

**Overview of SNAP Policy:** Arkansas' adoption of Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) for SNAP receipt is used somewhat restrictively, only increasing asset limits for some families. Specifically, once every five years, **households can be granted a temporary asset limit of \$5,500 for up to one year** and remain eligible for nutritional assistance.

Arkansas has **fully lifted the eligibility ban for those with drug-related felony convictions**. Additionally, the state **offers online services for its initial application, change reporting, and renewal of SNAP benefits**, thereby easing the administrative barriers that can limit families from accessing nutritional support even when they are eligible.

**Assessment of SNAP Policy:** By fully adopting BBCE, Arkansas could **extend its gross income limit up to 200% FPL for families**. Similarly, the state could **remove or increase its asset limit for all households with children**. Families with savings or "rainy day funds" are less likely to experience cumulative material hardships, remain dependent on social benefit programs, or return to dependence on them later. Parents capable of retaining greater assets are also more likely to have the resources to invest in homes or their children's education down the line. **Treating child support payments to non-household members as income exclusions rather than deductions** would further expand eligibility to more families.

**By increasing recertification periods from six to twelve months**, Arkansas could also reduce administrative costs and further lessen the barriers to accessing nutritional assistance. Additionally, **by providing families that are losing access to TANF cash assistance with transitional SNAP benefits for several months**, the state could offer more consistent support to low-income families through a critical period of acute needs. Finally, **using state funds to provide SNAP to immigrant households with children who are ineligible under federal regulations** would also benefit young children's development and support economic security, particularly for newly-arrived families.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For research detailing effects of some state-level policies and administrative practices on children and families, see <https://www.nccp.org/ec-profiles-pes-policies-related-research-and-resources/#parenting>.

Arkansas's Food Stamps (SNAP) Policy		
WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR FOOD STAMPS?		
Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p><b>Gross income limit</b></p> <p>How much can family members earn while being eligible?</p>	<p>\$2,797*/month (or 130% FPL for a family of three in 2024).</p>	<p><b>Consider adopting BBCE and extending the gross income limit to 200% FPL, as many other states have done (e.g., Louisiana, Kentucky).</b></p>
<p><b>Asset Limit</b></p> <p>How many assets can families retain in savings while still being eligible for food stamps?</p>	<p>Generally, the asset limit is \$2,750. However, once every five years, households can be granted a temporary asset limit of \$5,500 for up to 1 year.</p>	<p><b>Remove the asset limit so that households with children can retain savings while receiving nutritional support (i.e. Georgia).</b></p> <p><b>Alternatively, raise the asset limit.</b></p> <p><b>Example: Texas permits \$5,000.</b></p>
<p><b>Transitional Benefit Alternative (TBA)</b></p> <p>Does Arkansas provide families who are losing TANF cash assistance with automatic SNAP eligibility for a few months?</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p><b>Consider providing TBA to families transitioning from TANF cash assistance, as other states are doing (e.g., North Carolina, Georgia).</b></p>
<p>* Current administrative guidelines may present different income amounts depending on when updates to the current federal poverty guidelines are implemented.</p>		
ADDITIONAL RULES AND RESTRICTIONS		
Flexibility	Current policy	Potential improvement
<p><b>Treatment of child support payments to non-household members</b></p>		

Does Arkansas treat child support payments made to non-household members as an income exclusion rather than a deduction?	No.	Enable more families to qualify for SNAP by treating child support payments as income exclusions in the eligibility process (e.g., Virginia, South Dakota).
<b>Lifting drug felony bans</b> Are persons convicted of drug-related felonies eligible for nutritional assistance?	Yes.	N/A
<b>Extending eligibility to some federally ineligible noncitizens using state assistance programs</b> Has Arkansas extended SNAP eligibility to immigrants who are ineligible for SNAP under federal guidelines?	No.	Provide nutritional assistance to newly-arrived families in which parents are awaiting work authorization (e.g., Illinois, Maine, and Minnesota).
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS</b>		
<b>Flexibility</b>	<b>Current policy</b>	<b>Potential improvement</b>
<b>Less frequent recertification periods</b> Has Arkansas extended the recertification period to 12 months for all recipients?	No.	Extend recertification periods to twelve months for all families to reduce agency costs and lighten administrative burdens for working parents, as many other states have done (e.g., Louisiana, Missouri).
<b>Simplified income reporting</b> Does Arkansas require parents to report income only when it rises above the eligibility limit?	Yes.	N/A

<b>Online services for all application processes</b>		
Does Arkansas offer online services for its initial benefit application, reporting of changes, and renewal?	Yes.	N/A