What outcomes are required for SNAP E&T?

SNAP is focused on increasing food security while SNAP E&T, a program within SNAP, is focused on helping SNAP participants gain skills needed to improve their employment prospects (employment is clearly tied to economic mobility, increased income and food security). SNAP does have outcomes related to program integrity and participation rates (potential eligible for SNAP compared to actual SNAP enrollments), but meeting these outcomes is not part of SNAP E&T or the responsibility of SNAP E&T partners. SNAP E&T tracks similar outcome measures as WIOA. While outcomes must be reported by State agencies to USDA/FNS, they are not tied to funding.

Is SNAP E&T the same across all States?

While SNAP E&T is a required element of every State's SNAP program, States have great flexibility in how their SNAP E&T programs are designed and operated. It is safe to say that no two SNAP E&T programs are alike. Variables include the number of SNAP participants being served, whether SNAP E&T participation is mandatory for SNAP recipients, whether SNAP and therefore SNAP E&T is State or County administered in that State, the quantity and types of SNAP E&T third party partners, and the range of SNAP E&T components offered. So, while federal regulations provide a framework for SNAP E&T across the U.S., those interested in better understanding SNAP E&T in their State should consult with their State agency. For more information on individual states, please refer to the State Information Guide.

How much money can we receive through a SNAP E&T contract? And is it a set amount for each County or based on some population calculation?

A contract may be paid by either 100% funds or 50-50 funds. 50-50 funds mean the state, county, or third-party provider pays for allowable SNAP E&T expenses with non-federal funds and is then reimbursed up to 50% of those costs by the federal government. 100% funds are capped at the State level and presumably, within States, by County, based on the relative number of SNAP work registrants. Accordingly, there is a cap on how much a State or County could spend using 100% funds on any contracted partner. However, there is no set amount for 50-50 funding: it is currently uncapped at the federal level. While 100% funds are an option, 50-50 funds are where the greater potential for enhancing services and are more commonly used to fund third-party contracts. Some State or County SNAP agencies might approve contracts with pre-established service levels and dollar amounts, but generally, a 50-50 SNAP E&T budget is determined only by your capacity and available non-federal funds (including CDBG funds) to apply to SNAP E&T services.

How can Community Action Agencies (CAA) use their 50% reimbursement funds?

Partner providers contracted to receive SNAP E&T 50-50 reimbursement funds typically use these funds to build capacity in their programs, either by offering a wider array of services including support services (participant reimbursements) or increasing the number of participants served. State or County SNAP agencies might look at proposed use of reimbursed funds as a factor in their provider selection, but often it takes a while for new providers to grasp how to best use their added capacity. State SNAP agencies can sometimes offer guidance for providers during monitoring to suggest ways they could increase their level of reimbursement by finding additional allowable costs or help them with outreach strategies to bring in more participants.

How can a CAA apply to be a SNAP E&T provider?

It depends, as each State (or County) SNAP agency has its own process for screening potential SNAP E&T provider partners. Some States have a formal RFP that is released on a schedule, while others have informal processes, including processes that are ongoing in which new providers can be added at any time of year. More information on individual states and their application process can be found in the State Information Guide. Typically, contracts will last for a full federal fiscal year (or if a provider is contracted mid-year, until the end of the federal fiscal year). Additionally, States have discretion as to how often they repeat their selection process for providers who are currently contracted; however it is common that providers only go through the selection process once and then re-negotiate their contracts on an annual basis (federal fiscal year).

There is already a SNAP E&T provider in our area who serves multiple counties and has been doing so for many years. Does a Community Action Agency with a smaller footprint have a chance at getting this contract?

Yes! The SNAP agency does not have to choose a single provider to represent a geographic area; in fact, it should be in the agency's best interest to add multiple provider partners to increase the variety and range of services available to SNAP E&T participants and the number that can be served. Consider how participants are being served by this other provider and whether you offer something unique and even complementary. Think about how SNAP E&T can help you improve on what you are currently offering, which is already operating alongside what this other provider is offering.

We serve a small number of participants compared to other providers. Should we go after this contract for our current scale, so we are best aligning services or attempt to expand beyond our usual footprint?

Starting with what you currently offer is a good idea. You can always expand your reach as your program becomes more established and you see the opportunity to increase your capacity, including by employing new 50% reimbursement funds from SNAP E&T.

How often do States select new SNAP E&T providers? Is there an RFP?

Provider selection timelines vary from State to State (and do not always involve an RFP, depending on a State's procurement processes). But contracts typically run on the Federal Fiscal Year of October through September. States often prefer to identify new providers sometime before their annual SNAP E&T State Plans are due to USDA/FNS (in mid-August) because they must include all proposed providers and their combined budgets and service levels in these Plans that determine the amount of funding FNS will make available to the State for the upcoming FFY. Once FNS approves the State Plan, the State knows it will have the funding to contract providers. All this said, States are free to engage new providers at any time during the year and can amend their State Plans accordingly.

Can TANF recipients participate in SNAP E&T?

TANF recipients are not eligible to participate in SNAP E&T therefore a provider would not be able to get SNAP E&T 50% reimbursement for services provided to that participant.

Do you help people get on SNAP before they can be served in SNAP E&T?

For SNAP E&T, all participants must be receiving SNAP benefits to participate in SNAP E&T. SNAP E&T providers, especially Community Action Agencies, can and often do help participants who are not yet on SNAP to apply for SNAP benefits through their local SNAP office. One important consideration for SNAP E&T is that activities associated with enrolling a participant in SNAP cannot be supported with SNAP E&T funds.

We currently have an accounting system set up to serve LIHEAP funds. What other investments would be needed on the accounting side to be able to take on SNAP E&T?

It is likely that you have the necessary infrastructure in place and your experience managing other federal programs is helpful, too, for SNAP E&T. You might need to make minor modifications to add specific fields or programs to those existing systems but having a robust accounting system already in place will likely make it an easier lift. If you are receiving 50-50 funds, you will need to demonstrate to the State agency when billing for reimbursement that the expenses for which you are seeking reimbursement were covered by non-federal funds.

Describe the level of staff support needed to manage this contract.

This depends on the size of your SNAP E&T program, processes, and procedures in your State, and other factors. Typically, depending on your current staffing structure, it could involve adding a limited level of new staffing capacity, or possibly, spreading the effort across existing staff. Typical functions include:

- Fiscal/accounting
- Program administration
- Data and reporting
- Frontline (direct) service

Most partner providers, especially those utilizing 50-50 SNAP E&T funds, are not developing a new set of "SNAP E&T services" but are using E&T funds to support their current programming, and thus the staffing is already in place. Limited new capacity is more typically needed to support new functions associated with the SNAP E&T contract administration, such as referral and eligibility processes, data reporting, etc.

Does a provider of supportive services need to have a formal relationship with the provider of the component? or can they be contracted directly w/SNAP E&T and draw down funds (so longs as it's a legitimate supportive service attached to a component)?

No formal relationship between providers is necessary so long as the supportive service provider and component provider are both contracted with the state or county SNAP E&T agency and are part of the approved SNAP E&T State Plan.

For more information, please contact Steph Smith, Senior Associate,
National Community Action Partnership ssmith@communityactionpartnership.com

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