



2024 SNAC Policy Agenda

The Safety Net Advocacy Coalition (SNAC) works to defend and strengthen Florida's safety net programs. These programs include but are not limited to Medicaid, Reemployment Assistance (Unemployment Insurance), SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or food assistance), TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families or cash assistance), and WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children).

This policy agenda outlines administrative and legislative policies that SNAC will prioritize in 2024. The policy agenda summarizes key policies and serves as a living document that may evolve as the safety net policy landscape in Florida evolves.

Federal Policy Agenda

Below is federal legislation that impacts safety net programs.

1. Farm Bill

SNAC will monitor and, when appropriate, engage in advocacy around the next Farm Bill, which gives Congress the opportunity to increase SNAP benefit levels and improve access. Some important issues that have arisen include restrictions on food choice, benefit amounts, work requirements, streamlining excess medical deductions, and the eligibility of college students, certain immigrants, and people with felony drug convictions.

2. US. Playbook to Address Social Determinants of Health

The Biden Administration has proposed a number of strategies affecting safety net programs in their new [U.S Playbook to Address Social Determinants of Health](#). They seek to bolster programs and increase funding for gathering data, addressing social needs, and supporting backbone organizations. This is not one specific piece of legislation; however, SNAC can monitor these federal allocations for advocacy in Florida.

State Policy Agenda

Administrative Advocacy

Administrative advocacy focuses on making changes to how safety net program policies are implemented by appealing to the state agencies responsible for administering them.

1. Establish SNAP Pre-Release Application Program for Returning Citizens

SNAC supports establishing a pilot program to allow Floridians to apply for SNAP while incarcerated so that benefits will start upon release. If the state is unwilling to administer a pilot program, partners may consider efforts to work with institutions to help ensure that people are ready to apply and be certified for benefits as soon as possible after their release.

2. Use Lessons Learned from the Medicaid Redetermination Process to Improve Health Care Coverage

Florida's [Medicaid Redetermination Process](#) in 2023 showed that there were many unaddressed systemic issues that led to the loss of coverage for many who should not have lost coverage. As of December 2023, [73 percent of those who were disenrolled](#) from Medicaid were disenrolled due to procedural issues, and not necessarily because they were no longer eligible. These include — but are not limited to — long call-center wait times, inadequate staffing at the Department of Children and Families (DCF), inaccurate and difficult to understand language in administrative forms that families receive, and inappropriate use of household income to determine individual eligibility. SNAC will support efforts to minimize coverage loss in the future by monitoring and advocating for improvements to these processes.

3. Monitor the Impact of New MyACCESS Portal

At the end of 2023, DCF rolled out a new [MyACCESS portal](#) that promises to offer a more secure and user-friendly experience for Medicaid, SNAP, and TANF participants. SNAC will support outreach measures to raise awareness about the new portal and closely monitor the impact on safety net program participants.

4. Minimize the Impact of Expanded Mandatory E&T

Florida expanded its [mandatory SNAP Employment and Training \(E&T\)](#) program in December 2023 to include SNAP participants ages 53 through 59 who do not meet an exemption. This expansion is in addition to current mandatory work requirements on nonexempt participants who are ages 18 through 52. Because more than 7,000 participants were having their food assistance taken away as a sanction every month in Florida even before this expansion, it is important to ensure that partners and participants have necessary information about exemptions and good cause so that hungry households do not continue to lose food assistance unnecessarily. FPI will work with partners to identify systemic issues that cause E&T participants to lose SNAP and advocate for necessary changes with DCF.

5. Request Florida to Opt-in to Summer EBT

The Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer Program ([Summer EBT](#)) provides grocery assistance to low-income families with school-aged children when schools are closed for the summer. However, Florida has decided not to participate in Summer EBT in 2024, which means that about [2.1 million children will not be provided \\$259 million](#) in federal food assistance this coming summer. Although the state chose not to provide this food assistance to children in 2024, SNAC will advocate for implementation of the program in the summer of 2025.

6. Provide Medicaid Coverage for Medically Tailored Meals

Medically tailored meals can help address medical needs of people who are managing chronic illnesses and other health conditions by providing food that promotes health and wellness based on their specific dietary requirements. (Note: This can also be established through the Legislature. [HB 253](#) / [SB 488](#) would establish a pilot program for Food Is Medicine.)

Legislative

Below are key bills with an active role for SNAC members to lead or support.

