

Public Law 91-671

January 11, 1971
[H. R. 18582]

Food Stamp Act
of 1964, amend-
ments.
78 Stat. 703.
7 USC 2011.

Definitions.
7 USC 2012.

"Household."

Post, p. 2051.

"State."

"Elderly per-
son."

AN ACT
To amend the Food Stamp Act of 1964, as amended.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That section 2 of the Food Stamp Act of 1964, as amended, is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 2. It is hereby declared to be the policy of Congress, in order to promote the general welfare, that the Nation's abundance of food should be utilized cooperatively by the States, the Federal Government, local governmental units, and other agencies to safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation's population and raise levels of nutrition among low-income households. The Congress hereby finds that the limited food purchasing power of low-income households contributes to hunger and malnutrition among members of such households. The Congress further finds that increased utilization of food in establishing and maintaining adequate national levels of nutrition will promote the distribution in a beneficial manner of our agricultural abundances and will strengthen our agricultural economy, as well as result in more orderly marketing and distribution of food. To alleviate such hunger and malnutrition, a food stamp program is herein authorized which will permit low-income households to purchase a nutritionally adequate diet through normal channels of trade."

SEC. 2. (a) Section 3(e) of the Food Stamp Act of 1964, as amended, is amended to read as follows:

"(e) The term 'household' shall mean a group of related individuals (including legally adopted children and legally assigned foster children) or non-related individuals over age 60 who are not residents of an institution or boarding house, but are living as one economic unit sharing common cooking facilities and for whom food is customarily purchased in common. The term 'household' shall also mean (1) a single individual living alone who has cooking facilities and who purchases and prepares food for home consumption, or (2) an elderly person who meets the requirements of section 10(h) of this Act."

(b) Add the following sentence at the end of subsection 3(f) of the Food Stamp Act of 1964, as amended: "It shall also mean a political subdivision or a private nonprofit organization that meets the requirements of section 10(h) of this Act."

(c) Subsection (j) of section 3 of the Food Stamp Act of 1964, as amended, is amended to read as follows:

"(j) The term 'State' means the fifty States and the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands of the United States."

(d) Add the following new subsection at the end of section 3 of the Food Stamp Act of 1964, as amended:

"(l) The term 'elderly person' shall mean a person sixty years of age or over who is not a resident of an institution or boarding house, and who is living alone, or with spouse, whether or not he has cooking facilities in his home."

(e) Section 3 of the Food Stamp Act of 1964, as amended, is amended by adding the following new subsection:

“(m) The term ‘authorization to purchase card’ means any document issued by the State agency to an eligible household which shows the face value of the coupon allotment the household is entitled to be issued on presentation of such document and the amount to be paid by such household for such allotment.”

SEC. 3. Subsections (a) and (b) of section 4 of the Food Stamp Act of 1964, as amended, are amended to read as follows:

“(a) The Secretary is authorized to formulate and administer a food stamp program under which, at the request of the State agency, eligible households within the State shall be provided with an opportunity to obtain a nutritionally adequate diet through the issuance to them of a coupon allotment which shall have a greater monetary value than the charge to be paid for such allotment by eligible households. The coupons so received by such households shall be used only to purchase food from retail food stores which have been approved for participation in the food stamp program. Coupons issued and used as provided in this Act shall be redeemable at face value by the Secretary through the facilities of the Treasury of the United States.

“(b) In areas where the food stamp program is in operation, there shall be no distribution of federally donated foods to households under the authority of any other law except that distribution thereunder may be made: (1) during temporary emergency situations when the Secretary determines that commercial channels of food distribution have been disrupted; (2) for such period of time as the Secretary determines necessary, to effect an orderly transition in an area in which the distribution of federally donated foods to households is being replaced by a food stamp program; or (3) on request of the State agency: *Provided*, That the Secretary shall not approve any plan established under this Act which permits any household to simultaneously participate in both the food stamp program and the distribution of federally donated foods under this clause (3).

SEC. 4. Section 5 of the Food Stamp Act of 1964, as amended, is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 5. (a) Except for the temporary participation of households that are victims of a disaster as provided in subsection (b) of this section, participation in the food stamp program shall be limited to those households whose income and other financial resources are determined to be substantial limiting factors in permitting them to purchase a nutritionally adequate diet.

