

# FEEDING AMERICA

## Levering Partnerships to Fund SNAP Outreach Webinar

Hosted by:

USDA Food and Nutrition Service

Office of Strategic Initiatives, Partnerships and Outreach

Duke Storen, Director

Tia Norman, Program Analyst

# AGENDA

## Feeding America

### Leveraging Partnerships to Fund SNAP Outreach Webinar

- **Welcoming Remarks – Tia Norman**  
Office of Strategic Initiatives,  
Partnerships and Outreach
- **Introductory Remarks – Duke Storen, Director**  
Office of Strategic Initiatives,  
Partnerships and Outreach
- **Presenter – Jennifer McNabb, Feeding America**  
SNAP Outreach at Feeding America
- **Presenter – Charlie Okal, FNS Financial Management**  
Funding SNAP Outreach Activities  
through Reimbursement/Funding  
Eligibility/Benefit Workers by Building  
Partnerships
- **Presenter – Eddie Ortega, FNS Northeast Regional Office**  
SNAP Outreach Plans
- **Presenter – Veronica Wilson, North Carolina Department of Social Services**  
SNAP Outreach and Partnering with the  
State
- **Presenter – Lisa Johnston, Terri Farless MANNA Foodbank**  
Building Partnership and Funding  
Success
- **Closing Remarks – Duke Storen, Director**  
Office of Strategic Initiatives,  
Partnerships and Outreach

**Tough Times** require  
*New Solutions*

**Partner** with the  
**Food & Nutrition Service**

[www.fns.usda.gov](http://www.fns.usda.gov)

[partnerships@fns.usda.gov](mailto:partnerships@fns.usda.gov)

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**S. Duke Storen**  
**USDA Food and Nutrition Service**

# Leveraging Partnerships to Fund SNAP Outreach and Eligibility Services

- Thank you!
- We share a mission to feed America's hungry
- Financial crisis creates challenges ... and opportunities
- Challenges:
  - Increasing poverty and unemployment
  - Strained State government budgets
  - Increasing demand for nutrition assistance
  - Ending childhood hunger by 2015
  - SNAP participation rate – 68%

# Leveraging Partnerships to Fund SNAP Outreach and Eligibility Services

- Opportunities:
  - Maximizing the use of existing nutrition assistance programs including SNAP to meet the needs of struggling individuals and families
  - Provide better customer service to low-income individuals seeking participation in SNAP
  - Provide federal resources (money, materials, technical assistance) to the Feeding America network in support of their SNAP outreach efforts
  - Help States leverage the commitment of Feeding America to fund new eligibility workers, conduct outreach, and provide application assistance
  - Develop new partnership models that benefit low-income individuals, State/local government, and Feeding America
- How?



**Jennifer McNabb**  
**SNAP Outreach Manager**  
**Feeding America**



**SNAP OUTREACH**  
**at**  
**FEEDING AMERICA**

# History of the Initiative

## *How it Originated*

- **67%** of eligibles are currently receiving benefits
- **35%** of Feeding America clients receiving benefits
- **70%** of clients are income eligible
- **Board Outcome** set to increase participation in federal nutrition programs by 25%

# Network Outreach Goal

(Data from the 2007 NAR)

Current Activities	Food Banks Participating	Percent of Total
Distribute Information	134	97.8%
Pre-screen Applicants	55	40.1%
Deliver Applications to local Food Stamp Offices	76	55.4%
Current Activity Level	Food Banks Participating (Current)	2012 Goal (25% increase)
<b>Aggressive Outreach</b> (more than three outreach activities)	53	66
<b>Moderate Outreach</b> (performing three outreach activities)	31	39
<b>Entry Level</b> (distributing information )	54	68
<b>No Outreach</b>	67	32

# Phases of Implementation

## Phase 1

### **Evaluation of States**

Analyzing barriers to access in states with low participation rates and identifying policy and outreach intervention models that are likely to be successful.

## Phase 2

### **Increase Food Bank Capacity for Outreach**

Assisting food banks in developing strategies on a statewide basis to improve participation rates and supporting their efforts with financial resources and technical assistance.

## Phase 3

### **Maximize Outreach Efforts Nationwide**

Share best practices across state lines and support food banks in developing moderate and aggressive SNAP outreach across the Network.

