



# SNAP Employment & Training

Illinois Hunger Coalition

February 2020

Presenter Name

[ilhungercoalition@gmail.com](mailto:ilhungercoalition@gmail.com)



- Only statewide anti-hunger organization, founded in 1988
- IHC's goal is to organize grassroots collaborative efforts across low-income communities to expand programs that reduce poverty, bring federal and state resources to low-income communities
- Works to end hunger and address the underlying causes by working for a deeper and more transformative approach to economic and racial justice
- Co-convene Community Quality Councils with over 20 IDHS offices across the state since 2004



# Table of Contents

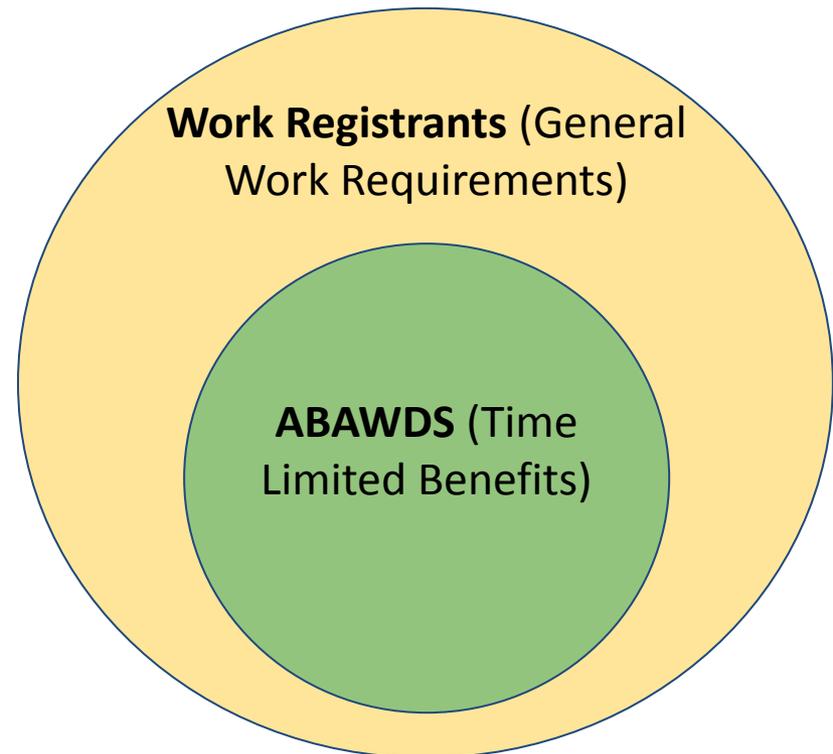
1. SNAP Work Requirements Overview
2. Introduction to SNAP Employment and Training
3. SNAP E&T Policy Changes
  - a. Transition from a mandatory to a voluntary SNAP E&T system
4. Barriers to Employment for SNAP Participants
5. SNAP E&T: SNAP to Success Program
6. Questions

# SNAP Work Requirements

Two categories of SNAP work requirements:

- General Work Requirements (Work Registration/Work Provisions)
- Time Limited Benefits - Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) work requirements

❖ All ABAWDs are Work Registrants (i.e. subject to SNAP General Work Requirements) but not all Work Registrants are ABAWDs.



# General Federal SNAP Work Requirements

All SNAP Participants between the ages of 16-59 years old who do not meet an exemption must:

- Register for work
- Take a suitable job if offered
- Not voluntarily quit a job or reduce their work hours below 30 hours a week without a good reason
- May choose to participate in SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) or workfare

# Time Limited Benefits - ABAWD

Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) are SNAP participants between the ages of 18–49 who are physically and mentally able to work, do not have a child under the age of 18 in their SNAP household and meet no other exemption.

