

May 1, 2019

The Honorable <Name>  
Commissioner  
SNAP State Agency  
Address  
City, State ZIP

Dear Commissioner <Name>:

I want to draw your attention to a memorandum sent to your State today by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) regarding State options for child support enforcement policy in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The child support program serves more than 15 million children each year, lifting more than one million people out of poverty entirely and moving millions more children closer to escaping poverty. Current statistics show that, since its creation, the child support program has disbursed nearly \$588 billion in needed child support, including \$27.4 billion in Fiscal Year 2017 alone. I encourage you to consider this opportunity to serve families in a more meaningful way.

Unfortunately, too few single-parent families enrolled in SNAP receive child support at all, with even fewer receiving the full amount they deserve. This not only leaves families without the support they deserve, but also increases their reliance on public assistance programs. The child support program has a strong track record of increasing the likelihood of collecting child support.

States have many opportunities to help parents assume responsibility for the economic, social well-being, health, and stability of their children. One such option is to require that custodial and non-custodial parents cooperate with State child support agencies as a condition of SNAP eligibility. This option brings States' SNAP policies in line with policies in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program and the Medicaid program, and is long-standing SNAP policy.

While these State options are long-standing SNAP policy, FNS stands ready to provide technical assistance to any State interested in implementing these flexibilities. Increasing the number of States that implement child support cooperation requirements will benefit families, help non-custodial parents assume responsibility for the well-being and stability of their children, and provide more children with the support they deserve.

The Honorable <Name>

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I appreciate your partnership in helping SNAP families gain access to this critical nutrition program and support to move out of poverty. I look forward to working with you as we strive to better serve our participants and enhance our Program in meaningful and substantive ways.

Regards,

/s/

Brandon Lipps  
Acting Deputy Under Secretary  
Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services

Enclosure