“(b) The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, shall establish uniform national standards of eligibility for participation by households in the food stamp program and no plan of operation submitted by a State agency shall be approved unless the standards of eligibility meet those established by the Secretary. The standards established by the Secretary, at a minimum, shall prescribe the amounts of household income and other financial resources, including both liquid and nonliquid assets, to be used as criteria of eligibility. Any household which includes a member who has reached his eighteenth birthday and who is claimed as a dependent child for Federal income tax purposes by a taxpayer who is not a member of an eligible household, shall be ineligible to participate in any food stamp program established pursuant to this Act during the tax period such dependency is claimed and for a period of one year after expiration of such tax period. The Secretary may also establish temporary emergency standards of eligibility, without regard to income

78 Stat. 703.
7 USC 2012.

“Authorization
to purchase card.”

Coupon allot-
ment program.
7 USC 2013.

Redemption.

Emergency dis-
tribution.

Eligibility stand-
ards.
7 USC 2014.

and other financial resources, for households that are victims of a disaster which disrupted commercial channels of food distribution when he determines that such households are in need of temporary food assistance, and that commercial channels of food distribution have again become available to meet the temporary food needs of such households: *Provided*, That the Secretary shall in the case of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands, establish special standards of eligibility and coupon allotment schedules which reflect the average per capita income and cost of obtaining a nutritionally adequate diet in Puerto Rico and the respective territories; except that in no event shall the standards of eligibility or coupon allotment schedules so used exceed those in the fifty States.

Ineligibility.

“(c) Notwithstanding any other provisions of law, the Secretary shall include in the uniform national standards of eligibility to be prescribed under subsection (b) of this section a provision that each State agency shall provide that a household shall not be eligible for assistance under this Act if it includes an able-bodied adult person between the ages of eighteen and sixty-five (except mothers or other members of the household who have the responsibility of care of dependent children or of incapacitated adults, bona fide students in any accredited school or training program, or persons employed and working at least 30 hours per week) who either (a) fails to register for employment at a State or Federal employment office or, when impractical, at such other appropriate State or Federal office designated by the Secretary, or (b) has refused to accept employment or public work at not less than (i) the applicable State minimum wage, (ii) the applicable Federal minimum wage, (iii) the applicable wage established by a valid regulation of the Federal Government authorized by existing law to establish such regulations, or (iv) \$1.30 per hour if there is no applicable wage as described in (i), (ii), or (iii) above. Refusal to work at a plant or site subject to a strike or a lockout for the duration of such strike or lockout shall not be deemed to be a refusal to accept employment.”

SEC. 5. Subsections (a) and (b) of section 7 of the Food Stamp Act of 1964, as amended, are amended to read as follows:

“(a) The face value of the coupon allotment which State agencies shall be authorized to issue to any households certified as eligible to participate in the food stamp program shall be in such amount as the Secretary determines to be the cost of a nutritionally adequate diet, adjusted annually to reflect changes in the prices of food published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in the Department of Labor.

“(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, households shall be charged for the coupon allotment issued to them, and the amount of such charge shall represent a reasonable investment on the part of the household, but in no event more than 30 per centum of the household's income: *Provided*, That coupon allotments may be issued without charge to households with income of less than \$30 per month for a family of four under standards of eligibility prescribed by the Secretary: *Provided further*, That the Secretary shall provide a reasonable opportunity for any eligible household to elect to be issued a coupon allotment having a face value which is less than the face value of the coupon allotment authorized to be issued to them under subsection (a) of this section. The charge to be paid by eligible households electing to exercise the option set forth in this subsection shall be an amount which bears the same ratio to the amount which would have been charged under subsection (b) of this section as the face value of the coupon allotment actually issued to them bears to the face value of the coupon allotment that would have been issued to them under subsection (a) of this section.”

Coupon allot-
ment face value,
charges.
78 Stat. 705.
7 USC 2016.

SEC. 6. (a) Subsection (c) of section 10 of the Food Stamp Act of 1964, as amended, is amended by inserting immediately preceding the first sentence the following: "Any household which is receiving public assistance and which makes application for the benefits of this Act shall be certified for eligibility solely by execution of an affidavit, in such form as the Secretary may prescribe, by the member of such household making application. Certification of a household as eligible in any political subdivision shall, in the event of removal of such household to another political subdivision in which the food stamp program is operating, remain valid for participation in the food stamp program for a period of sixty days from the date of such removal."

Eligibility,
certification.
78 Stat. 706.
7 USC 2019.

(b) Subsection (e) of section 10 of the Food Stamp Act of 1964, as amended, is amended to read as follows:

State plan of
operation, sub-
mission.

