eligible expenditures. Further, SNAP E&T programs can leverage non-federal funds currently used for existing employment and training services.
- Funds must be claimed on a reimbursement basis. No payments in advance of or in anticipation of services or goods provided under this contract shall be requested or paid.

**Funding**
Minnesota utilizes two types of funding to support SNAP E&T programs. The program expectations and policies apply to both funding sources:

**Employment and Training program grants (100 percent funding)**
The Food and Nutrition Service provides grant money to fund a portion of the administrative and program costs of a SNAP E&T program. These grants are often called 100 percent funds, because it is 100 percent federal funding and must be used on the planning, implementation and operation of a state employment and training program. One-hundred percent money cannot be used for any participant reimbursements, such as transportation, uniforms or child care. Employment and training grants vary based on state work registrants and the number of time-limited individuals in a state. This funding may be allocated to counties and tribes to market, connect, and/or provide SNAP E&T services and is very limited. Additional allocation is subject to availability.

**50 percent reimbursement**
There are two kinds of 50 percent reimbursements that a state agency can claim. The first kind is a 50 percent reimbursement for administrative and program costs related to the planning, implementation, and operation of an employment and training program.

The second kind of 50 percent reimbursement that a state agency can claim is for participant reimbursements. The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 and SNAP regulations require that state agencies reimburse employment and training participants for all expenses that are reasonable, necessary and directly related to participation in an employment and training component. The federal government will reimburse 50 percent of non-federal payments for allowable expenses.

Funding is based on a 50 percent reimbursement basis, unless otherwise approved. The United States
Department of Agriculture, through the Minnesota Department of Human Services, will reimburse 50 percent of all allowable SNAP E&T expenses. The cost of all program operations, SNAP E&T services and participant reimbursements must be expended up front from a non-federal funding source, and then billed to the department for 50 percent of all eligible costs.

Funds received from reimbursement of SNAP E&T expenditures can be used to seek reimbursement again in future SNAP E&T invoices. This is known as reutilizing SNAP E&T funds. These funds must be received, spent on valid SNAP E&T costs, and invoiced through the regular invoicing process to reutilize SNAP E&T funds. There is no restriction on how reimbursed funds must be spent.

**Invoicing**

Minnesota Department of Human Services-contracted providers are required to submit reimbursement requests through the Enterprise Grant Management System. This is to be completed by the 20th of the month following the month the expense was incurred in accordance with the terms of the contract. If no expenses are incurred in the month, providers should submit a request for $0 in reimbursement. The reimbursement request should reflect 50% of the cost of services expended by the provider on eligible SNAP E&T costs.

To request a copy of the Enterprise Grant Management System User Guide, email Ashley Snyder at ashley.snyder@state.mn.us.

**Quarterly reports**

Program reports must be submitted to the Minnesota Department of Human Services’ contract managers by the end of the month following the end of the quarter. State staff will send information on participants served and reimbursements requested. Providers must verify this information and respond to narrative report questions. For more information or to request an electronic copy of the current Federal Fiscal Year Quarterly Report, send an email request to Ashley Snyder at ashley.snyder@state.mn.us.

**E&T Tip:**

One element of the quarterly report is support needed. This is an opportunity for providers to ask questions, clarify policy, and troubleshoot problems proactively. State staff will follow up on any requests for assistance.
Glossary of terms

**Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD)**—A SNAP recipient who is limited to receiving up to 3 months of SNAP food benefits within a 36-month period, unless the recipient meets, or is not subject to, the work requirement.

**Banked Months**—Additional months of SNAP benefits that allow Minnesota to extend SNAP eligibility for individuals who are time-limited. For more information on use of Banked Months, refer to the [SNAP Banked Months Guide](#) dated April 1, 2018.

**Enterprise Grant Management System (EGMS)**—The electronic system used by the Minnesota Department of Human Services contracted providers to enter monthly reimbursement requests.

**50 percent reimbursement**—An uncapped federal SNAP E&T reimbursement funding stream. The federal government reimburses 50 percent of non-federal funds used to serve non-Temporary Assistance for Needy Families SNAP recipients. Non-federal funds must not already be used as a match for other programs.

**Fiscal year**—The state fiscal year (SFY) cycle begins July 1 and ends June 30. The federal fiscal year (FFY) cycle begins October 1 and ends September 30.

**MAXIS**—The computer system used by state, county and tribal workers to determine eligibility for public assistance and health care programs.

**100 percent funding**—A fixed amount of federal dollars allocated to states for the administration of a SNAP E&T program that is based on the number of work registrants in the state.

**Participant**—A SNAP recipient participating in SNAP E&T.

**Point of contact**—County Agency and Tribal Nation point of contact for State-Contracted Providers, as identified by the County Agency or Tribal Nation. This may be the County Agency or Tribal Nation contracted provider.

