



Indiana Association of Area Agencies on Aging

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IAAAA comments about SNAP Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana (10/16/2013)

The Indiana Association of Area Agencies on Aging represents Indiana's 16 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) which are the front door through which most Hoosiers access long-term services and supports.

AAAs assess all Indiana residents seeking nursing home care. They also administer local, state, federal and private resources such as CHOICE, Aged & Disabled Medicaid Waivers, Social Services Block Grant and Title III on the Older Americans Act which allow older adults and people with disabilities of any age to live and age safely and independently in their own homes and communities.

In reference to SNAP, SNAP benefits are an important part of a financial equation that allow low-income older adults and persons with disabilities to maintain their health, safety, dignity and independence. Area Agency on Aging Options Counselors and Case Managers make referrals to SNAP and can assist consumers in applying for SNAP benefits. From the most recent annual SNAP data available, we know more than 53,000 poor, older Hoosiers access SNAP benefits, not counting younger persons with disabilities who may also qualify.

IAAAA strongly supports measures that assure the financial integrity of SNAP, including fraud prevention initiatives. In order for AAAs to fulfill their mission related to home and community-based services, we need SNAP to remain a benefit for Hoosiers in need for years to come.

However, we have grave concerns regarding the following questions related to fraud prevention:

- (i) Whether Indiana should require a photograph of a SNAP recipient on the recipient's electronic benefits transfer (EBT) card.
- (ii) Whether Indiana should require a SNAP recipient to show the recipient's photo identification issued by a federal, state, or local unit when the recipient uses the recipient's electronic benefits transfer (EBT) card.

Older adults and persons with disabilities require a wide variety of supports to remain independently at home. One such support is homemaker assistance, whether provided formally through a home health care agency or informally through family, friend and neighbors. Homemaker assistance encompasses grocery shopping for people unable to shop for themselves. AAA clients frequently lack transportation or may be unable to drive. They may be homebound because of a physical disability, general frailty or dementia disorder. These consumers regularly send their SNAP cards with their home health aides, family members or other caregivers that grocery shop for them.

Requiring photo identification on or in conjunction with the SNAP card will put these homebound persons at great risk for lack of access to food necessary to maintain health and proper nutrition. Therefore, we respectfully request that you consider the needs of these poor, older, frail and disabled Hoosiers when determining your response to the above questions.

For more information:

Kristen LaEace
CEO, Indiana Association of Area Agencies on Aging
317.205.9201 v | 317.502.7057 c | klaeace@iaaaa.org