# Focused States

- Criteria for selection includes rate of participation, food bank activity and interest, and unemployment.
- FY10 states are California, Maryland, Minnesota, New Jersey, North Carolina, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin.
- Will add up to seven states per year for intensive focus.

# Impact

## Food Bank Outreach Activity

Aggressive Outreach

Moderate Outreach

Entry Level Outreach

Conversion  
Model  
Hypothesis  
Participation  
Rates  
Increase

## Food Stamp Friendly State Policies

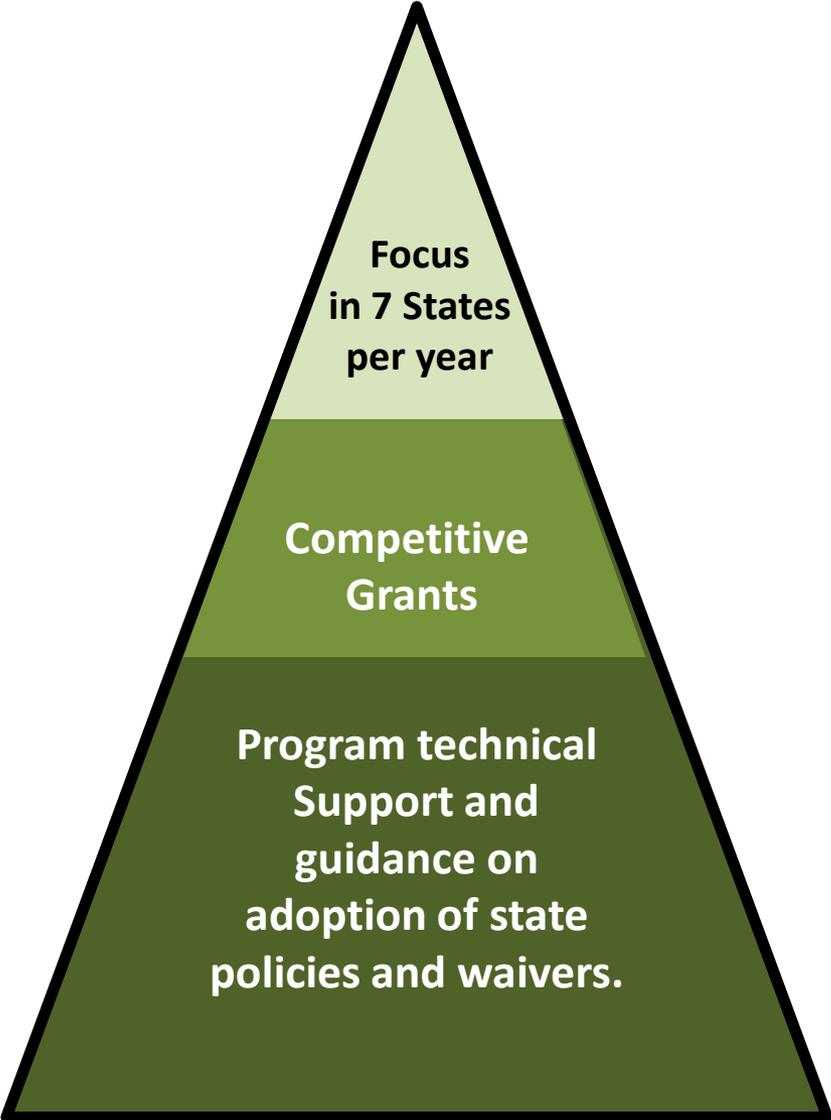
Most Receptive Waiver Adoption

More Receptive Waiver Adoption

Least Receptive Waiver Adoption

We estimate that it costs food banks about \$50,000 on average to hire an outreach worker. The Federal Government could reimburse up to 50% of allowable outreach expenses if the outreach plan is approved by the State agency.

# National Office Support



Focus  
in 7 States  
per year

Competitive  
Grants

Program technical  
Support and  
guidance on  
adoption of state  
policies and waivers.

**Focused states will receive \$50,000 per year** and additional grants will be allocated based on the number of residents who are eligible and not participation.

**Support in adopting state options and policies.** FA will work in all 50 states to support inclusion in state plans and influence states at the legislative and executive level to adopt SNAP-friendly state options included in the 2008 Farm Bill.

**Team dedicated to providing technical assistance,** best practice sharing and up to \$1M in competitive grants annually outside focused states.

