

**Overview of SNAP Policy:** Since Mississippi has not adopted Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) guidelines for SNAP receipt, the state has not been able to increase the gross income limit above 130% FPL or remove the asset limit for low-income families with children. Because of this, parents cannot retain more than \$2,750 in savings and still qualify for food assistance.

Mississippi has **eliminated 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 burdens that can limit families from accessing nutritional support even when they are eligible.

**Assessment of SNAP Policy:** By adopting BBCE, Mississippi could **raise its gross income limit for families up to 200% FPL**. Similarly, the state could **remove or increase its asset limit**. 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 more likely to have the resources to invest in homes or their children’s education as well. Additionally, **treating child support payments to non-household members as income exclusions rather than deductions** would expand eligibility to more families.

**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. Additionally, **by providing families that are losing access to TANF cash assistance with transitional SNAP benefits for several months**, Mississippi could offer more consistent support to low-income families through a critical period of acute needs.

Finally, **providing all households with children with a 12-month recertification period and simplifying the income change reporting process** would lessen administrative burdens on parents and lower costs.<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>.

Mississippi'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>\$2,694*/month (or 130% FPL for a Mississippi family of three in 2024).</p>	<p><b>Consider adopting BBCE and extending the gross income limit to families earning up to 200% FPL, as many other states have done (e.g., Louisiana).</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>Families can retain up to \$2,750.</p>	<p><b>Remove the asset limit so households with children can retain savings while receiving nutritional support (e.g., Georgia).</b></p> <p><b>Alternatively, raise the asset limit.</b></p> <p><b>Example: Texas maintains an asset limit of \$5,000.</b></p>
<p><b>Transitional Benefit Alternative (TBA)</b></p> <p>Does Mississippi 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> <p>Does Mississippi treat child support payments made to non-household members as an</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p><b>Enable more families to qualify for SNAP by treating child support payments as income exclusions in</b></p>

income exclusion rather than a deduction?		the eligibility process (e.g., Virginia, South Dakota).
<b>Lifting drug felony bans</b> Are persons convicted of certain crimes able to regain eligibility for nutritional assistance?	Yes.	N/A
<b>Extending eligibility to some federally ineligible noncitizens using state assistance programs</b> Has Mississippi 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 Mississippi extended the recertification period to 12 months for all recipients?	No.	Consider extending recertification periods to twelve months 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 Mississippi require parents to report income only when it rises above the eligibility limit?	No.	Consider enacting simplified reporting practices to enable households to report income changes only when they rise above the eligibility limit, as most other states do (e.g., Alabama, Arkansas).
<b>Online services for all application processes</b> Does Mississippi offer online services for its initial benefit	Yes.	N/A

application, reporting of changes, and renewal?		
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