Expanding Community Colleges as SNAP E&T Providers

Assembling the Team

Planning Guide #1



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This planning guide is one of a series of documents produced by ACCT with the following project partners:

APHSA American Public Human Services Association

SJI SEATTLE JOBS INITIATIVE Opening Doors to Living-Wage Careers

skills strategy CONSULTING

USDA Food & Nutrition Service

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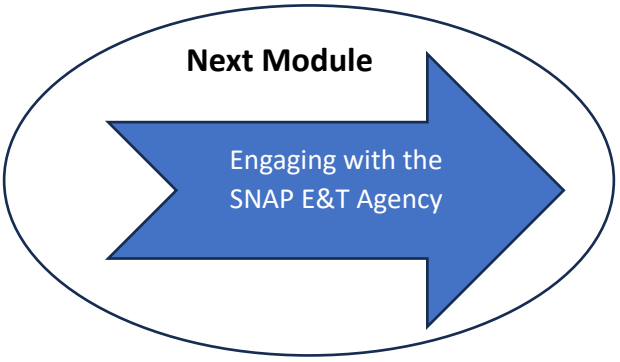
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SNAP E&T Planning Guide #1

Assembling the Team

Summary

SNAP Employment & Training (SNAP E&T) connects recipients of SNAP with high-quality education and training and support services that result in meaningful credentials and careers with family-sustaining wages. SNAP E&T helps to close opportunity gaps and creates career pathways to ensure people have access to the services and training they need to develop the skills needed to secure jobs that offer economic stability and mobility to allow people to move off of public benefits.



SNAP E&T is a unique program that aligns directly with state and institutional goals focused on equitable college access and completion of credentials that can support the economic wellbeing of students and meet the needs of local employers. The SNAP E&T framework is extremely flexible and can easily leverage current faculty and staff work in student success or workforce development. Colleges do not need to hire new staff or pull existing staff away from their ongoing responsibilities.

The SNAP 50/50 cost reimbursement model allows colleges to be reimbursed for 50% of their expenses–staffing, student support services, indirect, materials, and more–to expand, enhance, or provide new services for students receiving SNAP. This reimbursement can be put back into the program and can grow and expand over time to provide a robust funding stream to support students receiving SNAP benefits while they achieve their college and career goals.

Community and technical colleges have the opportunity to assemble and engage a large team of college stakeholders to develop, implement and scale SNAP E&T. In doing so, they draw distinct expertise from various college leaders as they develop new or enhance existing programs and services for SNAP-eligible students. Colleges are also able to be reimbursed 50% for this staff time and effort, for staff not funded through federal sources or matched in other grants. This SNAP E&T reimbursement can be reinvested in the program and support its expansion and impact. It is particularly important to

Who to Invite to the Table (college internal planning)

- SNAP E&T college lead
- College executive leader sponsor
- College leaders from:
  - Workforce development /Continuing Education
  - Career Technical Education
  - Adult education
  - Student Services including who oversee basic needs supports such as campus food pantry or benefit acess/resource hubs
- Grants office staff
- Advisers/College navigators
- College Finance
- College Foundation

Planning Goals

1) Identify the different college staff roles that can play an important part in the development of and scaling of SNAP E&T programs and contribute to the 50% reimbursement
2) Understand how SNAP E&T can increase the college's capacity to equitably serve students
3) Determine who should lead SNAP E&T for the college and who is essential to be part of the SNAP E&T team bringing unique expertise