**Charlie Okal**  
**Chief, Grants Policy Branch**  
**USDA Food and Nutrition Service**  
**Financial Management**

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**Presenter:**

**Charlie Okal**

**USDA Food and Nutrition Service**

**Financial Management**

# Leveraging Partnerships to Fund SNAP Outreach

- Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and many non-profit organizations share the mission of promoting programs that provide food assistance to low-income Americans.
- Millions of individuals are eligible but not participating in these programs and there are billions of dollars in unclaimed benefits.
- Partnering to leverage resources to fund SNAP outreach activities can efficiently help provide food to needy families, offer relief to overburdened social services offices, and stimulate the local and state economy.

# Allowable Outreach Activities

## Outreach Efforts

<b>Non- Profit Organization</b>	<b>State/Local Agencies</b>
<p><b>Media Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Direct mailers</li><li>•Local PSAs</li><li>•Church bulletins</li><li>•NGO newsletters</li><li>•Newspaper advertisements</li><li>•Articles and OP-Eds</li><li>•Promotion at community events</li></ul> <p><b>On-line Benefit Screening</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Ready applications for prospective SNAP clients</li><li>•Referrals for services offered by partner non-profit</li></ul>	<p><b>Media Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Local PSAs</li><li>•Posters/Signage</li><li>•Client communication</li><li>•Mailers included with SNAP notices regarding programs</li></ul> <p><b>On-line Benefit Screening</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Ready applications for prospective SNAP clients</li><li>•Referrals for services offered by partner non-profit</li></ul>

# Allowable Outreach Activities

## Individual Assistance

<b>Non- Profit Organization</b>	<b>State/Local Agencies</b>
<p><b>Point of Contact with Clients</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Promote SNAP onsite<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○Brochures</li><li>○SNAP applications</li></ul></li><li>•Provide SNAP screening and application assistance using on-line benefit tools</li></ul>	<p><b>Social Services Sites</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Promote services offered by non-profits onsite<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○Brochures</li><li>○Applications/Guidelines</li></ul></li><li>•Provide training to non-profit staff on on-line benefit tools</li><li>•Provide resources at non-profits for SNAP eligibility screening and application processing</li><li>•Host co-sponsored events at local SNAP office</li></ul>

# Funding SNAP Outreach Activities

- SNAP outreach, screening, and application assistance can be reimbursed with federal funds.
- Without any contribution of state funds, local non-profits can be reimbursed up to 50% of their expenses related to the provision of approved outreach activities.
- Staff time and expenditures on marketing efforts like media buys, printing materials, and postage costs are all allowable expenditures. In-kind contributions are not allowable.

# How?

- A non-profit organization enters into an agreement with the State agency responsible for SNAP to provide SNAP outreach services.
- The State agency includes this agreement as part of its SNAP Outreach Plan submitted to FNS.
- If the State has no money to contribute, then the agreement between the State Agency and the non-profit organization would be to reimburse the non-profit the federal share (roughly 50%) of the cost of services rendered, less any administrative costs used by the State agency.

# Funding Eligibility/Benefits Workers

- Maximize the use of government programs which provide nutrition assistance, cash assistance, and medical care.
- Community organizations spend considerable resources helping applicants navigate the application process.
- Many organizations prefer to have an eligibility/benefits worker on-site to take determine eligibility.
- Conducting these services at the point of contact increases the likelihood of a completed application and offers better customer service.

# Increasing the Number of Eligibility/Benefits Workers:

- Benefits Community Organizations
- Benefits Social Service Offices
- Benefits the Local and State Economy

See the Business Case for Increasing SNAP Participation: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/business-case.htm>

# How?

1. One or more community organizations enters into an agreement with a State/local department of social services office responsible for the eligibility determination of SNAP.
2. The community organization(s) agree to pay the State agency the State share of an eligibility worker through a cash donation.
3. The department of social services would use the cash donation to draw down the Federal reimbursement of administrative expenditures.

# How Does It All Work?

Cont'd

4. The department of social services would agree to provide an outstationed (or mobile) eligibility/benefits worker at the community organization's point of service.
5. The worker would be a civil service employee, not an employee of the community organization(s).

