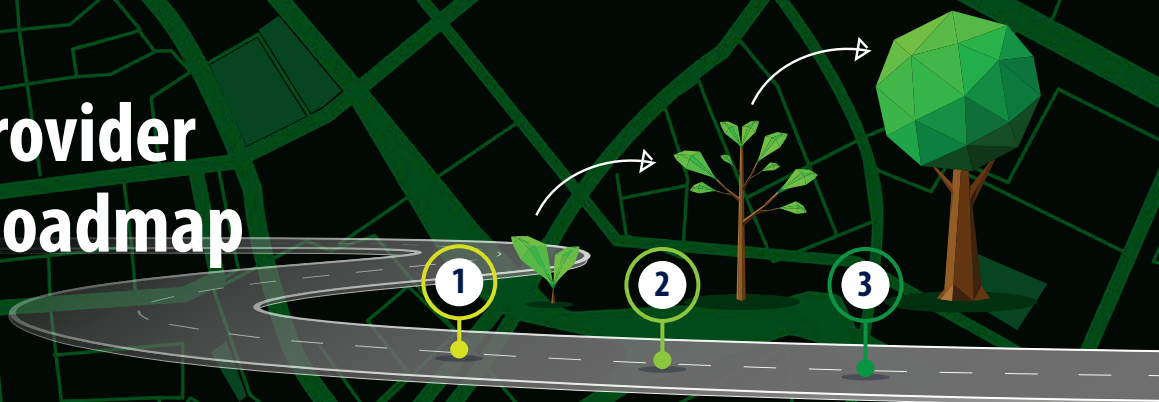


SNAP E&T Provider Readiness Roadmap Part 3



This guide is the final portion of a three-part series designed to help community action agencies (CAA) better understand their alignment and readiness to become third-party providers in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) program.

The Provider Readiness Roadmap Part III is for community-based organizations (CBOs) or Community Action Agencies (CAAs) who have been operating SNAP E&T for at least one year and who are ready to take steps to assess how they can enhance or grow their SNAP E&T programs. [Read Part 1 Here](#) | [Read Part 2 Here](#)

Reassess External Factors

State and County Policy Changes

Has the SNAP E&T program in your state/county changed? Consider if there are new initiatives, priorities, or SNAP E&T components being offered. Has the SNAP E&T agency changed in capacity? Has there been staff and leadership turnover? Are new policies or processes in place, such as referral and screening processes, changes in Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD) time limits, mandatory SNAP E&T participation requirements, or changes in SNAP eligibility requirements? These changes in policy can have an impact on participant eligibility as well as demand for services. Becoming aware of how best to support participants whose SNAP benefits are conditional on participation or work requirements can help to ensure that they stay in compliance, keep their food benefits, and remain eligible for SNAP E&T. Some agencies have a particular focus on specific populations. Understanding the demographics that exist locally and within your SNAP program can help you tailor services to meet their particular needs.



CBOs and CAAs might face capacity constraints to offering a higher level of support, so factoring in how best to respond to external program changes should also include an exploration of possible community partnerships to connect participants to the right level of support to help them succeed.

Federal Policy Changes

Are there any changes to the Farm Bill (Food and Nutrition Act of 2008), federal rules, or guidance that will change SNAP E&T policy? The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, often referred to as the Farm Bill, contains laws that govern SNAP E&T at the federal level. The Farm Bill is typically reauthorized every five years. It is important to stay aware of what changes might come out of reauthorization. For example, the 2018 Farm Bill established new requirements to include case management with every SNAP E&T component. Consider SNAP E&T policies and how they impact your participants. Be sure to engage your policy advocates and consult with them about how current policies potentially benefit or impede the success of people participating in SNAP E&T. Along with the Farm Bill, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) also has the authority to establish federal rules and guidance on the administration of SNAP E&T, in addition to reviewing and approving each state's State Plan. Communicate closely with your state or local human services agency SNAP E&T leads to receiving direct guidance on the impact of policy changes.

Reassess Your Internal Feasibility

When thinking about what is next for your program, think back to your original areas of alignment with SNAP E&T. Within these areas, it can be helpful to reassess based on new internal factors such as changes in staffing, nonfederal funding streams, or a more realistic sense of volume of eligible participants based on performance over the past year or more. Even if you lack the resources needed to make all potential changes to your SNAP E&T program, you can use what you learn through reassessment to inform the direction of strategic plans for growth.

Funding

SNAP E&T Budgeting. Reassess your budget to determine if allowable expenses have been omitted. New SNAP E&T providers are often encouraged to start small and identify one specific area of programming to start their SNAP E&T contracts. As time goes on, it might be the case that other program elements emerge as opportunities for SNAP E&T, or further analysis of expenses can identify new eligible costs that can be added to budgets.