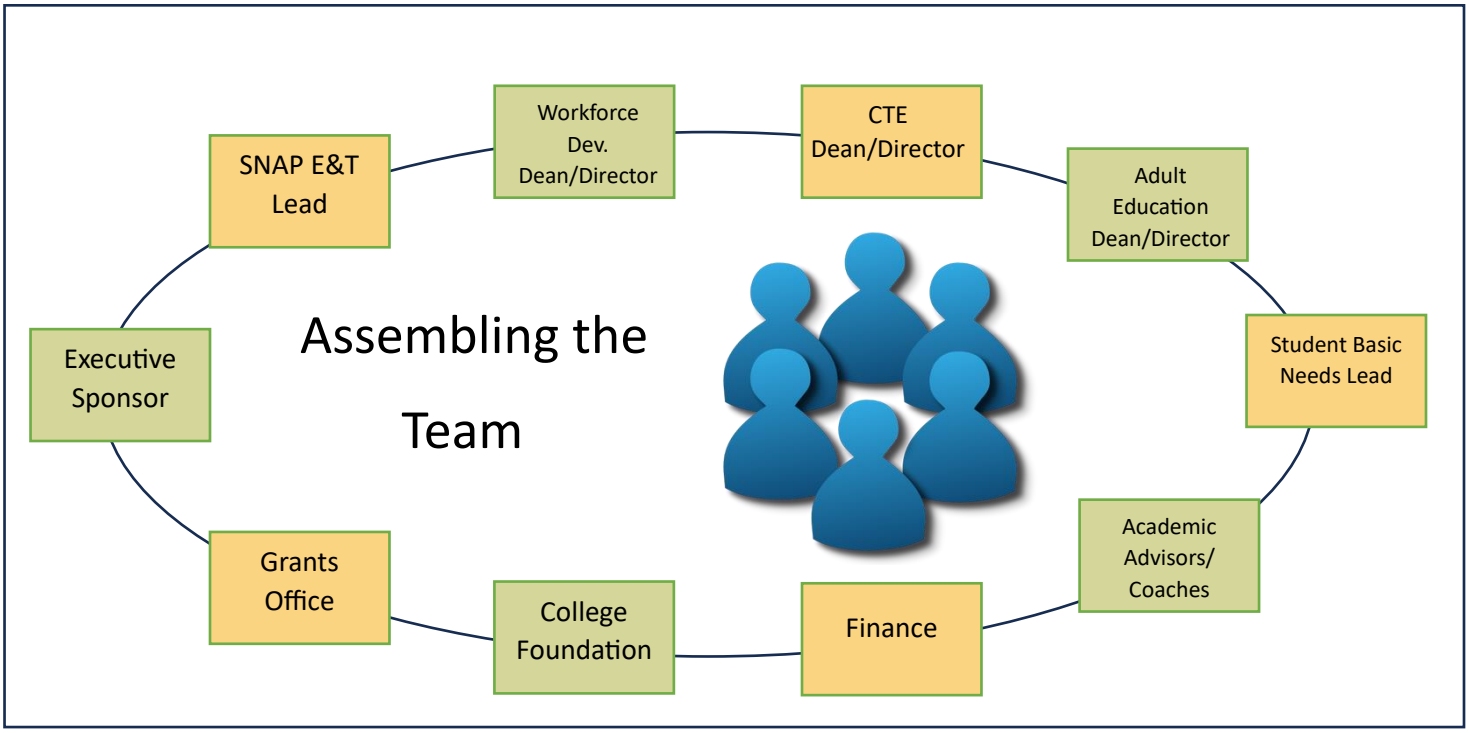
have college leaders involved in SNAP E&T who have overseen or participated in: 1) different workforce grants, including adult education, that braid multiple funding streams 2) existing college programs that have equitably supported students with low incomes to complete college credentials and gain careers that offer economic mobility (i.e. career pathways/non-degree credential programs) 3) college student basic needs initiatives such as a campus food pantries or benefit access/resource hubs 4) advisors/coaches who have insights on what support services are needed by students

Staff and administrators who oversee and support related programs are integral in the design, implementation and scaling of SNAP E&T because the program connects across multiple college divisions and student services and systems. These staff, along with those working with students directly, can help generate reimbursement for SNAP E&T as long as they're not funded with federal resources or already matched on a separate federal grant. Colleges can and should start small with their SNAP E&T implementation and can continue to bring additional colleagues to the table in scaling efforts. This can also lead to expanding the table in time to include external partners.

72%

of jobs in the US will require postsecondary education and/or training by 2031.

(Source: Georgetown University Center on Education & the Workforce – After Everything: Projections of Jobs, Education and Training Requirements through 2031)



This visual highlights key college stakeholders that could play a role in the development and implementation of SNAP E&T on campus. It is important to note that all of these representatives do NOT need to be on board or "at the table" for a college to begin planning and implementation of SNAP E&T. All of these roles will add value and insights to the team and can join in time.

Guiding Questions

1) Who will be the college's lead person and executive sponsor for the SNAP E&T program?
2) Who else at the institution has championed innovative workforce and community partnership grants and initiatives including any work with the state/regional SNAP agency?
    a. What expertise and insights will they bring to this project?
3) Who has led college initiatives that address student basic needs?
    a. What expertise and insights will they bring to this project?
4) Who at the college has led effective programs that have supported students with low incomes to complete credentials of value?
    a. What expertise and insights will they bring to this project?
5) Which advisors, career coaches or navigators have supported students effectively and gained insights on student needs?
6) What themes from the college's strategic plan and/or strategic enrollment management (SEM) plan can be used in framing SNAP E&T to the newly formed team?
7) If the college will be an intermediary with the SNAP agency on behalf of other colleges for SNAP E&T, who will play the following roles:
    a. Point person to contract with SNAP agency and colleges
    b. Liaison between the SNAP agency, your college and partnering colleges
    c. Finance person

Meeting Agenda Template

- Check-in regarding prior meeting action items
- Review and discuss responses to guiding questions
- Review and discuss the potential challenges
- Develop written responses for guiding question
- Identify areas that need further research/understanding – develop specific descriptions of information still needed
- Create a detailed list of questions for technical assistance
- Clarify next steps, who is responsible, and a timeframe for reporting back to team

Additional questions for assembling the team:

8) What are anticipated concerns from any faculty and staff about participating in SNAP E&T?
    a. What are some strategies to bring them along?
9) How frequently will the SNAP E&T team meet in the planning stages? How about once SNAP E&T is up and running?
10) What are next steps in assembling the team for SNAP E&T?