- ABAWDs face severe sanctions if they do not meet the work requirements or qualify for an exemption
  - ABAWDs are limited to only receiving SNAP for 3 full months out of a 36 month (fixed 3-year) period unless they comply or meet an exemption.
- ABAWDs are also subject to general SNAP work requirements

# Time Limited Benefits: ABAWD Work Requirements

- Work at least 80 hours a month. Work can be for pay, for goods or services (for something other than money);
- Participate in a work program at least 80 hours a month. A work program could be SNAP Employment and Training or another federal, state, or local work program (training programs can include basic education, GED and ESL classes);
- Participate in a combination of work and work program hours for a total of at least 80 hours a month;
- Participate in workfare for the number of hours assigned each month (If participating through SNAP E&T the number of hours will depend on the amount of a customer's SNAP benefit.);
- Be enrolled in higher education and meet the State's special student eligibility requirements;
- Work requirements can be met through volunteering

# Exemptions to SNAP Work Requirements

## **General Work Requirement (work registration) Exemptions**

- Under age 16 or age 60 or older
- Age 16 or 17 and not the SNAP Head of Household;
- A student of higher education who meets the State's special student eligibility requirements.
- Physically or mentally unfit to work;
- Responsible for the care of a child under age 6 (only 1 person can claim this exemption per child under 6)
- Caring for an incapacitated person (the child or incapacitated person does not have to live in the home)
- Receiving Unemployment Insurance benefits, or applying for Unemployment Insurance benefits if they registered with Job Service as a part of the application process;
- Enrolled in and cooperating with a substance abuse treatment program;

## **Additional Time Limited Benefits (ABAWD) Exemptions:**

- Under age 18 or age 50 or older
- Pregnant
- Have someone under 18 in the SNAP household
- Unfit to work due to chronic homeless
- Exempt from the general work requirements (see above)

# SNAP Employment & Training: The Basics

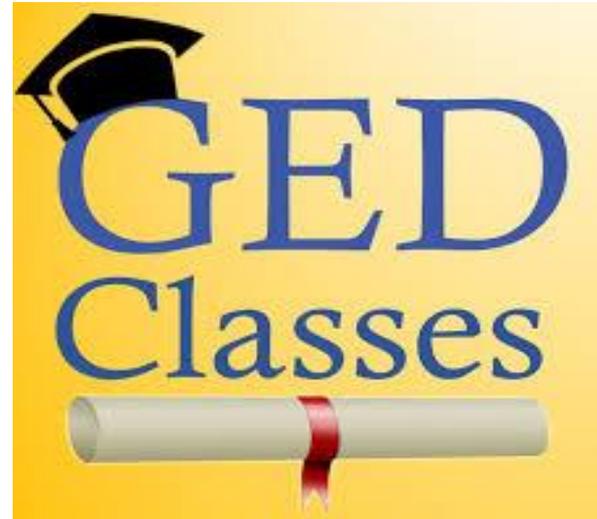
- SNAP E&T programs help SNAP participants achieve employment and self-sufficiency through education, skills training, supportive services, and employment
- Program established and funded by Congress in the Food and Nutrition Act (“The Farm Bill”)
- SNAP E&T allows a lot of state flexibility in program design
  - States (i.e. IDHS) must submit a SNAP E&T plan annually to the USDA for approval
- Serves populations that are not well served through other workforce development programs

# Who Can Participate in SNAP E&T?

- Anyone receiving SNAP benefits who is willing, able, and available to find employment immediately after SNAP E&T services are finished.
- Is not participating in a TANF training program.

# What Services can be Offered Under SNAP E&T?

- Supervised job search
- Job readiness
- Job retention
- Basic education (ESL, GED)
- Vocational training
- Earnfare
- Work experience (on-the-job training, apprenticeships)
- Community work



# Who can provide SNAP E&T Services?

- State SNAP administering agency (IDHS)
- State labor agencies (IDES, IDCEO)
- WIOA service providers
- Community and technical colleges
- **Community-based organizations**
- Employers

# SNAP E&T Policy Changes in Illinois: Transition From a Mandatory to a Voluntary System

- On August 23, 2019, Governor Pritzker signed SB 1791 effectively making SNAP E&T a voluntary program in Illinois.
- IDHS issued a policy memo on October 1, 2019 informing FCRCs of the end of sanctions for SNAP E&T.

Why Voluntary SNAP E&T?

