

STATE OF NEW YORK

10673

IN ASSEMBLY

June 24, 2020

Introduced by COMMITTEE ON RULES -- (at request of M. of A. Hevesi) --
read once and referred to the Committee on Social Services

AN ACT to amend the social services law, in relation to using supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits to purchase online groceries and to the state supplemental nutrition assistance program outreach program

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Paragraph (b) of subdivision 1 of section 95 of the social
2 services law is relettered paragraph (c) and a new paragraph (b) is
3 added to read as follows:

4 (b) The office shall promptly seek necessary federal approval needed
5 to enter into an agreement with all grocery retailers prepared to offer
6 SNAP online purchasing or subsequently available programs in order to
7 maximize availability of online fresh food purchasing options throughout
8 the state. Within one hundred eighty days after the effective date of
9 this paragraph, the office shall develop a plan to maximize SNAP online
10 purchasing options in the state. The office shall periodically review
11 and revise the plan. The plan, and any updates of such plan, shall be
12 submitted to the governor, the speaker of the assembly, and the tempo-
13 rary president of the senate. The office shall continue to seek all
14 necessary waivers from the United States department of agriculture, food
15 and nutrition service, to the extent necessary for the office to carry
16 out the plan, pursuant to federal law and regulations.

17 § 2. Subparagraph (i) of paragraph a of subdivision 7 of section 95 of
18 the social services law, as separately amended by chapter 41 and section
19 3 of part A of chapter 57 of the laws of 2012, is amended to read as
20 follows:

21 (i) May be redeemed for SNAP benefits at designated redemption centers
22 by the recipient or by an authorized representative. When an eligible
23 recipient under this section is issued SNAP benefits, such SNAP benefits
24 may be used to purchase food items from a food distributor by the recip-
25 ient or by an authorized representative. Recipients shall be able to
26 use SNAP benefits to purchase groceries from eligible online grocery

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 retailers and to have groceries delivered pursuant to federal laws and
2 regulations. Any other transfer or sale of authorizations to participate
3 or SNAP benefits shall constitute an unauthorized use of said authori-
4 zations or benefits;

5 § 3. Section 95-a of the social services law, as added by chapter 546
6 of the laws of 1978, is amended to read as follows:

7 § 95-a. State [~~food-stamp~~] supplemental nutrition assistance program
8 outreach program. 1. In accordance with federal requirements and to
9 the extent that federal matching funds are available, the department
10 shall develop and implement an outreach plan to inform low-income house-
11 holds potentially eligible to receive [~~food-stamps~~] supplemental nutri-
12 tion assistance program benefits of the availability and benefits of the
13 program, including information on the federal SNAP Online Purchasing
14 Pilot program or subsequent programs, and to encourage the participation
15 of eligible households that wish to participate.

16 2. In developing and implementing such a plan the department and/or
17 its local districts are authorized and empowered, subject to the
18 approval of the director of the budget and provided that federal aid is
19 available therefor, to enter into contractual agreements with public
20 and/or private organizations to develop and implement local, regional,
21 and statewide outreach programs.

22 3. Each commissioner of social services shall develop and submit to
23 the department on an annual basis for its approval, a local outreach
24 plan governing the use of local social services personnel and services
25 provided by federally funded and other agencies and organizations to
26 inform potentially eligible households of the availability and benefits
27 of the program and to encourage and facilitate the participation of
28 eligible households. The department shall provide commissioners of
29 social services with technical assistance as needed to carry out the
30 provisions of this subdivision.

31 4. As part of each local outreach plan, social services officials
32 shall take all steps necessary to maintain a supply of information leaf-
33 lets in public buildings, including but not limited to local unemploy-
34 ment insurance and employment services offices of the department of
35 labor, institutions and facilities under the supervision or control of
36 the department of health, food stores, union halls, community centers
37 and local agencies providing services to the elderly to help insure that
38 eligible persons are informed of the [~~food-stamp~~] supplemental nutrition
39 assistance program.

40 5. The department shall periodically distribute to all newspapers, and
41 to television and radio stations throughout the state, public service
42 announcements describing the [~~food-stamp~~] supplemental nutrition assist-
43 ance program, including the toll-free telephone numbers for [~~food-stamp~~]
44 supplemental nutrition assistance program information, and shall prompt-
45 ly inform such media of significant changes in the program affecting
46 eligibility requirements and/or the amount of the [~~food-stamp~~] supple-
47 mental nutrition assistance program bonus.

48 6. The department shall establish procedures in cooperation with the
49 industrial commissioner of the department of labor to ensure that infor-
50 mational leaflets about the [~~food-stamp~~] supplemental nutrition assist-
51 ance program are sent to each local employment services office for
52 distribution pursuant to section five hundred [~~and~~] forty of the labor
53 law. Each leaflet shall include but not be limited to: the phone number
54 for the New York State [~~food-stamp~~] supplemental nutrition assistance
55 hotline, estimated maximum income eligibility levels by household size
56 for participation in the [~~food-stamp~~] supplemental nutrition assistance

1 program and the availability of local social services departments to
2 provide additional information about the program.

3 7. In accordance with applicable federal laws, rules and regulations
4 the department shall make available appropriate bilingual materials so
5 that potentially eligible non English speaking individuals may be
6 informed about the [~~food-stamp~~] supplemental nutrition assistance
7 program.

8 8. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations, and take
9 all other actions necessary for the effective implementation of this
10 section.

11 § 4. This act shall take effect immediately.