

# Notes from Partner Cafe' 8/15/17

SNAP Operations and Policy Analyst – Carrie A Haws, [carrie.a.haws@state.or.us](mailto:carrie.a.haws@state.or.us) or 503-947-2682  
(Notetaker Jolene McGee)

- Can you give an overview of the programs in DHS, SSI?
  - SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program aka SNAP, Food Stamps, EBT, Oregon Trail, etc. This is a federal program which provides nutritional assistance to individuals and families that meet certain eligibility criteria. SNAP also provides Employment & Training assistance to individuals who meet eligibility criteria for them.
  - TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) – for many TANF recipients the duration is 60 months . Assists families with dependent children with cash benefits to help in meeting basic shelter-utility and other needs. In addition employment/education services are provided to support a family in the Self-sufficiency continuum.
  - Employment related day care (ERDC) – Income based program which assists employed parents with a portion of their child care costs related to employment.
  - Temp assistance to domestic violence (TA-DVS) – assists survivors of domestic violence with stabilizing their living situations and secure safe, permanent housing.
  - Refugee services - Assists new refugees with cash, medical and SNAP benefits for up to 8 months from their arrival into the United States as refugees.
  - SSI, SSD, etc. are administered by the Social Security Program which is not affiliated with DHS. Often individuals receiving Social Security benefits may also qualify for some DHS assistance in addition to the Social Security benefit as well.
  
- How long is the benefit period for SNAP?
  - A SNAP case is usually certified for one year e.g. Jan 1, 17 through Dec. 31, 17 Mid-way through the 12 month certification a report is required to be completed by the household. In month 5 month of the certification , SNAP sends a bright yellow form to SNAP households called an Ito the branch office by the 10<sup>th</sup> of month 6 along with required income verification in order to continue receiving SNAP benefits for the last 6 months of the 12 month certification. If the form is not received or is returned after month 7 the SNAP case will close and a new application and interview is required. SNAP participants can return the Interim Change Report form in person to a local DHS office, by fax, scan and email, or mailed back to DHS.
  - There Interim Change Report form asks for information about changes that occurred in the SNAP household since the certification interview occurred such as: address, household composition, loss of income, change in income, etc. One item that must be reported and verified on the Interim Change Report form is income. Participants are asked about income in the month that the report is due and verification is required.
  
- Do SNAP benefits roll over from month to month?
  - Yes! If participants don't use their benefits for a few months, those benefits stay on the card and are added to other unused benefits for 12 months. Unused SNAP benefits

remain accessible to participants for 12 months from benefit issue date. If unused benefits are not used within 12 months from issue the benefit is aged off the EBT case.

- For example: A participant certified from Jan 1, 17 through Dec 31, 17, receives SNAP benefits of \$16 per month. This participant does not use the SNAP benefits issued for January – November – every month the unused balance is increased by \$16. In December the participant uses the full year's benefits at one time ( $\$16 \times 12 = \$192$ ). The rollover/availability is true even if a SNAP case closes. Participants who have unused benefits upon closure of SNAP can access those benefits up to 12 months after the case closes.
- How do you apply?
  - Online
  - Visit the 211 website for information about where to apply and online applications
  - Contact a local office and request that an application be mailed or walk in to a local office and pick an application up.
  - Print out and complete an application and bring it in personally, mail it in or scan and email.
  - ONE VERY IMPORTANT THING to remember – people applying for benefits should set a “filing date” as soon as they can. This date starts the application processing time frame and in most cases will be the effective date of benefits. A filing date can be set easily – all that is needed is a formal request for SNAP benefits, the name of person requesting it, a mailing address and signature of the person requesting it to be provided to DHS.
- Can immigrants get benefits? Some immigrants do qualify for SNAP while others will not. Making the determination is a complicated process which is addressed on a case-by-case basis and is based on the status that the non-citizen is admitted under.
  - A person must be a US citizen or a qualified non-citizen with valid immigrant documentation to qualify for SNAP.
  - SNAP uses web based collateral sources to confirm citizenship.
  - Non-citizen registration numbers provided to DHS by non-citizens will be verified via a web based validation system with USCIS to determine the validity of the card and obtain entry status information necessary to make an eligibility determination.
  - **DHS does not provide SNAP case information including names, social security numbers, addresses, etc. to USCIS.**
  - All SNAP participant information is kept confidential by DHS.
- What does SNAP look at when applying for benefits? The SNAP application process is a complicated one. What is needed in order to arrive at a SNAP eligibility decision varies from case to case. **Some**, but not **all** of what is reviewed in the SNAP application process is:
  - The composition of the household e.g. who lives in the same home with the applicant, what the relationship between the applicant and other household members is, who buys, eats and prepares food together in the household.

