

SNAP Certification Notices Technical Assistance

Client: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service

Overview

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) certification notices are the primary way state agencies communicate with people in need of food assistance. Developing effective SNAP notices can be a challenge. For example, there may be difficulty in clearly conveying SNAP decisions to clients, the reasoning behind them, and required actions—especially when the household’s situation is complex. The communications must also meet numerous federal and state policies, and state-automated systems may impose constraints on the tone, content, and appearance of notices.

Insight is building on the successes of the SNAP Certification Notices Technical Assistance for the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Mountain Plains Region project by facilitating another 10-state collaborative; providing training on policy, communications, and improvement methods; and developing additional technical assistance tools for use nationwide.

Specifically, Insight—

- Conducted a review and evaluation of over 60 selected notices to evaluate policy compliance, comprehension, and usability and presented the results in person to FNS leadership; used the results as basis for developing a customized training curriculum for the group of states and technical assistance for each individual state based on need



- Led a year-long learning collaborative for states and FNS staff using an approach based on the Institute for Healthcare Improvement Breakthrough Series Collaborative Model
- Hosted virtual group meetings and individual conference calls with State teams each month led by Insight policy, communications, and improvement subject matter experts; discussed SNAP policy, operational concerns, and best practices for State notices; tracked emerging issues and progress on each state’s individual notice improvement efforts
- Developed two 3-day learning sessions to provide education, training, and practical experience; topics included policy, plain language, process improvement techniques and tools for teams to meet their notice improvement goals; the first Learning Session hosted 70 federal and state staff in-person in Atlanta; due to COVID-19, the second Learning Session pivoted to a virtual session of fully-interactive presentations, panels, and team working sessions for 100 federal and state staff
- Coordinated all logistics for learning sessions, conference calls, in-person and virtual meetings; authored monthly reports; and evaluated participant feedback for each learning session and webinar
- Developed six notice samples to serve as model SNAP notices; curated the notices as a revised Model Notice Toolkit with annotated notices and notice review tools to help FNS Regional Offices and other states agencies use them for future notice improvement work
- Conducted three webinars to debut the revised Model Notice Toolkit to FNS Regional Office staff and state SNAP agencies nationwide

Products

Model notice toolkit (including notice review tools and sample notices), as-is (current state) and to-be (future state) process maps, reviews and evaluations, in-person learning sessions, virtual learning sessions, presentations, training agendas, handouts, webinars, recorded presentations and trainings, written reports, briefings