

200,000 Men and Women Could Lost SNAP Benefits in Illinois

Overview: the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly Food Stamps) helps low-income households purchase adequate, nutritious food. Illinois’s SNAP time limit waiver for able bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs, also the ACA adult population) expires in December. This means an estimated 200,000 particularly poor men and women in our state could lose access to SNAP. Based on unemployment numbers, Illinois qualifies to continue to waive the federal time limit in 2017. In order to maintain uninterrupted SNAP access for this group, the Governor must request a waiver from the Food and Nutrition Service. SNAP benefits are 100% federally funded—keeping this group fed will come at no cost to the state.

The Policy: the federal policy limits SNAP recipients between the ages of 18 and 49 from receiving SNAP for more than three months in a three year period, unless caring for a child or working at least part time.

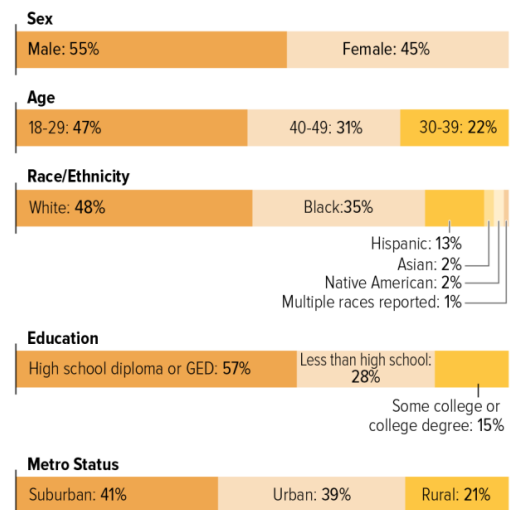
The men and women impacted are a particularly vulnerable group. National data on ABAWDs shows a diverse group with low education and training levels. The most comprehensive analysis of this group, conducted by the Ohio Association of Food Banks, found that ABAWDs who lost SNAP because of the time limit had a combination of the following barriers to work:

- Homelessness or an unstable living situation
- Mental or physical limitations (1/3)
- Non-custodial parenting (1/4)
- Caregiving for a parent, relative or friend (13%)
- Lack of reliable transportation (40%)
- Need for supportive services (15%)
- Having been dismissed from a job in the past and/or gaps in an employment records (1/4)
- Felony convictions hindering job searches(1/3)

The impact: adding a time limit to a nutrition program:

- Erodes the safety net for low-income workers between jobs and
- Denies food to poor men and women facing significant barriers to working.

Adults Subject to SNAP Time Limit Don't Fit a Single Profile



Note: The figures above differ from those in Bolen et al. (2016). To better characterize the individuals most likely to lose benefits, Bolen et al. excluded individuals with earnings equal to at least 20 hours a week at the federal minimum wage. The figures above include those individuals to better describe the total group of childless adults potentially subject to the SNAP time limit.

Source: CBPP analysis of 2014 SNAP household characteristics data and March 2015 Current Population Survey (CPS) (for metro status only).

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The Cost for ABAWDs:

Surviving on:
\$283
per month

Loss of:
\$138
in SNAP

200,000
hungrier
people

\$331 million
in federal
funding annually

Higher
administrative
costs and
Medicaid spending
on ACA adults