

2017 -- S 0279

LC000557

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2017

A N A C T

RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES -- PUBLIC ASSISTANCE ACT

Introduced By: Senators Kettle, Morgan, Paolino, and Cote

Date Introduced: February 15, 2017

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 40-6-8 of the General Laws in Chapter 40-6 entitled "Public
2 Assistance Act" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **40-6-8. Supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP).**

4 (a) The department shall have the responsibility to administer the food stamp program for
5 the state in compliance with the provisions of the federal Food Stamp Act of 1964, as amended, 7
6 U.S.C. § 2011 et seq. The supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) is and shall be the
7 new title of the program formerly known as the food stamp program. All references in the Rhode
8 Island general laws to food stamps shall be deemed to mean, apply to, refer to, and be interpreted
9 in accordance with the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP).

10 (b) The department is empowered and authorized to submit its plan for food stamps to the
11 federal government or any agency or department of it. The department shall act for the state in
12 any negotiations relative to the submission and approval of a plan, and may make any
13 arrangement or changes in its plan not inconsistent with this chapter which may be required by
14 the Food Stamp Act or the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to it to obtain and retain
15 such approval and to secure for this state the benefits of the provisions of the federal act relating
16 to food stamps. The department shall make reports to the federal government or any agency or
17 department of it in the form and nature required by it, and in all respects comply with any request
18 or direction of the federal government or any agency or department of it, which may be necessary
19 to assure the correctness and verification of the reports.

1 (c) The department is authorized and directed to pay one hundred percent (100%) of the
2 state's share of the administrative cost involved in the operation of the food stamp program.

3 (d) No person shall be ineligible for food stamp benefits due solely to the restricted
4 eligibility rules otherwise imposed by § 115(a)(2) of the Personal Responsibility and Work
5 Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Public Laws No. 104-193), 21 U.S.C. § 862a(a)(2), and
6 as this section may hereafter be amended.

7 (e) Each recipient of food stamp benefits shall present photo identification when using an
8 EBT card, and each retailer shall request and inspect such photo identification at each transaction
9 to insure that the individual presenting the EBT card is the person identified by the photo
10 identification. Failure to request such photo identification and perform such verification of
11 identity shall result in the suspension of the retailer's privilege of accepting EBT cards for
12 payment of any transactions for a period of one month for each offense. The department is
13 authorized to promulgate regulations implementing the provisions of this subsection consistent
14 herewith. The penalty provided in this subsection shall be in addition to the penalties provided in
15 §40-6-16, and a successful prosecution under that section shall not be a necessary precedent for
16 the penalty provided herein.

17 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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1 This act would require retailers to examine photo identification to verify that a buyer
2 presenting an EBT card ("food stamps") is in fact the person entitled to use the card. It further
3 provides that a retailer who neglects to perform such verification shall be suspended from the
4 program for one month.

5 This act would take effect upon passage.

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