

**Subject** SNAP as medicine program

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## Overview

SNAP is a program that increases the food purchasing power of low-income households. Under federal regulations, an otherwise eligible able-bodied adult who is between the ages of 18 and 52 and is without dependents (ABAWD) is only eligible to receive food support for three months in a 36-month period, unless the person is exempt from the time limit or is meeting the monthly work requirements. After using up these “three free months” of eligibility, in order to “earn” additional months of eligibility for food support, the ABAWD must work at least 80 hours per month, or must participate in employment and training activities. A person is excused from these work requirements and time limits if the person:

- is unable to work due to a physical or mental limitation
- is pregnant
- has someone under age 18 in the person’s SNAP household
- is excused from the general work requirements
- is a veteran
- is experiencing homelessness
- is age 24 or younger and in foster care on their 18th birthday

This bill, as amended, establishes the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as medicine program, to provide a monthly benefit of \$175 and assistance with obtaining medical or behavioral health assessments for eligible program participants who are at risk of losing SNAP benefits due to federal time limits. The bill also requires a two-year moratorium on terminating food assistance for eligible individuals, requires a report to the legislature, and appropriates money for the program.

## Summary

Section	Description
1	<p><b>SNAP as medicine program.</b></p> <p>Proposes coding for section 256D.59.</p> <p><b>Subd. 1. Purpose; establishment.</b> Establishes the SNAP as medicine program and lists the purposes of the program, to serve adults at significant risk of hunger due to federal SNAP time limits.</p> <p><b>Subd. 2. Definitions.</b> Defines “commissioner;” “community navigator;” “department;” and “internet telepresence” for purposes of this section.</p> <p><b>Subd. 3. Eligibility.</b> Specifies that a participant must meet the following requirements to be eligible for the SNAP as medicine program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ be 18 to 54 years old</li><li>▪ be eligible for medical assistance or MinnesotaCare</li><li>▪ be subject to the federal SNAP program time limits</li><li>▪ meet all other federal SNAP requirements</li></ul> <p><b>Subd. 4. Food benefits assessment.</b> Paragraph (a) requires the county agency or Tribe to attempt to meet with a program participant within 30 days or connect the participant with a community navigator. Allows for a participant’s existing case manager to conduct a SNAP as medicine assessment for the participant. Requires the county or Tribe to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ determine whether the participant’s loss of SNAP benefits can be explained by illness, injury, addiction, disability, or homelessness;</li><li>▪ determine whether the participant is eligible for an exemption to the federal SNAP time limits;</li><li>▪ assist the participant with obtaining a medical or behavioral health assessment that may identify barriers to the participant complying with SNAP time limits; and</li><li>▪ identify resources to assist a participant with complying with federal SNAP time limits.</li></ul> <p>Paragraph (b) requires the county or Tribe to send a participant a written notice of the purposes of the SNAP as medicine program if the county or Tribe was unable to contact the participant under paragraph (a).</p> <p>Paragraph (c) requires a caseworker to refer a participant to the appropriate provider if the participant may meet a federal exemption. Requires the participant to be immediately placed in the SNAP as medicine program while waiting for an assessment from a provider.</p>

Section	Description
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Paragraph (d) requires that a participant exit the SNAP as medicine program and convert to the federal SNAP program, if the participant is determined eligible for an exemption.

Paragraph (e) requires that a participant exit the SNAP as medicine program and convert to the federal SNAP program, if the county or Tribe determines that the participant is able to consistently meet federal SNAP requirements.

**Subd. 5. Health care enrollment.** Requires ongoing eligibility for medical assistance or MinnesotaCare to be eligible for the SNAP as medicine program.

**Subd. 6. Benefits issuance and monthly amount.** Establishes monthly benefit amount of \$175 for eligible participants.

**Subd. 7. Sustainable solutions to food insecurity for single adults.** Requires the commissioner to collaborate with specified stakeholders to develop recommendations for possible federal waivers and state measures to address food insecurity for adults in Minnesota, including but not limited to pursuing a SNAP as medicine federal demonstration waiver.

**2 SNAP as medicine program; evaluation.**

Requires the commissioner of human services to study the impact of the SNAP as medicine program and submit a report to the legislature by January 1, 2027.

**3 Moratorium on case closures.**

Between July 1, 2024, and July 1, 2026, requires the responsible commissioner to enact an emergency moratorium on the termination of food assistance for adults eligible for medical assistance or MinnesotaCare who do not have a current medical or behavioral health assessment indicating the adult's ability to consistently comply with federal SNAP time limit requirements.

**4 Appropriation; SNAP as medicine program.**

Appropriates money in fiscal year 2025 from the general fund to the commissioner of human services for the SNAP as medicine program.



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