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Expanded Work Requirements in Senate Agriculture Committee Proposal Would Take Away Food Assistance From Millions: State Estimates

By Joseph Llobrera and Catlin Nchako

One of the harshest cuts in the Senate Agriculture Committee reconciliation proposal would take food assistance away from people — including, for the first time ever, parents with children over the age of 9 and adults aged 55 to 64 — who don’t meet a red-tape-laden and ineffective work requirement. The requirement also applies to grandparents, aunts and uncles, older siblings, and foster parents.

Adults subject to the requirement would only be able to receive food benefits for *three months in a three-year period* unless they show compliance with a 20-hour-per-week work requirement or prove they qualify for an exemption, such as having a disability.

In total, about 8 million people — about 1 in 5 SNAP participants, including about 2.5 million children and more than half a million adults aged 65 or older and adults with disabilities — live in households that would be at risk of losing at least some of their food assistance under the provision.¹ (See Table 1.)

These requirements already apply to adult ages 18 to 54 who don’t have children. The evidence is clear — these requirements don’t do anything to raise employment rates.² But they do result in many people losing food benefits they need, deepening poverty and increasing hardship. Research also shows that many people who lose SNAP are working or should have qualified for an exemption, but

¹ Joseph Llobrera, “Millions Would Lose Food Assistance Under Expanded Work Requirement, Including Households With Children,” CBPP, June 11, 2025, https://www.cbpp.org/blog/tracking-senate-action-on-tax-and-budget-reconciliation-plan?entry_uuid=d473e392-d18c-43e0-9a5f-23477c9a7457#entry.

² Lauren Bauer and Chloe N. East, “A primer on SNAP work requirements,” The Hamilton Project, April 2025, <https://www.hamiltonproject.org/publication/paper/a-primer-on-snap-work-requirements>. See also LaDonna Pavetti *et al.*, “Expanding Work Requirements Would Make It Harder for People to Meet Basic Needs,” CBPP, March 15, 2023, <https://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/expanding-work-requirements-would-make-it-harder-for-people-to-meet>.

the bureaucratic red tape made documenting their employment or proving their exemption too difficult.³

While the threshold age of dependent children allowing caregivers to qualify for an exemption is even lower in the House bill (age 6, versus age 9 in the Senate), the Senate bill would still put millions of school-aged children at risk of hunger and food insecurity, which can have lasting consequences for their physical, cognitive, and social development and their educational success.⁴

Research consistently shows that SNAP's work requirement does not increase employment or earnings. This means that the vast majority of people who would lose SNAP under an expanded work requirement would lose the assistance they need to afford groceries with *no improvement* in their job prospects or income.⁵

Ending SNAP eligibility for these individuals would harm not only the adults subject to the requirement but also the people they live with, including children and people with disabilities, by reducing food benefits for the entire household and putting everyone in the family at greater risk of hunger. For example, if a mother with a 10-year-old is cut off SNAP, her family's benefit would fall from a maximum of \$536 per month to just \$292, based on this year's benefit levels. That's far too little to afford food for two people. In a small number of cases, an adult being cut off SNAP would end eligibility for their entire household.

The 8 million people at risk of losing SNAP benefits entirely or seeing the benefits for their families cut include older adults; parents, grandparents, and their children; veterans, people experiencing homelessness, and former foster youth who, under the proposal, would be stripped of their current exemptions from the work requirement; and people living in areas with high unemployment, as the Senate proposal makes it harder for states to seek a waiver from the work requirement based on local economic conditions.

People in every state are at risk of losing their food benefits. For state data, see the following table.

³ Erin Brantley, Drishti Pillai, and Leighton Ku, "Association of Work Requirements With Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation by Race/Ethnicity and Disability Status, 2013-2017," JAMA Network Open, Vol. 3, No. 6, June 2020, <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2767673>.

⁴ CBPP, "2025 Budget Impacts: House Bill Would Cut Assistance for Children, Raise Costs for Families," June 6, 2025, <https://www.cbpp.org/research/federal-budget/2025-budget-impacts-house-bill-would-cut-assistance-for-children-raise>.