# SNAP E&T Policy Changes in Illinois: Benefits of a Voluntary System

- Ending sanctions for SNAP E&T is vital to improving program quality.
- USDA SNAP E&T study found that states with mandatory SNAP E&T programs were less likely to see SNAP participants achieve self-sufficiency.
- Motivated customers who have chosen to participate are more likely to succeed.

# Moving From Mandatory SNAP E&T to Self-sufficiency

1. Recognize the barriers to employment many SNAP participants face
  - Screen SNAP participants for appropriate SNAP E&T services
  - Offer robust supportive service
2. Improve the quality of SNAP E&T services
  - **job-driven, skills-based** training
  - Industry recognized **credentials**
  - Client **support services**

# Barriers to Employment: Voluntary to Mandatory SNAP E&T System

From a provider's standpoint:

- The client might not show up for their initial appointment
- The client might be difficult to reach via phone or mail
- The client might enroll in a SNAP Employment & Training program, but be unable to complete the program
- A client might drop out of the program without communication to staff at local FCRCs or the workforce training provider

If any of the above occurred, the client was sanctioned and was at risk for losing their SNAP benefits under a mandatory SNAP E&T system

# Systemic vs. Individual: Barriers to employment for SNAP Participants

When SNAP participants do not comply with work requirements or the SNAP Employment & Training (E&T) program, it can often be viewed as a **personal problem** rather than being viewed as a **systemic issue** or an implementation challenge.

There are larger **systems** and **structures** in place such as **generational poverty and racism**, which are outside of the individual control of SNAP participants, but that greatly impact ability to comply with program requirements under a mandatory SNAP E&T program putting them at risk of losing their SNAP benefits.

# Barriers to Employment: Intersectionality

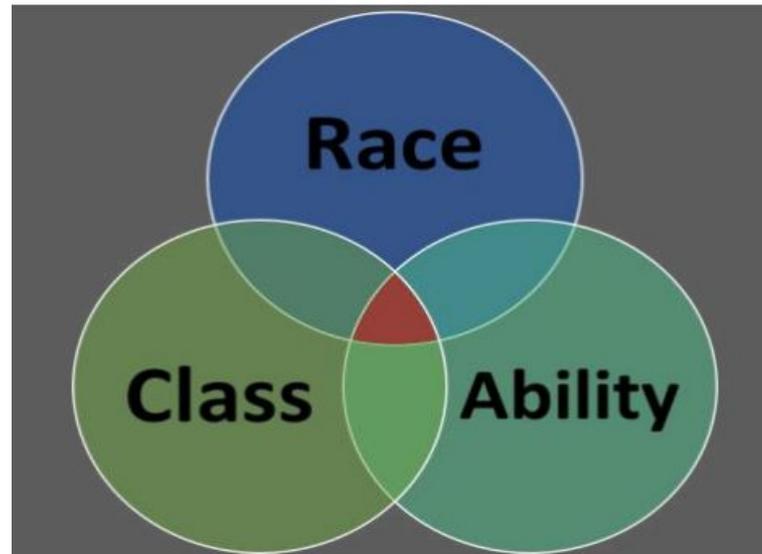
In Illinois, there are 512 statutory barriers to getting employed for people with a felony offense <sup>(1)</sup>

In 2011, 48% of federal prisoners were in prison for drug crimes <sup>(4)</sup>

Poverty Rates are 2 to 3 times higher for Illinoisans of color <sup>(6)</sup>

U.S. households of color are 2 times more likely to be food insecure <sup>(6)</sup>

People of color are disproportionately targeted by police. Black men have a 1 in 3 chance of going to prison in their lifetime versus 1 in 7 chance for Latino men and 1 in 17 for white men <sup>(2)</sup>



Lower-wage occupations experienced 21% of the losses during the 2008-2009 recession, but 58% of the recovery growth over mid-wage and higher-wage occupations <sup>(8)</sup>

Nationally, if you've been jobless for a year or more, you have less than 1 in 10 chances of finding a job <sup>(4)</sup>

