



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Executive Department

EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE THIRTEEN (2025)

MATERIALLY REDUCING ERRORS IN SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BENEFIT PROCESSING

By virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, I hereby direct the Secretary of Health and Human Resources and Commissioner of Social Services, in conjunction with the Secretary of Finance, to launch a comprehensive effort to bring Virginia's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) error rates down to below six percent to ensure accuracy, and avoid federal cost-sharing amounts.

Importance of the Initiative

Public Law No. 119-21, widely known by its legislative designation of H.R. 1 and informally known as the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act" provides significant tax relief and makes changes to spending policies across a wide variety of areas of federal and state engagement. One area of potential impact to the Commonwealth is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

The core mission of SNAP is to reduce hunger and provide nutrition to low-income households across the United States. In Fiscal Year 2024, SNAP provided benefits to 41.7 million Americans, or 12.3 percent of all U.S. households, spending \$99.8 billion. The scale of SNAP nationally underpins the key role the program plays in maintaining food stability across the United States.

In Fiscal Year 2024, SNAP distributed roughly \$1.76 billion in benefits across the Commonwealth and served approximately 874,000 Virginians in 450,000 households, representing approximately 9.9 percent of the state's population. The majority of Virginia SNAP households (78 percent) had income at or below the federal poverty line, with only 26 percent reporting earnings from employment in Fiscal Year 2022.

Beginning October 1, 2027, states with SNAP Quality Control Payment Error Rates above six percent will be required to contribute a state match for SNAP benefits to eligible low-income Virginians. The amount of the state match will depend on the demonstrated error rates, ranging from zero to 15 percent of the total benefit amount paid. Currently, benefits

are paid with 100 percent federal funds. Virginia does have time to improve processes, reduce error rate, and reduce the state share of payments. If Virginia does not take aggressive action to lower the current error rate of 11.5 percent, the Commonwealth would be required to contribute 15 percent state share to total benefits, or \$270 million General Fund annually. A state having a payment error rate that is less than six percent means the state will not have a benefits contribution.

Directive

Accordingly, pursuant to the power vested in me as the Chief Executive Officer of the Commonwealth, and pursuant to Article V of the Constitution and laws of Virginia, I hereby direct the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, in conjunction with the Secretary of Finance, and the Commissioner of Social Services to take the following steps to meaningfully reduce errors in SNAP benefit processing at the local departments of social services, driving the error rate down below six percent. Because SNAP processing is performed by the local DSS office and not the state, all participants will need to engage fully to achieve our objective:

- Design and execute an incentive and disincentive program to encourage local agencies to adopt best practices in error rate reduction.
- Require local benefits staff to complete a core set of trainings to perform job functions.
- Require benefits staff to verify applicant expenses and household composition instead of accepting self-attestation.
- Investigate public-private partnerships to free up capacity at local social services agencies so that more efforts can be directed toward reducing Virginia's SNAP error rate.
- Institute system reform and increase quality control measures utilizing contractors, when necessary.
- Explore the feasibility of contracting with a vendor using cutting edge technology, including artificial intelligence, to improve the accuracy and automation of SNAP decisions.

Effective Date

This Executive Directive shall be effective upon its signing and shall remain in force and effect unless amended or rescinded by further executive order or directive. Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia this 13th day of August 2025.




Glenn Youngkin, Governor

Attest:


Kelly Gee, Secretary of the Commonwealth