**Quarterly report**—Report includes provider-specific information for each quarter of the federal fiscal year. This includes number of participant served, provider accomplishments, best practices and success stories.

**Recipient**—A person receiving SNAP food benefits.

**75 percent reimbursement**—An uncapped federal SNAP E&T reimbursement funding stream. The federal government reimburses 75 percent of non-federal funds used to serve non-Temporary Assistance for Needy Families SNAP recipients for services administered on a reservation for residents of the reservation. Non-federal funds must not already be used as a match for other programs.

**SNAP Eligibility: County Agency or Tribal Nation**—The local human services office where public
assistance benefits are determined.

**Time-limited participant**—Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD) who is subject to the work and time limit provisions.

**Workforce One (WF1)**—The web-based client management application used by nearly 2,000 state, city, county, and non-profit employment and training providers to track employment and training services.

**Workforce One MAXIS-Generated Program Sequence**—A program sequence used for enrolling a participant in Workforce One when a referral from MAXIS is received. Referrals are typically generated only for time-limited SNAP recipients. This referral can only be received by county or tribal providers operating in-house, or by county or tribal contracted providers.

**Workforce One User-Generated Program Sequence**—A program sequence created to enroll a participant in Workforce One when a referral from MAXIS is not received.

**Frequently asked questions**

**Q.** Will the Minnesota Department of Human Services complete monthly participant verifications on behalf of my agency or tribe?

**A.** No. The Department has provided all contracted providers with MAXIS Inquiry Access. This allows agencies and tribes to complete the required SNAP eligibility verifications in accordance with their contracts. It is expected that, at minimum, participant eligibility verifications are completed each month before a request for reimbursement is made.

**Q.** May mental health services be provided under SNAP E&T?

**A.** Persons in need of mental health services would likely be exempt from federal work registration requirements as mentally unfit for employment (refer to 7 CFR 273.7(b)(ii)). Therefore, mental health treatment itself is not a necessary participant cost and may not be funded by SNAP E&T. However, referral for mental health services and case management around the impact of mental health on employment may be part of SNAP E&T.

**Q.** Are there general guidelines that can be used to assess whether SNAP E&T expenditures are allowable?

**A.** To be allowable, expenditures must be necessary, reasonable, and directly related to an approved SNAP E&T program component.

A cost is reasonable if, in its nature and amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the costs. Reasonable costs:
• Provide a program benefit generally commensurate with the costs incurred;
• Are in proportion to other program costs for the function that the costs serve; and
• Are within the scope of SNAP E&T.

A cost is necessary if it is needed in the performance of the program. Necessary costs:
• Are incurred to carry out essential functions of SNAP E&T;
• May not be avoided without adversely affecting program operations;
• Are a priority expenditure relative to other demands on availability of administrative resources; and
• Do not duplicate existing efforts.

Refer to Guidance on Costs and Reimbursements for more information.

Q. What if an educational activity is normally available at no cost to participants because it is funded by a state or local government, but space and funds are limited and more classes would be required to serve SNAP E&T participants? Can a state agency use SNAP E&T funds to pay for additional classes?

A. No. If the educational activity is a state or local entitlement, SNAP E&T funds cannot be used to pay for expansion of classes or additional classes. For example, if a state or local government guarantees that all adults, age 21 and under, are entitled to a GED at no cost and the state funds this activity, SNAP E&T funds cannot be used to pay for these services nor can the funds the state provides be used for reimbursement. In another example, a state commits to pay for 30 percent of the operational expenses at its universities and community colleges. In this example, SNAP E&T funds cannot be used to pay for or reimburse any portion of that commitment and the state commitment cannot be used to draw down federal SNAP E&T reimbursement.

Q. What is the difference between a state match and a reimbursement?

A. SNAP E&T is a reimbursement program and not a matching program. In a reimbursement program, in order to be eligible for reimbursement, funds for allowable activities must be expended, after which Food and Nutrition Service reimburses the state for 50 percent of expenditures. In a matching program, the amount of funds made available to the state agency is simply matched on a dollar per dollar basis.

Q. Are advertising expenses eligible for reimbursement?

A. Yes. The Food and Nutrition Service’s SNAP Employment and Training Toolkit (p. 66) indicates that the federal 100 percent grant money can be used for any allowable cost that is necessary and reasonable for the planning, implementation or operation of the SNAP E&T program. This can include hiring a consultant to improve administration, marketing the SNAP E&T program and salaries for third-party providers, as well as state agency administration of SNAP E&T.

There are expenses for which 100 percent grant money may not be used. One-hundred percent grant money cannot be used to cover other non-SNAP E&T processes, such as the determination of SNAP
eligibility or disqualification from SNAP. SNAP E&T funds also cannot be used to pay for meals away from home.