# Feeding America Q/A

**Q:** What strategy does FNS recommend to leverage federal funding for SNAP Outreach without using state funds?

**A:** We suggest that the State agency be contacted to become a sub-grantee to the state for outreach activity. You should have a proposed plan and budget to achieve a level of confidence on the part of the state.

**Q:** What is the step-by-step process?

**A:** 1) Find any source of non-Federal funds for the non-Federal share; 2) Prepare a budget based on these funds; 3) Prepare a draft work plan; 4) Approach the State agency to become a sub-grantee to the State, without requiring state agency funding.

# Feeding America Q/A Cont'd

Q: Who is eligible?

A: The State is able to decide which group can provide these services for them. Currently a good example is nutrition education. This program is almost entirely run by outside State/local departments of social services.

Q: What is a state outreach plan?

A: Each State which requests outreach funds must prepare a plan outlining the activities and costs involved.

# Feeding America Q/A Cont'd

Q: Which outreach activities are reimbursable?

A: Visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/guidance/stateplan.htm>

Q: Which outreach activities are not reimbursable?

A: Certain costs relating to activities other than outreach would not be reimbursable such as entertainment, fines and penalties, and contributions and donations are examples of unallowable costs. In addition, in-kind contributions are not reimbursable for non-government organizations. For more information visit [http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/guidance/Outreach\\_Plan\\_Guidance.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/guidance/Outreach_Plan_Guidance.pdf)

Q: Can private funds be used to pay for services which are reimbursable?

A: Yes, for example, if you have \$5000 in private funds, you could spend \$10,000 and receive \$5000 in Federal reimbursement. The local share would be the private funds, but the total would be eligible for reimbursement.

# Feeding America Q/A Cont'd

**Q:** Please explain the reimbursement process?

**A:** Once the state's outreach plan is approved and their budget is revised to reflect the cost of the activity, the State is able to draw funds from the Federal Letter of Credit. You would be required to follow the state's process for payments. Invoices would be required as per the State's process. Please be aware however that some states use some of the reimbursement to cover administrative cost.

**Q:** My state/county agency is overwhelmed with record participation. What messaging should I use to get their buy-in for our outreach efforts?

**A:** The benefits of social service agencies:

- Improve Customer Service by locating eligibility/benefits workers at places convenient for applicants
- Improve worker satisfaction by reducing workload of existing staff
- Increase federal resources by drawing down federal funds for program administration
- Avoid federal penalties/sanctions by increasing the number of eligibility/benefits workers
- Improve worker satisfaction by reducing workload of existing staff

# Feeding America Q/A Cont'd

Q: Are grants announced on a regular schedule?

A: Yes, discretionary grants are posted on an annual basis usually at the start of the Federal Fiscal Year, which is October 1. The announcements are posted at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

Q: Can Recovery Act dollars be used for SNAP Outreach ?

A: Yes

For more information regarding allowable outreach activities and policy guidance visit:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/guidance/stateplan.htm>



**Eddie Ortega, Program Specialist  
USDA Food and Nutrition Service  
Northeast Region**

# Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Outreach Plans



**Presenter:**

**Eddie Ortega, Program Specialist  
USDA Food and Nutrition Service  
Northeast Region**



# Leveraging Federal Funds with SNAP Outreach Plans

- *Read the current SNAP State Outreach Plan Guidance and then find out if your State has a SNAP Outreach Plan*
  - *The guidance is available online: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/guidance/stateplan.htm>*
- *Talk to your State about how your organization can help ease the burden on Eligibility Workers with outreach activities:*
  - *Providing pre-screening and application assistance*
  - *Preparing people for SNAP interviews*
  - *Assisting people in gathering the necessary documents before appointments*
- *Ask your State if there are other ways your organization can help*

**Outreach Plan Partnerships work: Your organization helps fulfill its mission with support from Federal funds, the State has a partner in reaching those in need effectively and efficiently.**



# Community Based Organizations Eligible to Participate as Sub-grantees

- *Public health or educational entities*
- *Private nonprofit entities such as community-based or faith-based organizations, food banks, or other emergency feeding organizations*
- *Organizations must have non-Federal funds to produce the 50% State portion of the reimbursement where States do not have outreach resources*

*Non-Federal funds can include:*

- *Donations*
- *State Appropriations*
- *Foundation Grants*
- *Corporate Donations*



***Let your State know: Your organization can be a partner in providing the best services possible during these difficult times without the need for additional State funding.***

# State Decisions and SNAP Outreach Plan Partners

When a community partner is interested in participating in a SNAP State outreach plan, that prospective community partner should contact the State.

