
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2572 Session of
2020

INTRODUCED BY BURGOS, DRISCOLL, PASHINSKI, DELLOSO, KINSEY,
DeLUCA, YOUNGBLOOD, SHUSTERMAN, GREEN, HILL-EVANS, SCHWEYER,
NEILSON, GALLOWAY, ROZZI, GAINEY, TOOHL AND SANCHEZ,
JUNE 8, 2020

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, JUNE 8, 2020

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of June 13, 1967 (P.L.31, No.21), entitled "An
2 act to consolidate, editorially revise, and codify the public
3 welfare laws of the Commonwealth," establishing the SNAP
4 Benefits Start-Up Assistance Program; providing for
5 applications for assistance, for award of assistance, for
6 requirements of participants and for funding for assistance.

7 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
8 hereby enacts as follows:

9 Section 1. The act of June 13, 1967 (P.L.31, No.21), known
10 as the Human Services Code, is amended by adding an article to
11 read:

12 ARTICLE IV-A

13 SNAP BENEFITS AND START-UP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

14 Section 401-A. Definitions.

15 The following words and phrases when used in this article
16 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
17 context clearly indicates otherwise:

18 "Access device." The Pennsylvania ACCESS card or electronic
19 benefit transfer card.

1 "Authorization card." The paper authorization to participate
2 that a person signs and then exchanges for the designated amount
3 of food coupons at a bank.

4 "Corner store." A retail establishment that sells grocery
5 products and contains less than 5,000 square feet of an area
6 designated to sell grocery products.

7 "Direct marketing farmer." A farmer that engages in a
8 marketing arrangement to sell agricultural products directly to
9 the final consumer, including a farmer that sells agricultural
10 products directly to the final consumer through a farmers
11 market, crop sale agreement or farm stand.

12 "Eligible applicant." Any of the following located in this
13 Commonwealth:

14 (1) An independent grocery store.

15 (2) A corner store.

16 (3) A farmers market.

17 (4) A direct marketing farmer.

18 (5) Any other small food retailer.

19 "Farmers market." A building, structure or place that meets
20 all of the following criteria:

21 (1) The building, structure or place is physically
22 located in this Commonwealth.

23 (2) The building, structure or place is owned, leased or
24 otherwise in possession of a person, municipal corporation or
25 public or private organization.

26 (3) The building, structure or place is used or intended
27 to be used by two or more farmers or an association of
28 farmers for the purpose of selling agricultural products
29 directly to a final consumer.

30 "Independent grocery store." A retail establishment that

1 meets all of the following criteria:

2 (1) The retail establishment's primary business is the
3 sale of grocery products.

4 (2) The retail establishment has no more than three
5 locations.

6 (3) The retail establishment contains at least 5,000
7 square feet of an area designated for a general line of food
8 and nonfood grocery products.

9 "Price look-up device." A device that can access a database
10 price file. The term includes any of the following:

11 (1) A bar code beam or contact scanner.

12 (2) An optical character recognition scanner or reader.

13 (3) A magnetic scanner or reader.

14 (4) A keyboard.

15 (5) A voice response system.

16 (6) A computer-based retail price retrieval system.

17 "Price look-up system." A computer-based price retrieval
18 system used with scales, cash registers or point-of-sale units
19 in which numbers are assigned to items or commodities and the
20 price is stored in a database for recall when the numbers are
21 manually entered.

22 "Program." The SNAP Benefits Start-Up Assistance Program
23 established under section 402-A(a).

24 "Scanning system." A price look-up technology capable of
25 communicating with a database price file or retail price
26 retrieval system, including hardware, software or supporting
27 computer systems.

28 "SNAP benefit." The value of supplemental nutrition
29 assistance provided to a household for the purchase of eligible
30 foods as defined in 7 CFR 271.2 (relating to definitions).

1 "SNAP program." The Federal Supplemental Nutrition
2 Assistance Program.

3 "Universal product code." A type of bar code symbol used for
4 tracking an item or commodity, including a type of bar code
5 symbol developed by the Uniform Code Council.

6 "Universal product code scanning system." A scanning system
7 capable of reading universal product codes and reflecting the
8 information represented by the universal product codes in the
9 price an individual pays for items or commodities sold, offered
10 for sale or exposed for sale.

11 Section 402-A. Establishment of program.

12 (a) Establishment.--The department shall establish the SNAP
13 Benefits Start-Up Assistance Program to assist eligible entities
14 in this Commonwealth to acquire the necessary technology to:

15 (1) accept Federal SNAP benefit coupons, stamps,
16 authorization cards or access devices;

17 (2) use scanning system technology, including price
18 look-up devices and price look-up systems; and

19 (3) use universal product code scanning systems.

20 (b) Administration.--

21 (1) The department, in collaboration with the Department
22 of Revenue if necessary, shall administer the program to
23 provide any of the following assistance to eligible entities
24 for the purpose specified under subsection (a):

25 (i) Grants.

26 (ii) Low-interest or no-interest loans.

27 (iii) Tax credits.

28 (iv) Any other financial support.

29 (v) Equipment.

30 (vi) Technical assistance.

1 (2) The department may contract with nonprofit
2 organizations to promote and implement the program.

3 Section 403-A. Applications for assistance.

4 (a) Applications.--An eligible entity may apply to the
5 department for assistance under this section. The application
6 must be submitted to the department by December 31 of each year
7 or until all the program funds have been expended, whichever
8 occurs first. The application shall be on the form required by
9 the department.

10 (b) Review and approval.--The department shall review and
11 approve or disapprove the applications submitted under
12 subsection (a) within 30 days of submission. The department may
13 require any information necessary from an eligible entity to
14 determine whether or not to approve an application submitted
15 under subsection (a).

16 (c) Eligibility.--A farmers market or direct marketing
17 farmer that received a grant from the Commonwealth to purchase
18 the technology required to accept Federal SNAP benefit coupons,
19 stamps, authorization cards or access devices as authorized
20 under any other law of this Commonwealth shall not be eligible
21 for assistance under this section.

22 Section 404-A. Award of assistance.

23 Assistance shall be awarded with a priority given to eligible
24 entities with the greatest capability to expand access to
25 Federal SNAP benefits to underserved areas in this Commonwealth
26 where retailers do not readily have access to the technology to
27 accept Federal SNAP benefit coupons, stamps, authorization cards
28 or access devices.

29 Section 405-A. Requirements of participants.

30 (a) General rule.--A participant in the program shall be

1 required to apply and accept Federal SNAP benefits for food as
2 authorized by the United States Department of Agriculture.

3 (b) Prior grants.--A farmers market of direct marketing
4 farmers shall not have previously received a grant from the
5 Commonwealth for the purchase of wired or wireless technology to
6 receive SNAP benefits.

7 Section 406-A. Funding for assistance.

8 The department shall use money as appropriated by the General
9 Assembly for assistance under the program and may also use any
10 other money that is made available to the department for
11 assistance under the program by Federal appropriations,
12 donations or from any other source, including grants and
13 contributions from private sources.

14 Section 407-A. Regulations.

15 The department shall promulgate regulations as necessary to
16 implement the program.

17 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.