

HB 1797-FN - AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

11Mar2026... 1027h

2026 SESSION

26-2927

05/08

HOUSE BILL

1797-FN

AN ACT relative to eligibility for public assistance, including the New Hampshire employment program, family assistance program, and SNAP.

SPONSORS: Rep. Kofalt, Hills. 32

COMMITTEE: Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs

AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill:

I. Strengthens work requirements for SNAP eligibility.

II. Directs the department of health and human services to enter into data-sharing agreements with other state agencies to verify SNAP benefit eligibility.

III. Directs the department to verify eligibility of enrollees that make exclusively out-of-state purchases.

IV. Prohibits the department from using their discretion to set more lenient standards for SNAP eligibility or exemptions than those outlined in federal law.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in **bold italics**.
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six

AN ACT relative to eligibility for public assistance, including the New Hampshire employment program, family assistance program, and SNAP.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 New Section; SNAP Benefit Eligibility Criteria and Verification Procedures. Amend RSA 167
2 by inserting after section 17-d the following new section:

3 167:17-e SNAP Benefit Eligibility Criteria and Verification Procedures.

4 I. The department of health and human services shall not seek any waiver of work
5 requirements for able-bodied adults without dependents under 7 U.S.C. section 2015(o)(4), nor shall
6 the department adopt any discretionary exemptions from the work requirement under 7 U.S.C.
7 section 2015(o)(6)(E) without prior legislative approval.

8 II. Unless expressly required by federal law, the department of health and human services
9 shall not:

10 (a) Grant categorical eligibility under 7 U.S.C. section 2014(a) or 7 C.F.R. section
11 273.2(j)(2)(ii) for any noncash, in-kind or other benefit.

12 (b) Apply gross income standards for SNAP higher than the standards specified in 7
13 U.S.C. section 2014(c).

14 (c) Apply asset standards for SNAP higher than the standards specified in 7 U.S.C.
15 section 2014(g).

16 III. The department of health and human services shall enter into a data-matching
17 agreement with the lottery and gaming commission to identify households with lottery or gambling
18 winnings of \$3,000 or more and, to the extent permissible under federal law, treat this data as
19 verified upon receipt. To the extent that the data may not be verified upon receipt, department shall
20 make such referrals as may be necessary to identify households with winnings equal to or greater
21 than the resource limit for elderly or disabled households as defined in 7 CFR 273.8(b).

22 IV. The department of health and human services shall enter into a data-sharing agreement
23 with the secretary of state, division of vital records, to receive and review, on a monthly basis,
24 information relative to individuals in households enrolled in SNAP that indicate a change in
25 circumstances that may affect eligibility for SNAP.

26 V. The department shall enter into a data-sharing agreement with the department of
27 employment security to receive and review, on at least a quarterly basis, information relative to
28 individuals in households enrolled in SNAP that indicate a change in circumstances that may affect
29 eligibility for SNAP, including but not limited to changes in employment or wages.

1 VI. The department shall enter into a data-sharing agreement with the department of
2 corrections to receive and review, on at least a monthly basis, information relative to individuals in
3 households enrolled in SNAP who indicated a change in circumstance that may affect eligibility,
4 such as incarceration.

5 VII. The department shall enter into a data-sharing agreement with the department of
6 employment security to receive and review, on at least a semi-monthly basis, information relative to
7 individuals in households enrolled in SNAP who indicated a change in circumstance that may affect
8 eligibility for SNAP, including but not limited to potential changes in employment, income, or assets.

9 VIII. The department shall review, on at least a monthly basis, earned income information,
10 death register information, incarceration records, supplemental security income information,
11 beneficiary records, earnings information, and pension information maintained by the United States
12 Social Security administration to assess changes in circumstances for individuals in households
13 enrolled in SNAP that indicates a changes may affect eligibility for SNAP.

14 IX. The department shall review, on at least a monthly basis, income and employment
15 information maintained in the national directory of new hires database and child support
16 enforcement data maintained by the United States Department of Health and Human Services to
17 assess changes in circumstances for individuals in households enrolled in SNAP that indicate a
18 changes that may affect eligibility for SNAP.

19 X. The department shall review, on at least a monthly basis, payment and earnings
20 information maintained by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development to
21 assess changes in circumstances for individuals in households enrolled in SNAP that indicate a
22 change in circumstances that may affect eligibility for SNAP.

23 XI. The department shall review, on at least a monthly basis, national fleeing felon
24 information maintained by the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation to assess changes in
25 circumstances for individuals in households enrolled in SNAP that indicate a change that may affect
26 eligibility for SNAP.

27 XII. The department shall assign households with zero net income, households with an able-
28 bodied adult without dependent member, or other households with circumstances that are deemed
29 unstable by the department to eligibility certification periods of no greater than 4 months but
30 generally no less than 3 months, as allowed pursuant to 7 CFR 273.10(f)(3)(ii).

31 XIII. The department shall utilize on at least a monthly basis the Systematic Alien
32 Verification for Entitlements online service or any other federal database used to determine
33 citizenship or immigration status to verify that an individual that is enrolled in or applying for
34 SNAP benefits is a United States citizen or alien that is eligible for food stamps pursuant to 7 U.S.C.
35 section 2015(f).