- Citizen/alien status – (SNAP participants must be citizens or qualified, documented non-citizens)
  - Earned/unearned income some of which include: earned wages, Unemployment Compensation, Self Employment, Student financial aid, child support, gifts of income, in-kind income, Workers Comp, etc.
  - Deductions some of which include: Shelter and Utility costs, child care costs related to employment, court ordered child support costs, etc.
  - Resources if participants have liquid assets over \$25,000
- Is an interview in the office required? An interview is required for SNAP. SNAP interviews do not need to be conducted in the branch office. SNAP interviews can take place at:
    - In person at any open (not a Processing Center) branch office.
    - Over the phone.
    - At the home of housebound participants (with prior arrangement with branch office).
    - At a mutually agreed upon location e.g. Starbucks, the library, etc. (with prior arrangement with the branch office).
- How long does it take to find out if you get benefits once you apply?
    - If an applicant meets the criteria for Expedited (emergency) SNAP an initial decision must be made within 7 days of the filing date.
    - A SNAP eligibility decision for non-expedited applications needs to be made within 30 days of the filing date. DHS strives to make an eligibility decision and issue benefits for eligible participants as quickly as possible which in some situations can be as soon as the same day that an eligibility interview is conducted.
  - 
  - Can a partial SNAP application be sent in?
 

Yes, but it will not be considered valid and initiate the application processing clock if the partial application does not contain at the minimum: the name of the applicant, a mailing or permanent address and the signature of the individual or their authorized representative. It is also important to remember that DHS will require a fully completed SNAP application from the individual applying and conduct an interview in order to complete the eligibility determination process
  - What are SNAP applicants rights?
    - If someone doesn't understand actions taken on their application or case and feels that their eligibility worker is not responding to their inquiries or believes that they have not received fair and courteous service, they always have the right to speak to a manager and or lead about this and to seek clarification. Information about such interaction from the individual who has experienced it is valuable and goes a long way in developing processes which provide the best service possible to those who seek and receive DHS benefits.
    - Individuals who disagree with an eligibility decision that has been made on their case have the right to request for a fair hearing.

- SNAP participants and applicants have a number of rights. Some of these include:
  - The right to apply for benefits whenever they person wants to do so.
  - The right to be treated fairly and courteously.
  - The right to appeal a decision that they do not agree with.
  - The right to speak to a person in charge e.g. manager or lead.
  - The right to file a discrimination complaint if they believe that their civil rights have been violated
  
- SNAP eligibility is complicated. Where can I find out if I or a participant may be eligible?
  - Use the OR benefits calculator at: [https://aix-xweb1p.state.or.us/caf\\_xweb/SNAP\\_Estimate/frmEstimate.cfm](https://aix-xweb1p.state.or.us/caf_xweb/SNAP_Estimate/frmEstimate.cfm) or visit the 211 website. *Remember this is just an estimate of potential eligibility and what a possible benefit would be.* In order to know for sure if an individual qualifies for SNAP and exactly what benefit a person is eligible for, an application and interview is encouraged and required. Even if a SNAP benefit is smaller than a person would like there are many benefits to establishing eligibility for SNAP.
  
- Are there deductions that can be listed on the application for SNAP?
  - Yes, some of them include: rent (but not renter's insurance), mortgage, property tax and fire insurance for homes, medical deductions for participants who are elderly or disabled, court-ordered child support, heating/cooling costs, childcare, etc.
  - People should include all of their expenses when applying or recertifying if they are not an allowed deduction the worker will inform them.
  
