



Food Stamp Reforms to Promote Opportunity

Strengthen Work Requirements.

Congress should strengthen Food Stamp work requirements by including all work-capable adults, eliminating geographic waivers, expanding the age applicability, and phasing up the hours of expected effort.

Roll Back New Exceptions Created in the Fiscal Responsibility Act.

The Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 created new exceptions from work requirements for able-bodied adults who are experiencing homelessness, are veterans, or were previously in foster care. These exceptions send the wrong message that these work capable individuals are unable to contribute and could trap thousands in dependency rather than promote opportunity.

Eliminate Broad Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE).

BBCE allows states to ignore the Food Stamp program's own eligibility guidelines. Ending BBCE would reserve Food Stamps for the truly vulnerable, the population the program is intended to serve.

Prevent Permanent Dependency for Work-Capable Adults.

A reasonable lifetime limit on the time that able-bodied adults can remain on Food Stamps should be implemented, similar to the cap under Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Congress should also require USDA to track and report data on the duration of benefit receipt for different populations.

Rescind Biden's Unilateral Benefit Increase and Adjust Benefits with Inflation.

The 2021 reevaluation of the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) unilaterally increased Food Stamp allotments by 21% above inflation. The TFP reevaluation should be rescinded; benefits should instead grow with inflation each year.

Phase in State Responsibility.

The Food Stamp program is funded by the federal government but is administered by the states. To promote federalism and require states to have skin in the game, a matching requirement should be phased in, like exists in other welfare programs.

Provide Accountability and Transparency for Improper Payments and Fraud.

State administrators should be held accountable for high improper payments and fraud occurring on their watch. The provision that requires USDA to tolerate and disregard improper payments of up to \$56 should be repealed.