36 XIV. The department shall verify citizenship or qualified alien status pursuant to 7 U.S.C.
37 section 2015(f) upon enrollment and during eligibility recertification with acceptable forms of proof of

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1 citizenship or qualified alien status including birth or hospital records, voter registration cards, U.S.
2 passports, and United States Customs and Immigration Service documentation to verify citizenship
3 or naturalization such as the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements online service.

4 XV. The department shall prohibit any individual from receiving SNAP benefits unless they
5 are a citizen or a qualified alien eligible for SNAP pursuant to 7 U.S.C. section 2015(f) and refer the
6 individual to the United States Customs and Immigration Services if it is determined by the
7 department that an individual applying, receiving, or recertifying their eligibility for SNAP benefits
8 in New Hampshire is an illegal alien.

9 2 New Paragraph; Prohibited Use of EBT Cards. Amend RSA 167:7-b by inserting after
10 paragraph IV the following new paragraph:

11 V. The department shall, on at least a monthly basis, utilize EBT card data to flag any
12 individual making purchases exclusively out-of-state over a 60-day period. The department shall
13 contact each individual flagged for exclusively making out-of-state purchases over a 60-day period
14 within 30 days to determine whether they reside in New Hampshire and remove those who are
15 determined not to be residing in New Hampshire or do not respond. The department shall be
16 required within 15 days to refer any individual who was determined to be receiving New Hampshire
17 SNAP benefits while not residing in the state to the United States Attorney's Office for the district
18 in which the individual is determined or claims to reside for further investigation.

19 3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

HB 1797-FN- FISCAL NOTE
AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE (AMENDMENT #2026-1027h)

AN ACT relative to eligibility for public assistance, including the New Hampshire employment program, family assistance program, and SNAP.

FISCAL IMPACT: This bill does not provide funding, nor does it authorize new positions.

Estimated State Impact				
	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Revenue Fund(s)</i>	None			
Expenditures*	\$0	Indeterminable Increase	Indeterminable Increase	Indeterminable Increase
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	General funds, federal funds			
Appropriations*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	None			

*Expenditure = Cost of bill

*Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill

METHODOLOGY:

This bill makes a variety of changes relative to the use and regulation of EBT cards and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) eligibility. The following is a list of provisions that, per the Department of Health and Human Services, are anticipated to have a fiscal impact:

- The bill prohibits the Department from using discretionary exemptions to able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD) work requirements without legislative approval. The Department currently uses discretionary exemptions on a limited basis to allow for more time to conduct training before changes to ABAWD requirements. Without access to the discretionary exemption, the Department likely would have increased its error rate when ABAWD requirements were reinstated. Beginning in federal fiscal year 2028, SNAP will include a state share for benefits calculated upon the state error rate. If the proposed restriction on ABAWD discretionary exemptions were enacted it could potentially increase state expenditures in state fiscal year 2029 and subsequent years, if the lack of discretionary exemptions would cause an increase in the error rate that would increase the state share of SNAP benefits. The amount of any such impact is indeterminable.

- The bill requires the Department to repeal its broad-based categorical eligibility for SNAP benefits. Currently, New Hampshire certifies for broad based categorical eligibility SNAP households with income less than or equal to 200% of the federal poverty guidelines. Based on available American Community Survey data, the Department estimates that approximate 20,000-25,000 New Hampshire households would lose SNAP eligibility from the repeal of categorical eligibility. This would result in an indeterminable reduction in expenditures. (SNAP benefits, as opposed to administrative costs, are 100 percent federally funded.)
- The bill requires the Department to review information from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Department notes that it does not currently have access to HUD data and the bill does not contain any direction on how the Department would get such information, so the fiscal impact of this provision is indeterminable. Similarly, the bill requires the Department to review national fleeing felon information maintained by the FBI. The Department notes that it does not have access to this information.
- The bill requires the Department to use the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) on a monthly basis to determine citizenship or immigration status. The Department notes that it does not use SAVE to verify citizenship. Citizenship when questionable is verified through documentation such as birth certificate or naturalization papers. Presently the Department uses SAVE to verify the immigration status of noncitizens at application and redetermination. There will be an indeterminable cost to state expenditures as a result of this requirement. The Department will need to make system changes and train staff to conduct SAVE checks monthly for citizens and non-citizens instead of the current process of at application and redetermination and only for non-citizens.
- The bill requires the Department to track SNAP households that exclusively use benefits out of state. This would require data checks to be done more frequently than currently required. The Department states that it would need five new employees to meet the increased requirements from the proposed legislation. The cost of five new positions would be \$400,000 for FY27, \$420,000 for FY28 and \$435,000 for FY29. The cost of staff can be paid with 25% federal funds and 75% general funds for FY28 and FY29. Due to a change in federal law effective October 1, 2026, the reimbursement rate for FY27 will be at 50% federal funds and 50% general funds from July until October and 25% federal funds and 75% general funds for the remainder of FY 27. For FY 27, 31.25% of the staffing costs would be paid with federal funds and 68.75% of the staffing costs would be

paid with general funds. The system changes required by this provision are expected to cost \$1,690,000, of which 50% will be paid with federal SNAP administrative dollars.

In total, the Department anticipates the bill will increase expenditures by at least \$2,090,000 in FY27 (\$920,000 general funds, \$1,170,000 federal funds), \$420,000 in FY28 (\$315,000 general funds, \$105,000 federal funds) and \$435,000 in FY29 (\$326,250 general funds, \$108,750 federal funds). Due to the various components for which cost cannot be estimated, the total impact is indeterminable.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Department of Health and Human Services