- Is there special criteria for students in college?
  - Yes, Students who are between the ages of 18 to 49 and attend higher education at least half time must meet additional special criteria to be eligible for SNAP. If you are in this age group and attending higher education then you must meet certain criteria to be an eligible student, plus income eligible: More detailed student criteria can be found using this link: <http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ASSISTANCE/FOOD-BENEFITS/Pages/Student-Eligibility.aspx>
  
- Can homeless get SNAP?
  - Yes. Individuals without a permanent address who are applying for or receiving SNAP must provide a valid mailing address. Addresses are needed to get benefits and renew benefits. Most SNAP offices should have a few mailing addresses offered by community agencies for people who don't have a mailing or permanent address to use.
  - People who use mailing addresses should be reminded to check for their mail from DHS. DHS mails important information including benefit calculations, approval/ closing notices and required reports which need to be completed in a specific timeframe to protect uninterrupted SNAP eligibility. Also, many community agencies only hold mail for brief period of time. If the mail is not picked-up by the participant the agency returns the mail. Mail that is returned to DHS without a forwarding address can result in closure of the SNAP benefit

- WIC participants often say “why bother” applying for SNAP because they don’t get much in benefits. What do we say to that?
  - People who qualify for SNAP often qualify for other services such as: Reduced or free School Meals without the need to apply for them and Oregon Telephone Assistance (OTAP).
  - SNAP benefits can be accrued over a series of months and used when the amount is larger.
  
- What’s the best way to connect with my local DHS/SNAP office?
  - Locate the DHS office or local District Office using the link provided on the information sheet provided at the table and ask to talk with the CPC (. You could offer to attend a staff meeting to talk about WIC, ask if the branch can accommodate their presence in the lobby to offer WIC information, invite a DHS staff member to a staff meeting to talk informally about SNAP and other DHS programs , or perhaps you and the local office will have other innovative ways to develop and strengthen a partnership



## Farmers' Market Association – Partner Café

### What aren't all markets in the farmers' market association?

*Belonging to the association is voluntary. Most Oregon farmers' markets belong, but it cost some money, so some choose not to be in the association.*

**Challenge:** Getting families to our market because it doesn't offer much variety, participants would rather drive an hour and use their checks at a bigger market.

#### **Ideas/Solutions:**

- Bring the market to the clinic
- Connect with market manager to brainstorm ideas on how to increase traffic to the market
- Pick a special WIC day and really promote it
- Work with market manager to have special WIC market days, maybe one per month where they are open for extended market hours and have extension doing demos and other activities
- Partner with SNAP to increase demos and activities at the market
- Use Facebook and google voice to increase interest in the market

**Challenge:** Transportation to the market is a challenge in our rural County. Farmers closing down and leaving early.

#### **Idea/solution:**

- Talk with market manager about encouraging farmers to stay open or working with other farmers to consign to sell their produce when they have to leave early.

### How do I get a market started in our community?

- Check with a nearby existing markets to see if they might be interested in coming to your community or have ideas on ways to get the market to your community.

### Interested in more information on the SNAP Match

- There is a Double SNAP match program called Double-Up Food Bucks. Double up food bucks can be used at all participating markets.
- There are also independent programs around the state, in those situations, the double is only for a given market.



## **Unanswered questions**

How many times can a participant use the SNAP matchup at the market?:

- <http://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/sfn/su16double-up-bucks>
- <http://www.portlandfarmersmarket.org/programs-events/double-up-food-bucks/>

What are the senior farmers' market check redemption rates in our County?

## **Comments**

- Forest grove Farmers' Market is matching WIC.
- This year we've been asked to focus on redemption and then distribution, I'm concerned we can't do both well.
- We need to give more than \$20.00 it's not enough to incentivize families to go to the market.

## Notes from Partner Café 8/15/2017

### Oregon Child Development Coalition Head Start – Joy Rowley

(Notetaker Kim McGee – included info that came up in multiple groups or from multiple agencies)

- **Request for a Head Start primer**
  - Lots of confusion around the different types of Head Start (migrant, early childhood/pre-k, prenatal, seasonal, regular)
  - Confusion around what is offered in their area
  - Confusion around Head Start eligibility criteria
  
- **Data sharing**
  - Some agencies get info from state, some ask local agencies for it directly
  - Unsure of how the data is used because sometimes they get a request for more information on “high risk”
  - Concerns that Head Start staff interpret our data differently than intended
  - Reports of Head Start staff telling participants “WIC says you are...” (obese, high risk, etc.), which impacts the relationship that WIC has with the family (angry participants, insulted parents)
  
- Several local agencies report meeting regularly with Head Start staff to provide case management for mutual participants. This has been very successful.
  
