ASSEMBLY, No. 649

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:
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SYNOPSIS

Requires State to pledge to ensure availability of job training or similar activities to certain Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program recipients to prevent loss of benefits.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.

AN ACT concerning the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training Program and supplementing Title 44 of the Revised Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. a. As used in this section:

"Able-bodied adults without dependents" has the same meaning as set forth in 7 CFR 273.7.

"SNAP" means the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program established pursuant to the federal "Food and Nutrition Act of 2008," Pub.L.110-246 (7 U.S.C. s.2011 et seq.).

b. A State SNAP Employment and Training Plan that is submitted to the federal Food and Nutrition Service on or after the effective date of this act shall include a pledge by the State to ensure the availability of education, training, or workfare opportunities that will permit participating able-bodied adults without dependents to remain eligible for SNAP beyond the three-month time limit for SNAP benefits established pursuant to 7 U.S.C. s.2015(d) and 7 CFR 273.24(f). The SNAP Employment and Training Plan shall conform to all federal requirements in order to qualify the State to receive additional federal funding as may be available in relation to the provision of qualifying work activities to able-bodied adults without dependents.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill would require the State to pledge to ensure the availability of education, training, or workfare opportunities that will permit certain participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, also called food stamps) to remain eligible for benefits beyond the current three-month time limit.

Current federal rules establish a time limit of three months of SNAP eligibility during any three-year period for "able-bodied adults without dependents" or "ABAWDs" if they are unable to find qualifying employment, education, job training, or workfare activities. Historically, this time limit has generally been waived in New Jersey in regions of the State with high unemployment; however, the Department of Human Services declined to request any such waivers for 2016, which may result in an estimated 11,000 individuals losing SNAP benefits. The State can help these individuals avoid the loss of SNAP benefits, while simultaneously

preparing these individuals for long-term employment, by ensuring the availability of qualifying education, training, or workfare opportunities. By pledging to ensure this availability, the State would also qualify to receive a portion of the $20 million in federal funds allocated for such "pledge states."

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development currently operates the SNAP Employment & Training Program, which is funded with a combination of State and federal funds.