Potential Challenges

1) College leaders may already be charged with leading or be involved in other student success initiatives beyond SNAP E&T and raise concerns about capacity or creating a sense of initiative fatigue. SNAP E&T should be designed to build on existing institutional strengths and work in place on campus and not be viewed as a separate siloed project. It can also generate reimbursement from college staff (not funded through federal resources) that can generate revenue to help fund additional student support services or even new staffing to sustain the work.

2) There may be a perception that SNAP E&T requires colleges to identify and fund new staff positions to implement SNAP E&T and generate time-and-effort for reimbursement. This is not the case and rarely possible. Colleges can creatively integrate current staff into SNAP E&T at a percent of their FTE to serve students or support this program and build up to new positions in time through the federal reimbursement or other non-federal grants.

3) Many colleges have initiatives in place to address student basic needs overseen typically by the Student Affairs or Student Services area of the college. SNAP E&T should be integrated into this work but leaders in these areas may have less experience overseeing workforce grants that require braiding funding across multiple streams and strategically engaging community partners. In turn, this could limit the growth potential of SNAP E&T to serve more students and maximize reimbursements. It is recommended to have SNAP E&T co-led by a college leader who does have that experience managing similar partnership grants.

Planning Checklist

- ❒ 1) Identify the college's lead person and executive sponsor for SNAP E&T
- ❒ 2) Determine who needs to be part of college SNAP E&T team based on recommendations listed above
- ❒ 3) Facilitate initial meeting with SNAP E&T college team and provide background information on the SNAP E&T program
- ❒ 4) Determine what role team members will play in launching and sustaining SNAP E&T
- ❒ 5) Identify who else needs to be part of team in near future
- ❒ 6) Continue to engage with SNAP agency in planning to join as a third-party SNAP E&T provider

Tools/Organizational Aids for this Module

- FNS SNAP E&T Toolkit
- FNS SNAP E&T Operations Handbook
- FNS SNAP E&T website

Resources

- SNAP to Skills
- FNS SNAP E&T 2024 National Forum – Community College and Human Service SNAP E&T Partnerships
- FNS Webinar – How Community College Systems and SNAP Agencies Can Take Career Pathways to Scale
- The Institute for College Access and Success - SNAP Reimagined: Improving Postsecondary Education Access and Completion
- National Skills Coalition – Building State Career Pathways Systems: A Toolkit for State Policymakers, Human Service Agency Leaders, Community Colleges, and Partners

FAQ's

1) Who is essential to have on the college team to get started with SNAP E&T?

It is beneficial to have someone on the team that has led workforce grants that have braided funding and also established strong community partnerships. SNAP E&T should be integrated with other college initiatives addressing student basic needs so having representation from staff leading this related work will ensure these efforts are aligned and leveraged. It is also valuable to have leaders from the instructional programs in Career Technical Education, Adult Education and/or non-credit workforce education/continuing education that SNAP E&T students will enroll in from the very beginning so it is designed in a strategic, inclusive and equitable way. Similarly, having college finance at the table will establish strong fiduciary systems and documentation that will position SNAP E&T for growth and scaling.

2) How many people should be part of the SNAP E&T college team?

   It can begin with a small college team and others can join in time as the program expands. Bringing more college staff in to help develop new or enhance existing programs and services for SNAP E&T should only improve access, retention, completion and employment outcomes while also generating more SNAP E&T reimbursement that can be reinvested in the program.

3) Should college community partners such as CBO's, workforce organizations or employers be part of the SNAP E&T team?

   The SNAP agency, community-based organizations and workforce organizations, especially those that are also SNAP E&T third-party providers along with employers are all key collaborators in an effective SNAP E&T program. There are separate modules and planning guides that focus on these partnerships. In assembling the SNAP E&T team at the beginning, it is best to form it with college-specific staff.

Case Study

ABC Community College has been in dialogue with their State SNAP agency about becoming a third-party SNAP E&T provider in the next fiscal year. The college is new to SNAP E&T but has worked with the state and local human service agency in the past through their TANF JOBS program. The workforce development manager at the college led this grant in the past and has an established relationship with local leaders from the human service agency. The college Vice President of Instruction determines this workforce development manager will be the lead for SNAP E&T and the Vice President of Student Affairs will be the executive sponsor as they have overseen all of the student basic needs initiatives across campus.

The workforce development manager and Vice President decide to bring a CTE instructional dean for manufacturing and IT programs onto the SNAP E&T team as this dean has managed a Strengthening Community Colleges U.S. Department of Labor grant over the past few years. They also include the coordinator of the campus food pantry, the grants office accountant, and two career coaches who have worked with students in short-term non-degree CTE credential programs including an Integrated Education and Training program designed for adult education students working on their English language skills or preparing for the GED tests. The adult education WIOA Title II director is also invited to be a part of the initial SNAP E&T college team.

At the initial meeting, the team learns more about SNAP E&T and how they can develop new services or enhance existing ones for SNAP-eligible students to support them in achieving their career goals. The team also learns more about how reimbursements can be reinvested in the program to be able to assist even more students. They discuss who else at the college should be a part of this team and recognize the college foundation and more leaders from CTE and workforce development need to join in soon.