

POLICY PRIORITIES: THRIVING KANSANS



KANSAS APPLESEED

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as “food stamps,” is one of the main ways to fight hunger, malnutrition, and poverty in Kansas.

Access to SNAP food assistance reduces hunger, improves health, bolsters local economies, creates jobs, and helps lift people out of poverty. Limiting access to food assistance negatively impacts families and is also strongly correlated with more kids entering foster care in Kansas.¹



HOW FOOD ASSISTANCE BENEFITS KANSAS

Every dollar in SNAP benefits generates \$1.54 in economic activity that goes back into our communities and up to \$1.70 in a weak economy.²

Food assistance is linked with improved health outcomes and lower overall health care expenditures.

Food assistance helps Kansas kids. In FY 2021, nearly 72% of Kansans utilizing SNAP food assistance are members of families with children.³

EXPANDING FOOD ACCESS

Losing access to food, no matter one's past, does not help individuals nor the state of Kansas. In Kansas, if you have more than one drug felony conviction, you are banned for life from receiving SNAP food assistance. Eliminating this barrier would allow more Kansans to utilize the benefits they need.

For many Kansans with felony drug convictions, successful reentry from the justice system is difficult. Finding food, housing, and employment are all hurdles that Kansans face while transitioning from the justice system.

People with convictions often face much higher rates of food insecurity than the general public—meaning they don't know where their next meal may come from.⁴

IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR RETURNING KANSANS, COMMUNITIES, AND OUR STATE'S BOTTOM LINE



Preventing people from receiving food assistance because of a drug-related conviction has not deterred drug use or drug crime. In fact, drug use and drug crime are higher in states that impose stricter drug felony bans on SNAP.⁵



States with drug felony bans on food assistance have twice the poverty rates as states without bans.⁶



SNAP access has been shown to reduce the risk of returning to prison by 10 percent.⁷



Black and Latino/a populations are significantly more likely to be convicted of drug-related crimes, even though data on drug use shows white, Black, and Latino/a populations use drugs at similar rates.⁸



Given the current recidivism and drug-felony incarceration rates, ending the drug felony ban could result in fewer people being incarcerated per year, saving the State of Kansas in incarceration costs.

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