- **Areas for enhancing partnerships**
  - Recommended local meetings between staff to discuss communication, language to use, etc.
  - Encourage WIC staff to participate in Head Start Health Services Advisory Committee.
  - Every Head Start has an RD and RN on staff. Could be shared staff or meeting between health professionals.

### ***Follow-up from Joy Rowley from OCDC:***

- An increase use of the state data request program would increase if each child's full WIC ID # was written on the family's EBT card or otherwise given to the parent. The staff at Head Start need this ID # accurately entered in order to request the nutrition risk level, Hemoglobin result, and measurements. Local WIC and Head Start staff can still connect when high risk children's full participant summary/progress note is requested to support parent in nutrition plan for their child.
- WIC and Head Starts can partner by having the WIC program review and agree that the nutrition education families attend at Head Start parent events or those hosted in the community that Head Start/WIC parents attend can count toward education for secondary certification.
- WIC staff can further partner with Head Starts by attending Health Service Advisory Committees that Head Starts are required to host with community partners to advise the health services. These HSAC meetings and other ongoing partnership meetings are opportunities for discussing collaborations, best practices, evidence-based models, specific cultural and community needs and services, and more! (For example, I heard some WIC staff share that they wish the language that Head Start staff and they use around body size and other topics was more in alignment.)
- Specifically with OCDC, and other Head Starts if they are interested, WIC can partner with OCDC on ongoing food security trainings, coaching, screening & intervening processes, resource and referral collaboration, and the PCE or Motivational Interviewing approach to supporting individuals in the change process.



## Oregon Food Bank Partnership Café Notes

August 15<sup>th</sup>

### Questions and interesting info

- Oregon FB sites have a goal of having 5 types of fresh produce available at each site
- They'd like there to be some shared education about "best by" food dates—IE milk can be consumed within X days, dried foods within X days... They have this information posted at the food banks but it might be helpful for WIC staff to share that info.
  - Follow up: they sent that information, it is posted under "resources" for the Food Insecurity Training on the WIC Training website.
- Some food banks offer pre-made boxes, some offer food shopping style.
- People getting food from the FB can expect to get 3-5 days of food
- Foodbank collects address, suggests that participants be under 185% of the Federal Poverty level, but don't turn people away based on income/**never ask for proof of income.**

## OSU Extension

### Round 1

At table: *Washington, Tillamook, Salud, Hood River*

- Interested in collaboration so SNAP-Ed could teach classes?
- Food Hero demos/cooking class can partner in WIC
- SNAP-Ed CANNOT count as WIC NE but can support or enhance WIC\* [see follow up from Sara below](#)
- Multnomah has OSU extension at all 3 sites, summer wellness fair, Food Hero monthly newsletter, etc.
- Tillamook paid for class through OSU Wellness funding
  - Needs to be outside of SNAP-Ed funding

### Reach out to OSU faculty-contact Sara for staff in your area

- SNAP-ed goal wants all partners at table including WIC
- Different models in each county- different capacities

Examples:

- Farmers Market tours in Lane County
- Food Hero demos at Quick WIC events Clackamas 3X/year
- Deschutes- Taste of WIC scheduled events, SNAP-ed recipe
- Master Gardener

### Round 2

At table: *NCPHD, Curry, UMHS, Jackson*

- Connection between SNAP-ed & WIC?
- Cannot take place of WIC but can enhance services; cooking demos, other hands-on activities
- Food Hero event following WIC event, partner at Quick WIC events, supplement WIC activity
- Lane at Farmer's Market at the same time as SNAP-ed Market tours
- Deshutes- partner w/ Master Gardeners for seed distribution
- UMHS Food Hero cooking class- parent/child activity.
- Jackson prints off recipes for participants upon request- can ask for some supplies(?)