1. Remove the Lifetime SNAP/TANF Ban Placed on Returning Citizens

Florida law prohibits returning citizens with certain drug trafficking offenses from receiving SNAP and TANF, which could provide crucial support for meeting basic needs. [Lifting the ban](#) would provide a smoother transition for returning citizens and reduce chances of reincarceration.

- Related bills: [HB 409](#) / [SB 776](#)

2. Remove “Family Cap” for TANF

Florida is one of only [seven states](#) that [deny parents some or all TANF benefits for additional children born while they are participating in TANF](#) (called “family cap”). As a result, many babies born into families with low income in Florida go without any help from TANF to meet their basic needs. A recent [policy brief](#) from Florida Policy Institute points out that [family cap](#) is rooted in the racist myth that a woman receiving assistance has additional children to get more benefits. It is an extension of the historical legacy of attempts to exercise reproductive control over Black women.

- Related bills: [HB 641](#)

3. Establish the Universal Free School Breakfast and Lunch Program

Support establishing a program that provides free school breakfast and lunch meals to all public-school students.

- Related bills: [SB 300](#)

4. Expand Fresh Access Bucks

[Fresh Access Bucks \(FAB\)](#) provide additional funds for SNAP recipients to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables and seeds that grow food. SNAC supports securing appropriations from the state to further fund FAB.

5. Improve Florida’s Health Care Through “Live Healthy”

The “Live Healthy” Act is a sweeping health care and workforce package that includes a number of provisions that seek to enhance Florida’s health care workforce, primarily by increasing Medicaid reimbursement rates for workers providing preventative care and serving vulnerable populations. This includes services such as dental care; private duty nursing; occupational, physical, and speech therapy; behavioral analysis; and maternal care in labor and delivery.

- Related bills: [CS/SB 7016](#) and [SB 7018](#)

6. Oppose Barriers to Reemployment Assistance

Oppose bills that reinstate mandatory skills assessment review and impose once-a-week in-person job applications as a condition of Reemployment Assistance (RA) eligibility.

- Related bills: [SB 1260](#) and [HB 1289](#)

Long-Term Initiatives

Long-term initiatives require multi-year strategic efforts. Progress can be achieved during the current legislative session by raising awareness among partners and community members; convincing legislators to raise the issue via future legislation and/or other means; working with state agencies to find administrative solutions; or garnering media attention on the issue.

1. Increase TANF Maximum Payment

TANF payments have not increased in Florida [since 1992](#). Increasing TANF payments is crucial to helping families afford the rising costs of necessities like food and housing.

2. Improve Safety Net Program Alignment and Reduce Churn

Eligible Floridians lose benefits when they face barriers during the recertification process for safety net programs. Cross-program alignment and simplification of recertification policies in SNAP, TANF, and Medicaid will reduce barriers and prevent participation churn.

3. Expand Medicaid

Florida needs to expand Medicaid via ballot or legislation to provide better access to affordable health care. [Health Care for Florida](#) provides direction on actions for Medicaid expansion. The 2026 Ballot Initiative for Medicaid Expansion in Florida is spearheaded by [Florida Decides Healthcare](#).

Other Policy Agendas

This section highlights policy agendas from other organizations and/or coalitions that are of interest to SNAC. Although we will not take an active role in every policy, we will monitor and keep SNAC members informed of relevant information and/or strategic opportunities.

1. Florida Policy Institute (FPI)

The [2024 Legislative Agenda](#) is organized by goals set forth in FPI's [Roadmap to Shared Prosperity](#), with categories for healthy communities, a thriving and resilient economy, shared prosperity, and an equitable tax code.

2. Bread for the World

The [Farm Bill Policy Platform](#) outlines policies to prioritize in the categories of nutrition, equity, and sustainability. Bread for the World also provides [resources for Farm Bill advocacy](#), including sample letters to Congress, one-pagers, and social media posts.

3. Florida Voices for Health

The [2024 Legislative Session Tracker](#) provides information on bills to watch around mental and behavioral health, disabilities services, oral health, consumer protection, and more.

4. Food Research & Action Center (FRAC)

[FRAC lists the bills they are supporting](#) in the categories of child nutrition; school-based, out-of-school time; SNAP; additional anti-poverty priorities; equity; and budget/appropriations.

5. MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger

[MAZON's Farm Bill Policy Priorities](#) breaks down specific asks in the bill "to strengthen federal nutrition programs, ensuring equity and access for overlooked populations" including Native Americans, single mothers, LGBTQ+ older adults, active military service members and their families, and veterans.

Contact Amber Nixon at nixon@floridapolicy.org for more information about contributing to the SNAC policy agenda.