

### **Background**

From October 1, 1993 to September 30, 1996, the Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture sponsored demonstration projects in Georgia, Hawaii, Missouri, South Dakota, and Texas to demonstrate the feasibility and effectiveness of operating the Food Stamp Employment and Training (E&T) program under the same legislative and regulatory terms as the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) program for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) recipients. Common objectives of the demonstrations were to increase compliance with E&T participation requirements among mandatory work registrants, target services to individuals most at risk of long-term dependency and those most likely to benefit from E&T services, improve participant outcomes, and improve the cost efficiency of welfare to work services.

States conformed their E&T programs to the JOBS model by changing their participation rules and E&T service designs. Each state was also required to design and arrange for an independent evaluation of its demonstration. The first volume of this report synthesizes the implementation and process evaluations of the demonstrations in the states. The second volume is a synthesis of the states' impact and cost evaluations.

The implementation and process evaluations focus primarily on the objectives of the demonstration and how the states designed their programs. Outcomes are covered in the impact and cost evaluations. These impact evaluations provide evidence of at most modest improvements in participant outcomes. Some of the state findings include:

- Client targeting criteria and service approaches established for poor households with dependent children do not automatically make sense when transferred to the Food Stamp Program, since the demographics and participation dynamics of Food Stamp recipients can vary significantly from those of the AFDC population.
- Intensive services were provided to a limited number of work registrants under the demonstration. It is unclear how the provision of these services would have affected outcomes for those work registrants who did not receive them, but probably would have under the regular Food Stamp E&T Program.
- Selective targeting to priority groups can increase services to these groups. However, providing supportive services such as child care assistance to E&T participants may entice them to stay on the Food Stamp Program longer.

The experiences from the demonstration states suggest that regulatory conformance and administrative consolidation between E&T and JOBS is administratively feasible at the state and local level. However, the findings described above may cast doubt as to whether such conformance improves outcomes for E&T participants. Moreover, the world of welfare to work has changed since these demonstrations were first authorized. Welfare reform replaced the AFDC program with state Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grants and brought about significant changes to the Food Stamp E&T program.

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