



CEO's Farm Bill Recommendations: SNAP & SNAP E&T

The Value of SNAP E&T During Reentry

Each year more than 500,000 individuals return from incarceration, yet no workforce investment adequately meets employment reentry needs, such as paid skills training, work experience, and assistance with transportation and food security. Returning individuals are incredibly motivated to restart their lives after incarceration, but the reentry challenges they face are significant. For this population, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and SNAP Employment & Training (SNAP E&T) provide food security, employment training, and stability during the first days of a job. As the nation's largest employment reentry provider with 31 program sites operating across 12 states, CEO is a SNAP E&T Provider in all states we operate in. **In any given month, more than 1,000 CEO participants participate in SNAP E&T.** Recipients tell us SNAP and SNAP E&T take away stress during reentry, provide stability during a critical transition, and help them feel independent.

CEO's 2023 Farm Bill Recommendations

Support Employment & Training and Fund Paid Training

Support voluntary SNAP E&T and paid training to create more quality employment opportunities during reentry.

In the bipartisan 2018 Farm Bill, Congress strengthened SNAP E&T by including paid training as an allowable activity under E&T. These training opportunities reach high barrier populations who have little to no previous training or employment experience, and who are unable to step away from the workforce to engage in unpaid training. **With this support, justice-impacted people can access evidence-based work experience that helps them find permanent employment and independence.** For example, in CEO's current IT Support training, only 15% of participants would have been able to complete the training without additional financial support. Because CEO provides paid training for this opportunity, we are able to enroll twice as many participants, and 65% of the enrolled cohort passed the first training milestone.

[Jordan](#), a CEO San Diego participant, describes the importance of food security while engaging in work-based training; "I'm paying child support and I'm paying rent. It's nice to have help with food so that I can have energy and work well to provide for myself and the ones I love."

Disregard SNAP E&T Wages from SNAP Eligibility

Pass the bipartisan Training & Nutrition Stability Act (H.R. 3087) to disregard SNAP E&T wages from SNAP eligibility income calculations.

As states implement the new E&T subsidized work-based learning program as Congress intended in the bipartisan 2018 farm bill, an unintended consequence has arisen. Presently, "income" received from E&T programs for participants' time in work-based learning and training is counted as income for the purposes of calculating SNAP eligibility. This results in significant reduction or complete removal of individuals' SNAP benefits because they are receiving income from SNAP E&T. **Recipients are then**



forced to choose between pursuing the training needed to ensure their long-term success in the workforce or keeping the security of being able to feed themselves in the short-term. Congress should include the bipartisan Training & Nutrition Stability Act in the Farm Bill, [HR 3087](#), to address this “Catch-22” and ensure access to these programs as intended.

[Fred](#), CEO Harrisburg participant, shares the experience of having his SNAP benefits cut as a result of his paid training: “I have transportation expenses, rent, utilities and more that were not considered before my benefits were cut. My goal is to move forward...I’m not sitting still, I’m actually working to do better so that I can eventually get off benefits completely”.

Remove Drug Conviction ban

Pass the RESTORE Act to allow SNAP for people with prior drug convictions.

Statute 21 USC § 862(a) prohibits SNAP access for an individual convicted of any offense which is classified as a felony drug conviction. **This prevents individuals from accessing SNAP E&T during their critical reentry period, and serves no public safety purpose.** Almost 60% of people in state prison for drug offenses are Black or Latino, and drug-related arrests have risen nearly 216% for women. While states have the opportunity to “opt out” of this law, restrictions remain across the country. The bipartisan [RESTORE Act](#) would repeal this ban and ensure individuals like [Lamar](#), CEO Charlotte, have access to food assistance and wrap-around support. Lamar states; “It’s impossible for me to save, pay bills, and feed my family at this phase of my life.”

Increase SNAP Access for Individuals Living in Transitional Housing

Clarify that individuals who live in transitional housing are eligible for SNAP and SNAP E&T.

Currently, individuals who are considered residents of an institution which provides them with the majority of their meals (halfway houses, sober living communities, etc) are not eligible to receive SNAP benefits. **CEO strongly recommends that states clarify that residents of a public or private nonprofit halfway house are residents of a homeless shelter for purposes of establishing an exemption from this institution rule.** In many cases, while these individuals live in institutions that provide food, their participation in training programs like CEO result in missing meals provided at their housing institution, while participation in SNAP E&T helps with their transition to independence. Such was the case with [Isaac](#), CEO Detroit participant, who would miss all three meals provided by his transitional housing center when he participated in CEO’s work-based learning and training program.

Summary of CEO

With 31 locations across 12 states, CEO is the nation’s largest organization providing employment reentry services exclusively to justice-involved individuals. CEO provides transitional employment, advanced leadership training and credentialing, and support services to remove barriers to finding a job. Our vision is that every person returning home has the opportunity for full participation in society, and the support to achieve economic mobility in a way that aligns with their goals. To help achieve that vision, CEO helps participants utilize SNAP and SNAP E&T to provide money to pay for food, employment training, and other supportive services. CEO is a 50/50 SNAP E&T third-party partner in all of our states and we provide E&T components to SNAP participants as part of our core program model. CEO also provides SNAP E&T consulting and training to other organizations, and serves as an E&T intermediary, connecting peer organizations directly to E&T through our contracts.