

Subject SNAP eligibility; students enrolled in higher education

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Summary

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a federal program that increases the food purchasing power of low-income households. Students attending institutes of higher education more than half-time are only eligible for SNAP benefits under certain exemptions in federal law, including attendance at a state-approved local educational program that increases employability.

This bill addresses SNAP eligibility for students enrolled in higher education. Subdivision 1 requires the commissioner of human services to issue a guidance letter to counties and public postsecondary institutions in Minnesota by September 1, 2024, that:

- 1) clarifies eligibility requirements for programs to be state-approved local educational programs that qualify for the student exemption for SNAP eligibility;
- 2) clarifies the application and approval process for state approval as a qualifying local educational program for the student exemption for SNAP eligibility; and
- 3) states that a student enrolled at a four-year Minnesota public postsecondary institution with an approved campus-based program may not receive SNAP benefits unless eligible for a federal Pell grant.

Subdivision 2 specifies certification application requirements for qualifying postsecondary institutions. Subdivision 3 requires the commissioner to approve eligible programs and to maintain a list of approved programs on the department's website. Subdivision 4 specifies that a student enrolled at a four-year Minnesota public postsecondary institution with an approved campus-based program may not receive SNAP benefits unless eligible for a federal Pell grant.

Subdivision 5 requires an annual report to the legislature that includes information on: (1) the number of approved qualifying local education programs; (2) the number of pending applications; and (3) the number of denied applications, and the reason for denial.