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This Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) Plan Guidance provides instructions for developing and submitting State nutrition education and obesity prevention grant program plans, commonly referred to as State SNAP-Ed Plans. It describes Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) expectations regarding State SNAP-Ed requirements and includes more examples of activities that can be used in SNAP-Ed programming. Some sections have been broadened to provide additional instructions and in some places new information has been added.

Sections that include new content or have significant revisions will be marked with text reading

New!, with new material in purple and the end of the new section marked with “End of new material.” to assist users in identifying this information. Additional minor edits throughout have been made to assure consistency and to correct insignificant editorial and grammatical issues. Activities that are State requirements or FNS expectations, or are significant to program implementation are set in bold type to facilitate identification.

The FY 2018 SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance supersedes previous releases and provides instructions to States to implement all provisions of Section 28 of the FNA.

New! in 2018 Plan Guidance

FNS continues to support enhancement of SNAP-Ed services by providing improvements and clarifications in the SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance. This year, FNS made the following revisions to improve program operations:

- Clarification on developing evaluation tools
- Information about the Healthy Corner Stores Guide
- Clarification on SNAP promotion in social marketing
- Guidelines for sharing SNAP participant data
- Guidance for multi-year plans
- Updated EARS form information
- Updated Civil Rights Nondiscrimination Statement guidance for printed materials
- Removal of resource links pages, which will now be available online at the SNAP-Ed Connection https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/

End of new material.
Summary of Regulations and Background

The SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance includes provisions of the Food and Nutrition Act (FNA) of 2008, Section 28, as amended by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA), and the SNAP: Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Grant Program Final Rule.

The final rule, SNAP: Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Grant Program, adopts the amended interim rule published April 5, 2013 to implement the SNAP Education (SNAP-Ed) provisions of the HHFKA. The rule also implements a provision of the Agricultural Act of 2014 to authorize physical activity promotion in addition to promotion of healthy food choices as part of this nutrition education and obesity prevention program.

Highlights include:

- States must present a valid and data-driven needs assessment of nutrition, physical activity, and obesity prevention needs of the target population and their barriers to accessing healthy foods and physical activity in the State SNAP-Ed Plan.
- States are required to consult and coordinate with State and local operators of other FNS programs to ensure SNAP-Ed activities complement the nutrition education and obesity prevention efforts of these programs.
- Under this rule, States must implement two or more of the following approaches to deliver evidence-based nutrition education and obesity prevention activities that are based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA)
  - individual or group-based nutrition education, health promotion, and intervention strategies;
  - comprehensive, multi-level interventions; and
  - community and public health approaches.

To enhance their efforts, FNS encourages State agencies to integrate multiple complementary approaches when implementing SNAP-Ed.

- SNAP-Ed funds are allocated annually for a two-year period of performance. States must obligate these funds in a timely manner or funds are at risk of being returned to FNS or otherwise reallocated. To assist with the management of funds, States must now inform FNS by the end of the first quarter of each fiscal year, of 1) any funds that were carried over from the prior fiscal year to the current fiscal year and 2) the amount which the State cannot or does not plan to obligate for SNAP-Ed activities within the two-year period of performance.
- The target audience for SNAP-Ed is defined as SNAP participants and low-income individuals eligible to receive SNAP benefits or other means-tested Federal assistance programs, such as Medicaid or Temporary Assistance for

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Needy Families, as well as individuals residing in communities with a significant low-income population.

States must meet SNAP-Ed statutory, regulatory, and policy recommendations including:

- Implementing policy, systems, and environmental change (PSE) approaches, such as multi-level interventions and community and public health approaches in addition to individual or group-based (direct) nutrition education, to deliver effective, evidence-based nutrition education and obesity prevention programming.
- Coordinating with and complementing nutrition education and obesity prevention services delivered in other U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) nutrition and education programs, as well as other federal nutrition and nutrition education programs.
  - Programs for partnership include the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), among others.
- Partnering with other national, State, and local initiatives to further the reach and impact of SNAP-Ed activities.
  - Developing and enhancing partnerships is critical to instituting multi-level interventions and community and public health approaches in communities.
- Evaluating SNAP-Ed interventions using evaluation indicators across the Social-Ecological Model, such as those identified in FNS’s SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework, that are specific to each intervention and the overall plan’s impact using appropriate outcome measures and indicators.

The method for determining State SNAP-Ed allocations is based on State shares of SNAP-Ed expenditures in addition to State shares of SNAP participation. For FY 2018 and each year thereafter, the ratio of expenditures to participation is a 50/50 weighting of expenditures to participation. Estimated FY 2018 allocations to assist States in preparing their FY 2018 Plan budgets are attached to the transmittal correspondence accompanying this document.

New! Per the Final Rule on SNAP Promotion, recruitment activities designed to persuade an individual to apply for SNAP benefits; television, radio, or billboard advertisements that are designed to promote SNAP benefits and enrollment; or
agreements with foreign governments designed to promote SNAP benefits and enrollment are prohibited.

For SNAP-Ed, information regarding SNAP enrollment should not be placed on any billboard, radio, television or video recording that may be part of a SNAP-Ed intervention. Basic SNAP Information or a link to SNAP information may be placed on handouts, brochures, recipes, etc. only.

Want to find the full text of the regulations and resources listed above? You can find them at:

- **Food and Nutrition Act (FNA) of 2008, Section 28:**
- **Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA):**

**SNAP: Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Grant Program Final Rule:**
https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/03/31/2016-07179/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-nutrition-education-and-obesity-prevention-grant-program

- **SNAP Promotion Final Rule:**
  https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/12/20/2016-30621/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-promotion
- **2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA):**
  https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/

End of new material.

**Evidence-Based Interventions:**

The Food and Nutrition Service emphasizes that all projects and interventions in State SNAP-Ed Plans must be evidence-based as required by the FNA and the Final Rule. Evidence-based interventions are defined in the Definitions section of the Overview and include research-based, practice-based, and emerging interventions. State and implementing agency staff are expected to thoroughly review the Overview Section including the SNAP-Ed Guiding Principles as this section describes evidence-based interventions that are required and the types of approaches that must be used.
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The SNAP-Ed Strategies and Interventions: An Obesity Prevention Toolkit for States, which is also known as the SNAP-Ed Toolkit, features evidence-based policy, systems, and environmental changes that support education and social marketing and provides ways to evaluate interventions across various settings. It was developed by the National Collaborative on Childhood Obesity Research (NCCOR) at the request of FNS. The last toolkit was released in January 2016 and updated in April 2016 with the help of The Center for Training and Research Translation (CenterTRT) and the Association of SNAP Nutrition Education Administrators (ASNNA). Updates to the toolkit will continue to add strategies and interventions that are being used successfully to address obesity in communities across the nation. The USDA’s Regional Nutrition and Obesity Prevention Centers of Excellence (RNECEs) launched an interactive version of the toolkit to make it easier for States to use for developing their SNAP-Ed plans. The interactive SNAP-Ed Toolkit can be found at https://snapedtoolkit.org/.