- *The State makes a determination as to how to proceed.*
- *The State may choose to submit an addendum to the current FY plan or depending on State-specific processes.*
- *The State may offer to include the prospective community partner as part of the next FY cycle.*



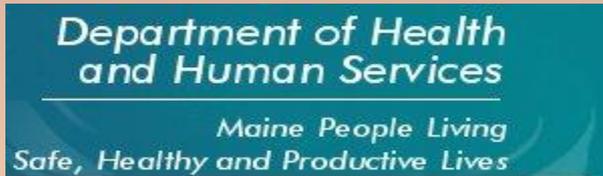
# Timeline for Submission of a SNAP Outreach Plan

- **June:** *The State may complete its evaluation of State SNAP outreach needs and available resources by the end of the third quarter.*
- **Dates and Processes Vary by State:** *The State in collaboration with its subgrantee/s prepares the SNAP State outreach plan documents (based on suggested FNS guidance).*
- **August 15:** *The State submits paperwork to the FNS region for review.*
- **September 30:** *FNS region approval.*
- *Upon final approval of the SNAP State outreach plan by FNS, funds are made available through the State SNAP agency's Letter of Credit (LOC).*



# NERO State SNAP Outreach Plans

(100 Percent State Participation)



State of Maine  
Department of Health and Human  
Services



State of Massachusetts  
Department of Transitional  
Assistance



State of Vermont  
Department of Children and Families



State of Rhode Island  
Department of Human Services



State of New Hampshire  
Department of Human Services



State of New York  
Office of Temporary and Disability  
Assistance



State of Connecticut  
Department of Social Services





# Sample Outreach Plan

## State of Connecticut Department of Social Services

FY 2009 Funding: \$2,058,706 (\$1,029,353 Federal reimbursement)

### Partners:

Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS)

- Greater Waterbury Interfaith Ministries
- Salvation Army of New Britain

End Hunger Connecticut! (EHC!)

- Manchester Area Conference of Churches

Hispanic Health Council

- Christian Activities Council



Reviewing  
the Plan

### Sample Outreach Components:

- Benefit pre-screening and group presentations
- Service provider trainings and presentations
- Public awareness campaigns
- Social marketing campaigns
- Public communication through church newsletters and bulletins
- Human Service Infrastructure: train community action agencies

# Veronica Wilson

**Nutrition Education & Outreach Coordinator  
North Carolina Division of Social Services**





# SNAP OUTREACH

*Partnering With The State*

# Nutrition Outreach Coordinator



- Research & Review Policies on Partnering
- Determine Target Audience
- Establish Partnerships
- Coordinate SNAP Outreach Plan Contents
- Provide Guidance, Information, & Monitoring

# State Outreach Plan



## Formal Document

- 50% Reimbursement
- Documents & Structures Outreach Activities
- Facilitates Partnership Building & Networking
- Documents Promising Practices

# Benefits of Partnering



- Helps Low-Income Families
- Helps States and Local Communities
- Helps Businesses and Workers

