



*Policy Ideas as compiled by Foundation for Government Accountability and edited by SIG.*

*Secretaries* - - At our Tuesday afternoon Food Stamp and Welfare session we will go through this list of twenty four and ask secretaries who have implemented any or all of these for policy and operational advice to other Secretaries emanating from their experience.

**1. Require Able-Bodied Childless Adults to Work to Receive Food Stamps**

States should restore work requirements for able-bodied adults without dependents on food stamps and not extend waivers beyond end date. For ABWODs not in the labor force require universal engagement in job search activity.

**2. Eliminate Fraud by Instituting Real-Time Eligibility Monitoring**

States should partner with independent vendors to run robust eligibility audits on their welfare programs. This will allow states to preserve scarce resources for the truly needy

**3. Enforce Federal Asset Limits for Food Stamps**

Enforce the federal asset limit so as to expect recipients to access their own available resources before turning to the public purse.

**4. Eliminate the Use of Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility**

Restore traditional categorical eligibility in the food stamps program.

## **5. Place Photos on EBT Cards**

Put photos on all EBT cards to reduce fraud and trafficking. States should also work with their Department of Motor Vehicles to obtain the photos and reduce implementation costs.

## **6. Crosscheck Lottery Winners with Welfare Rolls**

Welfare agencies should enter into agreements with their state lotteries to quarterly crosscheck winners with welfare rolls. Unreported winnings of \$2,000 or more should trigger a mandatory fraud review.

## **7. Require Face-to-Face Interviews After Excessive EBT Card Loss**

Require enrollees to participate in face-to-face interviews with a fraud investigator and eligibility expert after the loss of a card. If enrollees fail to appear at the interviews, their benefits should be terminated immediately. If third-party vendors are administering replacement cards directly to enrollees, they should be required to notify the department after the request for a fourth replacement card in a twelve-month period in order to trigger an interview, which must be completed before any additional cards that year are issued to that enrollee.

## **8. Limit the Number of EBT Card Users**

Limit the number of authorized representatives to no more than four individuals at any given time. This list should be compiled at the time of application and updated during every redetermination. A written request, signed by the cardholder, should be required to add or change the authorized representatives on the card.

## **9. Eliminate Benefits for Delinquent Child Support Payer**

Terminate TANF cash assistance benefits and impose full-family sanctions upon the first instance of noncompliance for enrollees who fail to cooperate with child support enforcement. States should also disenroll food stamp enrollees who refuse to cooperate with child support enforcement agencies or fail to make their required child support payments.

## **10. Prohibit Spending at Locations of Vice and Luxury**

Present applicants with a clear list of prohibited purchases such as tobacco products, imitation liquor or liquor, gambling activities, lotteries, bail, concert tickets, tattoos, travel services provided by a travel agent, and money transmission to locations abroad. The cards should not be usable at gambling facilities, liquor stores, tattoo parlors, cruise ships, jewelry stores, vapor and tobacco specialty stores, theme parks,

or retail establishments that provide adult-oriented entertainment like strip clubs. States should prohibit these businesses from having ATMs that accept EBT cards and businesses found in violation should be subject to licensing actions. Individuals violating these provisions should face a warning and disqualification of benefits of up to three months for the first offense. The second offense should result in the permanent termination of benefits.

**11. Share Enrollee Disenrollment Information Across Agencies**

Require agencies administering means-tested benefits to share disenrollment information with each other. Agencies receiving such information should then begin the redetermination process, if appropriate.

**12. Terminate Medicaid Benefits for Refusing TANF Work Requirements**

Terminate Medicaid coverage for non- pregnant adults who refuse to comply with TANF work rules.

**13. Convert TANF Cash Diversion from a Handout into a Hand Up**

Convert the payments into loans and institute mandatory job search requirements. Failure to repay the loan should result in an equivalent reduction of the individuals' lifetime TANF time limit.

**14. Implement Policies That Encourage Family Formation and Marriage**

Enforce a full-family sanction that cancels or closes cases for non-compliance on TANF, only exempt parents from work requirements if they have children under the age of 12 months, and enforce shorter lifetime limits. States should also cap benefits so that benefit levels do not continue to rise with more children. Finally, states should maintain minimally-required earnings disregards. When combined, these policies have a significant impact on promoting family formation and work, two key factors in moving individuals from welfare to self-sufficiency.

**15. Verify Identities and Household Composition of Welfare Applicants**

Require verification of household composition and the identity of all members of the household, not just the head of household.

**16. Verify All Expenses for Welfare Applicants**

Require verification of housing, child care and child support expenses.

**17. Reduce Opportunities for Fraud in Convenience Stores**

States should require these stores to carry all four major food groups in order to be EBT-eligible and monitor transactions against available inventory.

**18. Mandate Full Cooperation with Fraud Investigations**

States should mandate cooperation with a fraud investigation and communicate these expectations upon application. Non-compliance should result in case closure and termination of benefits within ten days.

**19. Reduce TANF Time Limits**

States should make the program truly temporary by instituting 12-month or 24-month lifetime limits.

**20. Reduce Reporting Gaps for Eligibility Changes**

States should close the simplified reporting gap and return to more frequent reporting standards.

**21. Strengthen Penalties for Non-Compliance with TANF Rules**

TANF benefits should only start when an individual signs an agreement that clearly states what is expected of the enrollee, explains under what circumstances they would be sanctioned, and details potential penalties for non-compliance. States should also require individuals to be compliant with all other program requirements, including work requirements, before receiving benefits. States should also institute a 3-month full household sanction for the first instance of non-compliance. Benefits should not be reinstated without a review of the sanction rules. Upon the second instance of non-compliance, benefits should be terminated.

**22. Strengthen Penalties for Non-Compliance with Food Stamps Rules**

Set disqualification periods of three months for the first case of non-compliance, six months for the second infraction, one year for the third case of non-compliance, and permanent disqualification for the fourth occurrence. States should also disqualify an individual enrollee who fails to perform actions required by other federal, state, or local means-tested public assistance programs.

**23. Track Out-of-State Welfare Spending**

States should annually post the dollar amount of food stamp benefits that are spent out-of-state, broken down by state. They should also post a breakdown of expenditures at in-state retailers, along with the time of transactions.

**24. Monitor Dependency**

On an aggregate and de-identified level, states should compile reports outlining the length and concurrent enrollment of different eligibility groups. The state should also report the characteristics of different eligibility groups and provide a breakdown of all taxpayer money used for advertising and marketing for TANF, food stamps, Medicaid, and other welfare programs.