The 50 percent reimbursement administrative funds can be used for the same purposes as the 100 percent federal grant.

Q. Are federal Community Development Block Grant funds used to pay for allowable SNAP E&T expenses reimbursable?

A. In general, federal funds cannot be reimbursed by other federal funds. However, there are some exceptions to this rule when authorized by federal legislation (7 CFR 277.4(d)). Community Development Block Grants may be used to cover SNAP E&T expenses and reimbursed with federal SNAP E&T money.

Q. How do I access the training region in MAXIS to complete the annual oath?

A. Enter CICSDT2 at the State of Minnesota screen and press ENTER. On the following page, put in the login ID and password and press ENTER. On the last screen enter FMTP. Now the user is in the training region. Sign the oath. After the oath is signed, log all the way out.

Q. How do I verify SNAP eligibility when a case is private in MAXIS?

A. When a case is marked private in MAXIS, SNAP E&T case managers should reach out directly to the eligibility worker to verify the participant is active on SNAP each month. The eligibility worker contact information can be found in MAXIS.

Q. What does it mean to have a voluntary SNAP E&T program?

A. Minnesota operates an all-voluntary SNAP E&T program, exempting all work registrants, including Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs), from mandatory participation in SNAP E&T. This means that no person can be sanctioned for not participating in SNAP E&T. ABAWDs that are subject to the work and time-limit provisions are still subject to these provisions, and can continue to earn additional months of food benefits by meeting the work requirement (for example, by participating in a qualifying work activity for an average of 20 hours per week).

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.
Recommended changes/additions to the Provider Handbook should be directed to:
Andrea McConnell at andrea.mcconnell@state.mn.us
## Appendix A

### Case Management Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complete?</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Form(s) Needed</th>
<th>System</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Verify participant is receiving SNAP.</strong></td>
<td>None or provider specific</td>
<td>MAXIS</td>
<td>SNAP E&amp;T Provider Handbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Date verified: _______________</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Complete Orientation.</strong> All participants require an orientation to SNAP E&amp;T. Orientation for time-limited participants must include additional information specific to their work requirements. Program intentionality must be case noted in WF1.**</td>
<td>Provider specific</td>
<td>WF1</td>
<td>Combined Manual Banked Months Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Complete Assessment.</strong></td>
<td>Provider specific</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>SNAP E&amp;T Provider Handbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Enroll participant in WF1 via User-Generated, or MAXIS-Generated Program Sequence.</strong></td>
<td>Pre-Enrollment Form Service Agreement Release of Information*</td>
<td>WF1</td>
<td>SNAP E&amp;T WF1 User Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Complete Employment Plan. Contents of plan must include: Date the plan was created, proposed employment and training activities, assessed employment barriers, referrals, if any, made to other service providers, participant signature, and hours required per activity if applicable. Indicate in WF1 if paper plan was created.</strong></td>
<td>Employment Plan (DHS or internal)</td>
<td>WF1</td>
<td>SNAP E&amp;T Provider Handbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Create participant file containing the following documents:</strong></td>
<td>Provider specific</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>SNAP E&amp;T Provider Handbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assessed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employment Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Release of Information*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Verify participant is receiving SNAP and case note (at least monthly).</strong></td>
<td>Provider specific</td>
<td>MAXIS</td>
<td>SNAP E&amp;T Provider Handbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Document Activities.</strong> Open activities in WF1 only after participant engages in them.**</td>
<td>Provider specific</td>
<td>WF1</td>
<td>SNAP E&amp;T WF1 User Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Document participation hours for time-limited participants.</strong></td>
<td>Provider specific</td>
<td>WF1</td>
<td>SNAP E&amp;T WF1 User Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Communicate participation hours for time-limited participants to the point of contact when minimum work requirement has been met.</strong></td>
<td>A tracking form may be used</td>
<td>WF1</td>
<td>SNAP E&amp;T Provider Handbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Document support services provided.</strong> This should be entered in the Support Services tab and case noted in WF1. Physical documentation must also be retained.**</td>
<td>None or provider specific</td>
<td>WF1</td>
<td>SNAP E&amp;T WF1 User Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Document credential and certificate attainment.</strong></td>
<td>None or provider specific</td>
<td>WF1</td>
<td>SNAP E&amp;T WF1 User Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Document employment information.</strong> This should include wage, employer and hours. If applicable, document retention services provided.**</td>
<td>None or provider specific</td>
<td>WF1</td>
<td>SNAP E&amp;T WF1 User Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Exit participant from SNAP E&amp;T program.</strong> Communicate case closure to point of contact for time-limited participants with exit reason, and any other relevant information, if applicable.**</td>
<td>None or provider specific</td>
<td>WF1</td>
<td>SNAP E&amp;T WF1 User Manual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Not a policy requirement, provider can choose to complete this step*