# Partnership Agreement



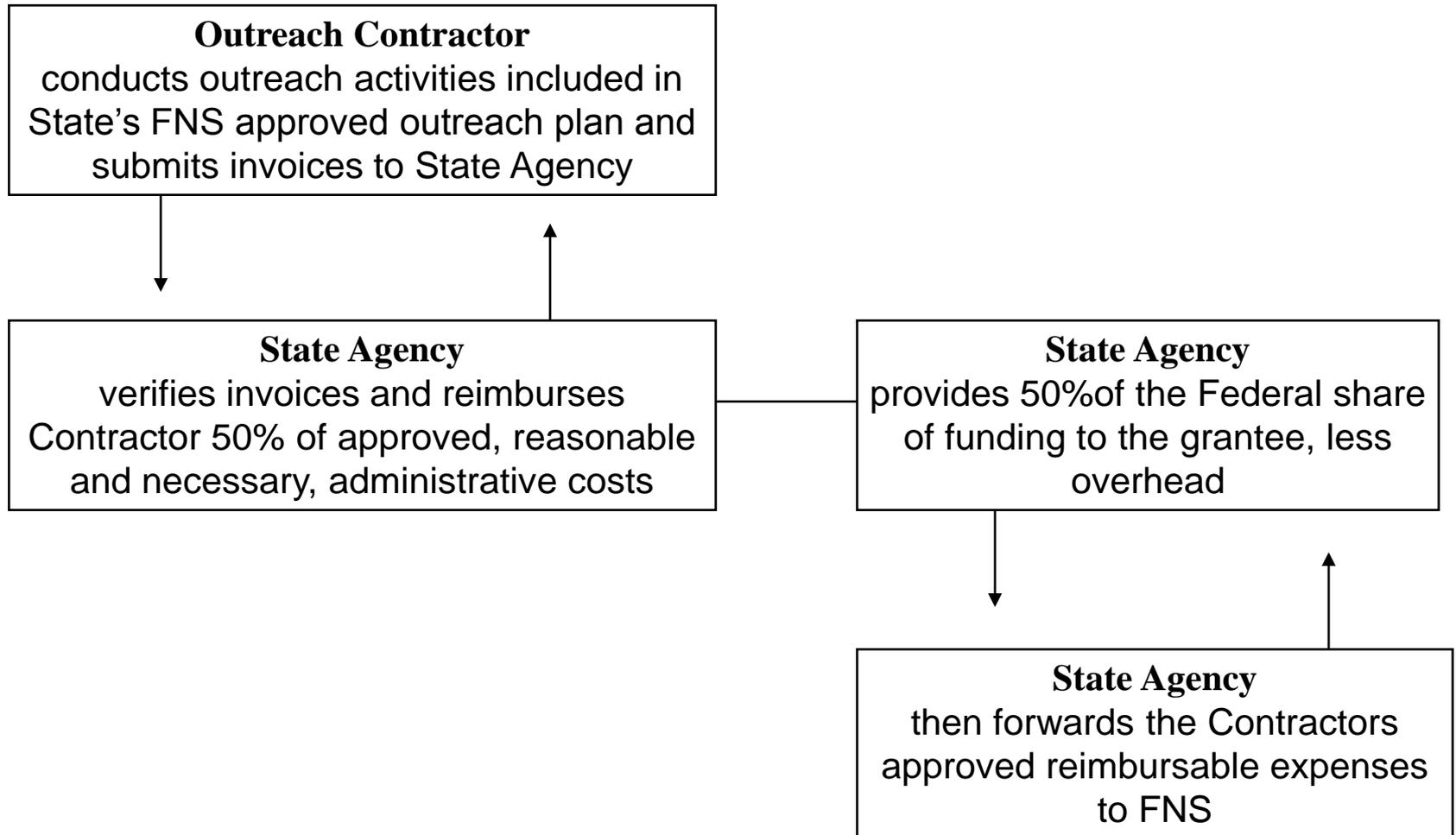
- Outreach Goals & Activities
- Roles & Responsibilities
- Funding Sources
- Evaluation Process
- Problem Solving

# Reimbursable Activities



- Eligibility Pre-screening
- Application Assistance
- Assistance Obtaining Application Verifications
- Information Dissemination
- Outreach Exhibit/booth at Community Events

# Flow Chart of Federal Reimbursement Process for SNAP Outreach Projects



**Lisa Johnston  
Terri Farless**

**MANNA FoodBank**





# Building Partnerships & Funding Success

**Collaborative between  
MANNA FoodBank & McDowell County  
Department of Social Services  
(DSS)**

***Involving, Educating, and Uniting  
People in the Work of Ending Hunger  
In Western North Carolina***

- Located in Asheville, NC with a branch in Franklin, NC
- Serves 16 counties in Western North Carolina
- Provides product to 328 partner agencies
- Distributed 6 million pounds of product last year



**MANNA's SNAP Outreach Program  
Teach One, Reach One**

- Began January 2007
- Two full-time staff employed
- Less than 50% of those seeking emergency food assistance receive SNAP benefits  
(from 2006 Hunger in America Study)

# McDowell County, North Carolina



- Population: **43,537** (2007)
- Poverty rate: **14.3%** (2007)
- Unemployment rate (April 2008): **7.6%**
- Participation rate (2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2008): **59.4%**
  
- Current participation rate: **76%**
- Current unemployment rate: **15.9%**
- Rural, mountainous area
- Large county