Funding Opportunities. Consider whether there are funding opportunities that could better support your programming and whether your status as a SNAP E&T partner could be a compelling part of a proposal for funding by making the case to funders that their investment goes further because you leverage those funds to bring in federal reimbursement.

Reimbursement dollars. Remember, once reimbursed, 50/50 funds lose their federal identity and become unrestricted, meaning they can be used in a variety of ways to enhance your services. Note that your state, county, or intermediary might place requirements or expectations for how reimbursement dollars are used. It is always important to refer to your contract and local program guidelines to inform your strategy for using reimbursement dollars. For example, in Washington State, new providers must wait one year before they can reinvest reimbursement dollars into their program and again claim SNAP E&T reimbursement.

CBOs and CAAs often use reimbursement dollars to increase support services for people participating in SNAP E&T, to fund programming for clients who do not qualify under other funding streams (including SNAP E&T) or to add staffing capacity to accommodate program needs or program growth.



Services

Are there services that you could be adding to better support people participating in SNAP E&T? Or are there existing service pathways that your agency can open up to people participating in SNAP E&T? Consider where there might be opportunities in this area.

It is also important to assess whether the support services you have been offering are meeting the needs of and effectively removing barriers for participants. You can assess impact by measuring outcomes or soliciting direct feedback from participants. When making this assessment, consider the capacity of your organization to tailor services to better meet the needs of participants. If you lack the capacity to expand in this way, consider what services are being offered by community partners and how you can best connect participants to those services.

Capacity

Staffing. Is your current staffing structure set up to support your SNAP E&T operations now and for any planned growth? Do you need to add staff or reassign roles? Consider whether you are on track to use reimbursement dollars to help support staffing capacity. Even if you partner with other community service providers, it is still essential to ensure that you have the adequate staffing capacity to support SNAP E&T operations.

Data & Reporting. Are your tracking systems operating effectively to track SNAP E&T participation? Consider whether you have been able to provide accurate and thorough reports to the SNAP E&T agency. Consider also if you are able to track and communicate participant progress effectively across departments. Measuring impact and tracking outcomes leads to improved decision-making and can also be helpful for communicating with potential funders.



Participants

Are there eligible clients receiving services in your organization who are not getting connected to SNAP and SNAP E&T? There are likely to be clients who are eligible for SNAP and SNAP E&T but do not know it or do not feel confident or comfortable with the application process. Once eligible participants are enrolled, are their needs being met as they participate in SNAP E&T?

Now that you have established relationships with your SNAP agency inquire about the possibility of being connected with SNAP Outreach providers to establish resources for clients to enroll in SNAP, eliminating time and transportation barriers. Some CAAs and CBOs also contract as SNAP Outreach Providers. If the organization utilizes Benefits Navigators, ensure they are educated on SNAP and SNAP E&T as a resource. *Note that helping participants sign up for SNAP is not a reimbursable SNAP E&T activity, but it can still be a worthwhile enhancement that has a direct, positive impact on your clients in general as well as your SNAP E&T program.*

Establishing a Process for Assessment and Continuous Improvement

Use Data to Inform Program

Having a system to track client needs, progress while in employment and training, utilization of supportive services, other referrals, and program outcomes allows you to assess what investments are the most impactful in supporting client success.

Assess whether you spent more or less than projected on any specific service, such as transportation or digital support. You have an opportunity to correct your course with your next SNAP E&T budget, planning for investments that make the most sense for client success and with potential expansion in mind.

Consider comparing SNAP E&T participant information and successes to that of the broader organization statistics and make a note of anything that stands out. It may be beneficial, where possible, to disaggregate data by client demographics to assess for and address potential disproportionalities in service delivery and outcomes.

Develop Participant Feedback Channels

In assessing all of these factors and when considering how best to enhance your SNAP E&T program, participant voice should be a part of your assessment process and can inform what specific changes you can make to your services to better meet participant needs.

Consider Timing

State SNAP agencies and their intermediaries begin planning for their upcoming SNAP E&T State Plan around June, but sometimes as early as March, to be ready to submit to FNS by August 15. It is important to factor in this planning cycle when you conduct your internal assessments. Identify areas for modification in the scope and budgets of your SNAP E&T contracts so you can be ready to request those changes when SNAP E&T agencies request information. When requesting changes to your budget and scope, be ready to share justifications for these changes and share your process for continuous analysis and improvement with your SNAP E&T agency. The ability to make changes throughout the year is dependent on the state or local policy. Some states are more tolerant of changes outside the state plan cycle, while others place strict limitations.

Sample Assessment and Planning Timeline

(For programs/contracts operating during the Federal Fiscal Year)



For more information and resources on SNAP E&T, please visit the [SNAP E&T Third-Party Partnerships Resource Clearinghouse](#).

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