

# Fiscal Note

**BILL #** HB 2211

**TITLE:** supplemental nutrition assistance program; eligibility

**SPONSOR:** Wilmeth

**STATUS:** As Introduced

**PREPARED BY:** Chandler Coiner

## Description

The bill, as introduced, would eliminate select eligibility requirements specific to individuals convicted of a controlled substance-related felony for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) within the Department of Economic Security (DES). It would continue to require these individuals to comply with the terms of their probation.

## Estimated Impact

We estimate this bill would have a minimal fiscal impact. SNAP recipients would still be required to comply with the substance abuse treatment provisions of their probation, thereby resulting in few caseload changes.

DES estimates there would be a one-time administrative cost of \$15,500 from the General Fund (\$31,000 Total Funds) to update systems and training.

## Analysis

DES administers the state's SNAP program, formerly known as Food Stamps. The program allows low-income individuals and families to receive benefits that they can use toward purchasing food. SNAP benefit expenses are funded with federal funds only while states and the federal government share in the administrative expenses of the program.

In addition to meeting the standard eligibility requirements, SNAP enrollees convicted of a controlled substance-related felony must either 1) have completed a substance abuse treatment program, 2) be participating in a treatment program, 3) be on a waiting list for treatment, or 4) have been determined by a licensed medical provider to not need treatment. Current state law also requires DES to adopt rules that include more frequent drug testing for offenses occurring within 24 months of the date of application. The bill would eliminate all these provisions while retaining a provision that requires the applicant to comply with the terms of their probation.

According to DES, there are approximately 48,000 current SNAP beneficiaries that have been convicted of a controlled substance-related felony. The average SNAP benefit is approximately \$180/month per person.

Given that the bill does eliminate some requirements for the SNAP program, the bill may increase SNAP caseloads. We anticipate, however, that the magnitude of caseload impacts would be minimal for at least 2 reasons:

- 1) A.R.S § 13-901.01 already requires these individuals to participate in a substance abuse treatment program as a condition of their probation. If the individual is compliant with the terms of their probation, then the individual would necessarily be following the provisions relating to a treatment program.
- 2) Courts also require drug testing as part of probation, so the individual would necessarily be following any drug testing requirement imposed by DES that are the same or less frequent than the one imposed by the courts.

(Continued)



If the bill ultimately changed SNAP caseload levels, that fiscal impact would only be at the federal level. SNAP benefits are 100% federal funded.

**Local Government Impact**

None

2/10/23