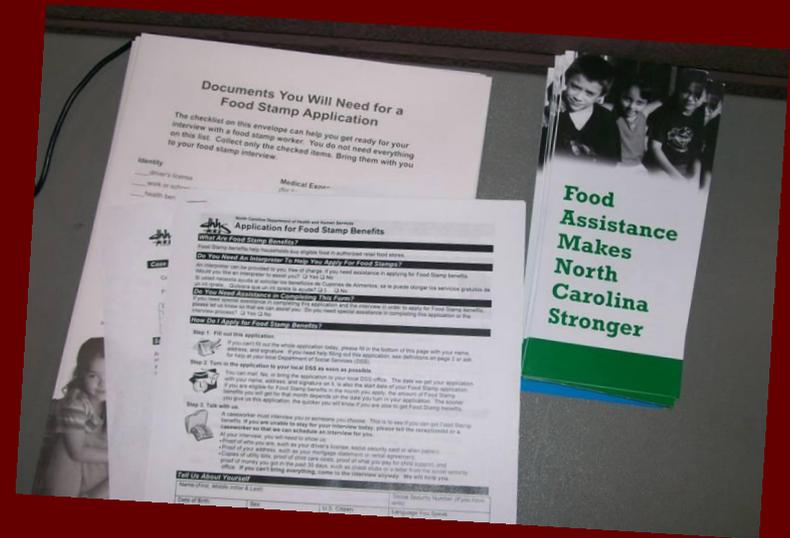
## MANNA's First Steps:

- Received a foundation grant
- Approached McDowell DSS
  - idea well received
  - already exploring innovative improvements
  - county was looking to improve participation rates
- Discussed individual goals & Collaborative goals
- DSS sought approval from county



# Identified roles & responsibilities:

- Created Memorandum of Agreement
- MANNA contributed non-federal share of salary (included cost of benefits)
- 1 year, full-time position
- DSS posted position and conducted first round of interviews  
MANNA staff attended 2<sup>nd</sup> round of interviews
- DSS made final decision, but in cooperation with MANNA staff
- Collaborative guided by advisory team – regular check-ins
- Employee & program review - every 6 months



## Specific roles and responsibilities of DSS Income Maintenance Outpost Worker:

- Take SNAP applications onsite – various agencies/sites around county
- Train agency personnel & volunteers
- Educate potential SNAP clients & community at large
- Promote SNAP through local media
- Show outcomes – provide data reports
- Attend advisory team meetings as determined
- Attend MANNA staff meetings once a month
- Bill MANNA quarterly



## Specific roles and responsibilities of MANNA FoodBank:

- Liaison between DSS and agencies -- help set up sites, meetings, as needed
- Initiate advisory team meetings
- Prompt payment when billed quarterly



## Benefits of subsidizing an outstationed worker

- Provides necessary source of information for isolated, under-resourced areas
- Work done where the people are; where the need is greatest
- Applications accepted and verification processed onsite
- Outcome data is readily available
- Provides widespread community outreach through:
  - local TV access channel
  - radio
  - newspapers
  - schools
  - other outlets
- Provides education to community leaders, communities of faith, potential recipients, and others
- Is a different approach to breaking down barriers and addressing stigma; replicable model
- Strengthens relationship and trust between DSS and food bank



## Challenges

- The “OUT” in outpost - worker is far removed from food bank; a concerted effort must be made by both partners to communicate well and stay up-to-date with progress, needs, etc.



## Successes of our Collaborative Outcomes so far:

Since November 2008 –

- surveyed all food bank partner agencies
- researched most underserved areas of the county
- numerous contacts and meetings,  
including more than 20 public school officials - counselors, principals, admin staff  
pantries, shelters, senior housing programs, faith community pantries, groups, and  
associations
- about 200 applications taken so far

## For more information:

**Lisa Johnston & Terri Farless**  
**Teach One, Reach One SNAP Outreach Program**  
**MANNA FoodBank**  
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**828-299-3663**  
**[ljohnston@feedingamerica.org](mailto:ljohnston@feedingamerica.org)**  
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**[www.mannafoodbank.org](http://www.mannafoodbank.org)**

**Andy Webb**  
**Outstationed Income Maintenance Worker, SNAP Program**  
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*Partner* with the  
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Thank You for Participating in the Feeding America-  
Leveraging Partnerships to Fund Snap Outreach Webinar