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:

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

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

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

(i) May be redeemed for SNAP benefits at designated redemption centers by the recipient or by an authorized representative. When an eligible recipient under this section is issued SNAP benefits, such SNAP benefits may be used to purchase food items from a food distributor by the recipient or by an authorized representative. **Recipients shall be able to 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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retailers and to have groceries delivered pursuant to federal laws and regulations. Any other transfer or sale of authorizations to participate or SNAP benefits shall constitute an unauthorized use of said authorizations or benefits;

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

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

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

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

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

5. The department shall periodically distribute to all newspapers, and to television and radio stations throughout the state, public service announcements describing the [~~food stamp~~] supplemental nutrition assistance program, including the toll-free telephone numbers for [~~food stamp~~] supplemental nutrition assistance program information, and shall promptly inform such media of significant changes in the program affecting eligibility requirements and/or the amount of the [~~food stamp~~] supplemental nutrition assistance program bonus.

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

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

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

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

§ 4. This act shall take effect immediately.