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New Data: 21,400 Kentuckians Have Lost Food Assistance as a Result of Barriers Erected by State

By Anna Baumann

May 14, 2019

New data shows 21,400 Kentuckians have had Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits taken away due to a recent state rule requiring adults without dependents or a disability report work hours over a certain threshold or lose food assistance.

"That so many Kentuckians have lost food assistance – roughly the same number as the population of Ashland – is extremely concerning," said Kentucky Center for Economic Policy Analyst Dustin Pugel. "As a result of the state's decision to let time limit waivers expire, a lot of Kentuckians are going hungry, which only exacerbates our already poor health."

Starting in January 2018, Kentucky rolled out this work reporting requirement as a condition of receiving SNAP. By May 2018, all but eight counties had the requirement in effect. It is the first time since the requirement became an option for states in 1996 that it applies to almost all of Kentucky.



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Only 138 of those who lost SNAP as a result of the time limits have regained benefits during the same period, pointing to the fact that work reporting requirements' primary effect is to reduce participation – not improve employment as the administration has repeatedly said is the goal.

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Last updated on May 16, 2019.

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