*Request to create list of examples/ideas on how to partner*

### What barriers to working together?--> Confusing funding streams

- Can get monthly email- sign up on Food Hero website, has recipes & tips
- WIC shopper app links to Food Hero\*

### Round 3

At table: *Josephine, Deschutes, CT Umatilla*

- Interesting- handouts show we are of the highest intake of fruits and vegetables in the nation, also highest food insecurity
- OSU give-aways are very practical incentives- what is policy?
- Guiding policy is will it extend the activity, match for reinforcement (herbs, spices, cutting boards, mixing bowls), Food Hero demos, integrated
- Deschutes Taste of WIC & recipes.
- Put display in clinic to market upcoming events

### Round 4

- Food Hero Seasonal recipes copied Eng & Spanish popular in Salud in Woodburn & Warm Springs
- Recipes are tested & kid-approved & reliable
- Timing & staff availability doesn't always work out for partnering
- Get in touch w/ Extension agent for copies of monthly hard copies of recipes...low-cost partnering
- Prefer recipes w/ less ingredients
- Warm Springs included community garden network & Master Gardeners OSU Ext.
- Can work w/ other faculty from extension that's not SNAP-ed
- Most common way for OSU to enhance WIC services are demos; can't teach but can do food demos that compliments class.
- Bulletin board done for Salud, never came back, staffing issues
- Food Hero accessible at community level

#### ***Follow-up from Sara Wilson, OSU Extension:***

“SNAP-Ed staff led nutrition education series or a class in one of our series cannot count as the required WIC nutrition ed. **However**, SNAP-Ed can partner with WIC to **enhance or supplement** a WIC staff led nutrition education **by adding a cooking demo or food activity**. SNAP-Ed just can't do the nutrition ed part since that is considered supplanting WIC services. Karen Bettin and I have been working on a policy around this, and we will be creating guidance for our staff”

## Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon

### Round 1

Opportunities to connect with PHFO:

#### Learn-

- Ways that we do research talking to participants in focus groups
- "[Finding Food Security](#)" report available on website
- Gauging Food Security report used to make connections and what hunger looks like in Oregon

#### Connect= outreach

- Not doing as much outreach support w/ WIC since we have outreach staff
- Creating materials (summer meals, SNAP, etc.)
- Made online SNAP Outreach site as an educational tool
- UM/Jackson serve some grandparents and it tends to be temporary
- In the focus groups there was positive feedback w/ WIC participants
- **UM Early Learning picnic**- fun games for kids and learning opportunities for families
- **Childhood Prevention Summit**- cross-education focusing on school districts to help reach out to families that may need help

#### Advocacy-

- Training & helping past participants to help share their stories with lawmakers and legislators and to train people on how to advocate for hunger issues
- Help organizations recognize & manage through barriers
- [Hunger-Free Oregon Action Network](#)

### Round 2

- 1 thing PHFO does is research for hunger through the Hunger-Free Task Force
- Task force is made up of Partners staff, legislators, educators, Oregon Food Bank director, farmer advocates, etc.
- Hunger Task-force website can provide info on hunger rates in rural v urban areas; working to get fact sheets for each county.
- Sept. 6<sup>th</sup>- new food insecurity data
- Trying to **pull together stories & people's experiences** to be able to bring to legislators
- Work to bring **summer meal programs** to more locations



- If there is an area of a known gap in community, let PHFO Oregon know as they work on this year-round!
- **Online SNAP training tool:** basics of SNAP, how to do effective outreach, eligibility, what to bring when applying for SNAP
- Have a 9 month fellowship for hunger advocacy (the next iteration of this fellowship will have a cohort in Eastern Oregon (Ontario region))

### **Round 3**

- Woodburn- during summer, large migrant population; large stay @ home mom population; Russian Orthodox families & Latino families make up a large % of the population
- Summer meal program- it can be weird for people to just show up @ a school to participate in a summer meal program. Need to work to encourage people that it is ok to go, that IDs won't be checked, they can just participate.
- Willing to advocate @ the local level to make sure meals offered are culturally appropriate

### **Round 4**

- -research about hunger; try to pull together statistics for the whole state so that they can be accessible in one place. Also working to get county level fact sheets
- Can pull SNAP participants down to zip code. Also per rates per individual schools.
- Do focus group and people experiencing hunger to see what services they are using & how that experience is going & also looking @ all the factors that may impact food insecurity DV, medical issues, etc.)
- Do outreach for SNAP & for summer meals program