

## 2020.07.14 - TF. SNAP & TANF Subcomm. Mtg. Notes

Present: Ashley Black, Caroline Bolas, Michael Wilson, Rob Durocher, Renee Phillips-Farley, Tamera White, Annie Speedie, Michelle Madaio, Lisa Klingenmaier

Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 28th, 3 pm - 4 pm *tentative*

The **three main initiatives** for the Economic&Food Security Committee are:

1. 1. Legal Aid Funding for Public Benefit Recipients.

Expressed interest: Renee Phillips-Farley, Michael Wilson, Annie Speedie

2. 2. Education and Outreach.

Expressed interest: Carolina Bolas, Michael Wilson, Lisa Klingenmaier, Annie Speedie, Michelle Madaio, Tamera White

3. 3. Advocacy to Program Administrators.

Expressed interest: Renee Phillips-Farley, Rob Durocher, Michael Wilson, Lisa Klingenmaier, Michelle Madaio

\*\* Ashley will reach out to members that were not present at the meeting today to determine their area of interest. She will send an email to subcommittee members by close of business tomorrow, July 15, 2020, to let subcommittee members know which work group they are assigned to. Work groups will focus on the descriptions (listed below under notes).

\*\* If, while working on initiatives, subcommittee members identify a need for representation from additional organizations or individuals, they should reach out to Ashley to potentially send invitations.

\*\* Part of the Education and Outreach workload should include finding organizations that focus on similar issues and see what has already been done so there is no overlap with recommendations.

\*\* The education and Outreach work group should consider not only what educational materials are needed, but also look into ways to effectively distribute those materials.

### Initiatives

1. Legal Aid Funding for Public Benefit Recipients. Those who have legal assistance when filing for public benefits have more successful outcomes than do those who proceed without legal assistance. Title V of the CARES Act directs funds to state and local governments to address impacts of COVID-19. The Civil Legal Aid Funding Committee of the AG's Task Force is looking at whether and how these CARES Act funds can be used to address legal aid needs related to COVID-19. As the Economic & Food Security Committee, we should identify: (i) those legal aid organizations that are best suited to provide legal services to individuals applying for UI, SNAP, or TCA/TANF; (ii) how an identified organization would utilize CARES Act funding, or other additional funding, should they receive it; and (iii) a funding level that the identified organization would need in order to make a positive impact.

2. Education and Outreach. Applicants for public benefits need comprehensive, consolidated, and easily understood guidance on benefit entitlements, eligibility, application requirements, application procedures, rights of appeal, and appeal procedures. We should produce visually appealing and user-friendly informational products that educate on these issues as they relate to UI, SNAP, and TCA/TANF. In addition, we should develop a distribution strategy for these products that makes them broadly available to beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries.

3. Advocacy to Program Administrators. No government program is administered perfectly; there are always opportunities for improvements. The Committee should review State agency administration of UI, SNAP, and TCA/TANF to identify potential improvements in program administration, with a focus on those aspects of program administration that the agency has the authority to address or improve internally (i.e., without need for legislation). For example: (i) the UI subcommittee has identified that the Department of Labor does not always provide notice in a benefits determination of the claimant's rights of appeal; (ii) language proficiency and access to technology can often be barriers for potential beneficiaries. Once potential improvements are identified, we will draft Task Force recommendations to program administrators.