⁵ Bauer and East, *op. cit.*

TABLE 1

Millions at Risk of Losing Food Assistance Under Senate Proposal to Expand SNAP's Work Requirement to Older Adults & Caregivers of Children as Young as 10

In addition to the 1.6 million adults nationwide who would be at risk of losing SNAP because of restrictions on states' ability to request waivers of the harsh work requirement, estimated average monthly number of:

	Adults at Risk of Losing SNAP		Total People at Risk of Losing Some Amount of SNAP	
	Ages 55 to 64 with no children, no disability	Ages 18 to 64 with school-age children aged 10 and older, no disability	In households with adults ages 55 to 64 with no children, no disability	In households with adults ages 18 to 64 with school-age children aged 10 and older, no disability
Alabama	22,000	36,000	28,000	86,000
Alaska	2,000	3,000	3,000	7,000
Arizona	37,000	37,000	44,000	83,000
Arkansas	8,000	14,000	11,000	35,000
California	201,000	192,000	243,000	428,000
Colorado	23,000	36,000	28,000	81,000
Connecticut	12,000	23,000	14,000	50,000
Delaware	5,000	9,000	6,000	21,000
District of Columbia	7,000	5,000	7,000	10,000
Florida	113,000	123,000	151,000	275,000
Georgia	50,000	95,000	58,000	218,000
Guam	2,000	2,000	2,000	4,000
Hawai'i	7,000	7,000	8,000	14,000
Idaho	2,000	4,000	3,000	12,000
Illinois	65,000	119,000	75,000	264,000
Indiana	18,000	33,000	23,000	73,000
Iowa	10,000	12,000	11,000	29,000
Kansas	5,000	9,000	7,000	22,000
Kentucky	19,000	31,000	24,000	69,000
Louisiana	23,000	51,000	28,000	123,000
Maine	4,000	8,000	4,000	18,000
Maryland	26,000	37,000	29,000	76,000
Massachusetts	42,000	56,000	57,000	119,000
Michigan	39,000	79,000	52,000	175,000
Minnesota	11,000	19,000	14,000	45,000
Mississippi	8,000	26,000	10,000	63,000
Missouri	14,000	41,000	18,000	97,000

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	Ages 55 to 64 with no children, no disability	Ages 18 to 64 with school-age children aged 10 and older, no disability	In households with adults ages 55 to 64 with no children, no disability	In households with adults ages 18 to 64 with school-age children aged 10 and older, no disability
Montana	3,000	4,000	3,000	10,000
Nebraska	3,000	7,000	3,000	15,000
Nevada	19,000	26,000	22,000	57,000
New Hampshire	1,000	3,000	1,000	8,000
New Jersey	22,000	55,000	29,000	107,000
New Mexico	23,000	33,000	28,000	67,000
New York	125,000	158,000	158,000	341,000
North Carolina	47,000	91,000	58,000	219,000
North Dakota	1,000	3,000	1,000	6,000
Ohio	42,000	58,000	53,000	140,000
Oklahoma	18,000	38,000	25,000	82,000
Oregon	27,000	35,000	31,000	72,000
Pennsylvania	58,000	81,000	84,000	177,000
Rhode Island	4,000	5,000	4,000	11,000
South Carolina	17,000	27,000	22,000	69,000
South Dakota	less than 1,000	4,000	1,000	9,000
Tennessee	21,000	36,000	26,000	82,000
Texas	107,000	200,000	123,000	416,000
Utah	4,000	8,000	5,000	17,000
Vermont	2,000	4,000	3,000	9,000
Virgin Islands	1,000	2,000	1,000	5,000
Virginia	22,000	52,000	28,000	119,000
Washington	26,000	32,000	29,000	68,000
West Virginia	13,000	20,000	18,000	44,000
Wisconsin	26,000	28,000	30,000	67,000
Wyoming	less than 1,000	2,000	less than 1,000	5,000

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	Adults at Risk of Losing SNAP		Total People at Risk of Losing Some Amount of SNAP	
	Ages 55 to 64 with no children, no disability	Ages 18 to 64 with school-age children aged 10 and older, no disability	In households with adults ages 55 to 64 with no children, no disability	In households with adults ages 18 to 64 with school-age children aged 10 and older, no disability
Total	1,400,000	2,100,000	1,700,000	4,700,000

Note: These estimates do not incorporate other proposals in the Senate Agriculture Committee's draft reconciliation legislation that would significantly restrict states' ability to request waivers of SNAP's work requirement for areas with insufficient jobs and eliminate current exemptions for veterans, people experiencing homelessness, or youth who have aged out of foster care. The District of Columbia, Guam, and the Virgin Islands are considered states in SNAP. Puerto Rico, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands are not included in this table because they receive a nutrition assistance block grant in lieu of participating in SNAP.

Source: State estimates based on CBPP analysis of SNAP quality control data for fiscal year 2022.