"(e) The State agency of each State desiring to participate in the food stamp program shall submit for approval a plan of operation specifying the manner in which such program will be conducted within the State, the political subdivisions within the State in which the State desires to conduct the program, and the effective dates of participation by each such political subdivision. In addition, such plan of operation shall provide, among such other provisions as may by regulations be required, the following: (1) the specific standards to be used in determining the eligibility of applicant households; (2) that the State agency shall undertake the certification of applicant households in accordance with the general procedures and personnel standards used by them in the certification of applicants for benefits under the federally aided public assistance programs; (3) safeguards which restrict the use or disclosure of information obtained from applicant households to persons directly connected with the administration or enforcement of the provisions of this Act or the regulations issued pursuant to this Act; (4) for the submission of such reports and other information as from time to time may be required; (5) that the State agency shall undertake effective action, including the use of services provided by other federally funded agencies and organizations, to inform low-income households concerning the availability and benefits of the food stamp program and insure the participation of eligible households; and (6) for the granting of a fair hearing and a prompt determination thereafter to any household aggrieved by the action of a State agency under any provision of its plan of operation as it affects the participation of such household in the food stamp program. The State agency shall, notwithstanding any other provision of law, institute procedures under which any household participating in the food stamp program shall be entitled, if it so elects, to have the charges, if any, for its coupon allotment deducted from any grant or payment such household may be entitled to receive under any federally aided public assistance program and have its coupon allotment distributed to it with such grant or payment. In approving the participation of the subdivisions requested by each State in its plan of operation, the Secretary shall provide for an equitable and orderly expansion among the several States in accordance with their relative need and readiness to meet their requested effective dates of participation."

Reports.

Hearing.

(c) Add the following new subsection to section 10 of the Food Stamp Act of 1964, as amended:

Elderly persons,
meal purchases.

"(h) Subject to such terms and conditions as may be prescribed by the Secretary in the regulations issued pursuant to this Act, members of an eligible household who are sixty years of age or over or an elderly person and his spouse may use coupons issued to them to purchase

meals prepared for and delivered to them by a political subdivision or by a private nonprofit organization which: (1) is not receiving federally donated foods from the United States Department of Agriculture for use in the preparation of such meals; (2) is operated in a manner consistent with the purposes of this Act; and (3) is recognized as a tax exempt organization by the Internal Revenue Service: *Provided*, That household members or elderly persons to whom meals are delivered are housebound, feeble, physically handicapped, or otherwise disabled, to the extent that they are unable to adequately prepare all of their meals. Meals served pursuant to this subsection shall be deemed 'food' for the purposes of this Act."

Enforcement.
78 Stat. 708.
7 USC 2023.

SEC. 7(a). Subsections (a) and (b) of section 14 of the Food Stamp Act of 1964, as amended, are amended as follows:

"(a) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Act, the Secretary may provide for the purchase, issuance or presentation for redemption of coupons to such person or persons, and at such times and in such manner, as he deems necessary or appropriate to protect the interests of the United States or to insure enforcement of the provisions of this Act or the regulations issued pursuant to this Act.

"(b) Whoever knowingly uses, transfers, acquires, alters, or possesses coupons or authorization to purchase cards in any manner not authorized by this Act or the regulations issued pursuant to this Act shall, if such coupons or authorization to purchase cards are of the value of \$100 or more, be guilty of a felony and shall, upon conviction thereof, be fined not more than \$10,000 or imprisoned for not more than five years or both, or, if such coupons or authorization to purchase cards are of a value of less than \$100, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall, upon conviction thereof, be fined not more than \$5,000 or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both."

SEC. 7(b). Section 14 of the Food Stamp Act of 1964, as amended, is amended by adding the following new subsection:

"(e) No person shall be charged with a violation of this or any other Act, or of any regulation issued under this or any other Act, or of any State plan of operation on the basis of any statements or information contained in an affidavit filed pursuant to section 10(c) of this Act, except for fraud."

Ante, p. 2051.
Federal assistance to States.
7 USC 2024.

SEC. 8. Subsection (b) of section 15 of the Food Stamp Act of 1964 as amended, is amended to read as follows:

"(b) The Secretary is authorized to pay to each State agency an amount equal to 62½ per centum of the sum of (1) the direct salary, travel, and travel-related cost (including such fringe benefits as are normally paid) of personnel, including the immediate supervisors of such personnel, for such time as they are employed in taking the action required under the provisions of subsection 10(e)(5) of this Act and in making certification determinations for households other than those which consist solely of recipients of welfare assistance; (2) the direct salary, travel, and travel-related costs (including such fringe benefits as are normally paid) of personnel for such time as they are employed as hearing officials under section 10(e) of the Act."

SEC. 9. Section 16(a) of the Food Stamp Act of 1964, as amended, is amended by striking "\$170,000,000 for the six months ending December 31, 1970" and inserting in lieu thereof "\$1,750,000,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1971; and for the fiscal years ending June 30, 1972 and June 30, 1973 such sums as the Congress may appropriate".

Approved January 11, 1971.

Appropriations.
82 Stat. 958.
7 USC 2025.