

ASSEMBLY HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 4241

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: AUGUST 10, 2020

The Assembly Human Services Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 4241.

As amended by the committee, this bill requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to conduct a biennial survey for the purpose of evaluating the experience of applicants and beneficiaries under the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The survey is to include, at a minimum, questions concerning: the applicant's experience in navigating the SNAP application process; any difficulties the applicant encountered in the application process; the availability of consumer support at the county welfare agency; and how well the applicant's questions and concerns were addressed by staff at the county welfare agency.

The purpose of each biennial survey is to: identify the strengths and weaknesses of each county welfare agency in processing SNAP applications; formulate trainings or strategies to improve the processing of SNAP applications; and assess which counties require additional resource and staff support. Each survey is to be distributed to SNAP applicants at each county welfare agency and the resulting survey data is to be made available through the DHS website. Within 18 months after each biennial survey is completed, the commissioner is to submit a report to the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee and the Assembly Human Services Committee, or their successor committees, documenting the results of the biennial survey and providing the commissioner's recommendations for legislation or other appropriate action.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to require the SNAP survey to be conducted on a biennial basis (once every two years). The amendments also require the Commissioner of Human Services to file a report in association with each biennial survey, and to submit each report directly to the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee and the Assembly Human Services Committee or their successor committees, instead of submitting the report to the full Legislature. The amendments also make minor technical changes to improve clarity, to ensure the correct use of department names, and to update the bill's synopsis.