

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 1, 2024

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Bill.Teets@jfs.ohio.gov**SNAP changes help recipients transition off food assistance**

COLUMBUS, OHIO – Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Director Matt Damschroder announced a change to Ohio’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) that creates a sliding scale to ease the transition off benefits. The change was approved by the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review in June and went into effect today.

“Fear of losing food benefits can be a deterrent to taking a new job, working more hours, or even accepting a promotion,” Damschroder said. “Instead of an all-or-nothing approach, we are creating a sliding scale that encourages people to earn more by slowly reducing their benefits as their income grows. This provides an incentive to accept promotions and pay raises knowing they won’t immediately lose benefits.”

The change addresses an issue known as the benefits cliff. The benefits cliff, which has been identified by employers as a barrier to growing their workforce, occurs when someone chooses not to accept additional work hours, increases in pay, or promotions because it pushes them over the income limitations for programs like SNAP. The result is that a pay raise may actually lead to a net loss in actual income due to losing public assistance.

Previously, SNAP was only available to those earning 130% of the federal poverty level (FPL). Beginning today, ODJFS is adding tiered eligibility for those with income above the 130% threshold. As a recipient’s income approaches 200% FPL, the amount of monthly SNAP benefits gradually decreases, creating an offramp from benefits instead of a cliff.

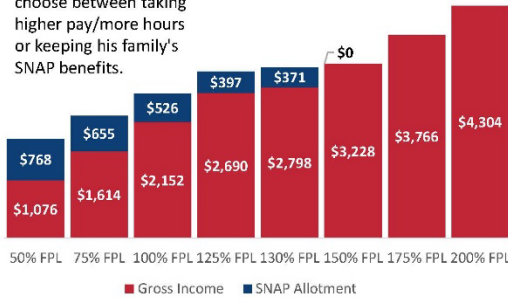




Two Married Adults – One Dependent

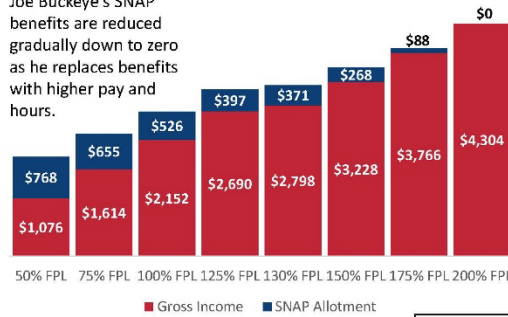
Current Program: Benefits Cliff

Joe Buckeye must choose between taking higher pay/more hours or keeping his family's SNAP benefits.



Proposal: Off-Ramp

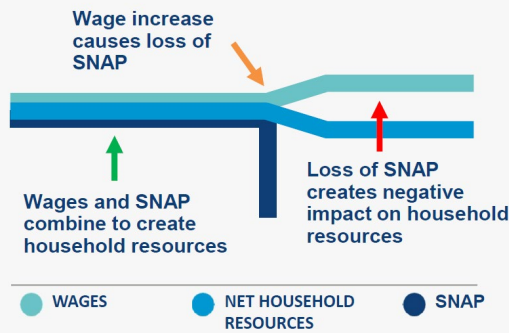
Joe Buckeye's SNAP benefits are reduced gradually down to zero as he replaces benefits with higher pay and hours.



Expenses: Housing/rent= \$1,200; Utilities= \$85; Cell Phone= \$60; Medical Insurance= \$105; Auto Payment= \$0; Auto Insurance= \$90; Gasoline= \$110; Savings= \$0

Income Amounts have Been Rounded

Understanding the Benefit Cliff



In general, SNAP recipients between 18 and 59 must meet certain work requirements. These requirements include registering for work, taking a suitable job if offered, not voluntarily quitting a job or reducing your work hours below 30 a week, or participating in employment and training programs. Able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) have additional requirements such as working or participating in a work program at least 80 hours per month. These requirements will remain in place.





Mike DeWine, Governor | Jon Husted, Lt. Governor | Matt Damschroder, Director

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services manages vital programs that strengthen Ohio families. These include job training and employment services, unemployment insurance, cash and food assistance, adult protective services, and child support services.