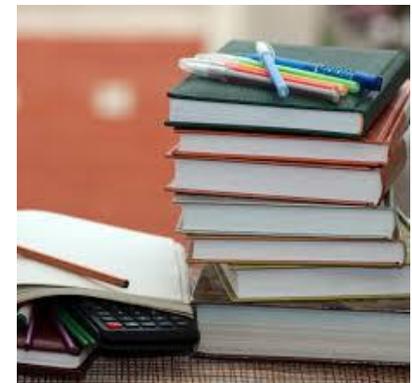
While black students made up 40% of Chicago's public school district in 2013, they made up 88% of those affected by public school closures <sup>(3)</sup>

A 2004–2005 survey found there were “more than three times more seriously mentally ill persons in jails and prisons than in hospitals” <sup>(5)</sup>

In 2013, 6 of the 12 public mental health clinics in Chicago were closed <sup>(7)</sup>

# What Supportive Services can be Offered Under SNAP E&T?

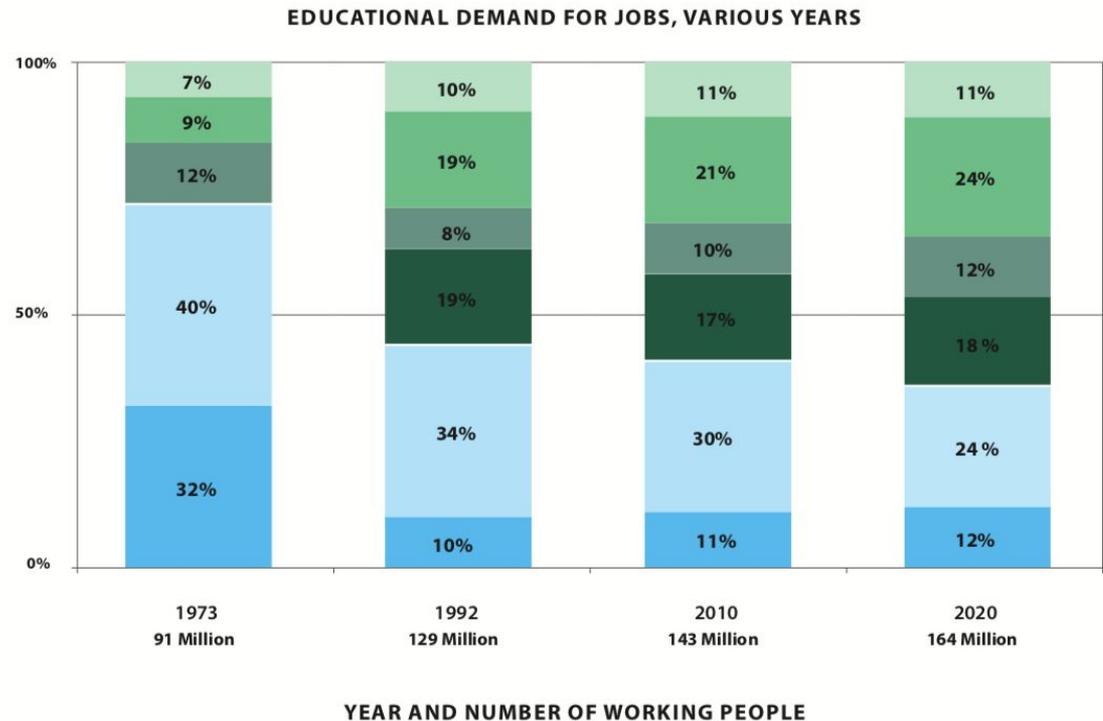
- Transportation
- Job search allowance
- Mandatory program fees
- Work experience/job readiness allowance
- Books and supplies
- Physical examination
- Earnfare clothing allowance
- Initial employment expenses



# Skills are Critical for Gaining Stable Employment

- The majority of jobs in the future will require employment or training greater than a high school degree
- The vast majority of long term SNAP recipients have only a high school diploma or less
- Skill based employment and training services increase the likelihood of SNAP participants getting a good job and reducing their need for SNAP

**FIGURE 1: SKILLS INCREASINGLY CRITICAL IN THE LABOR MARKET**

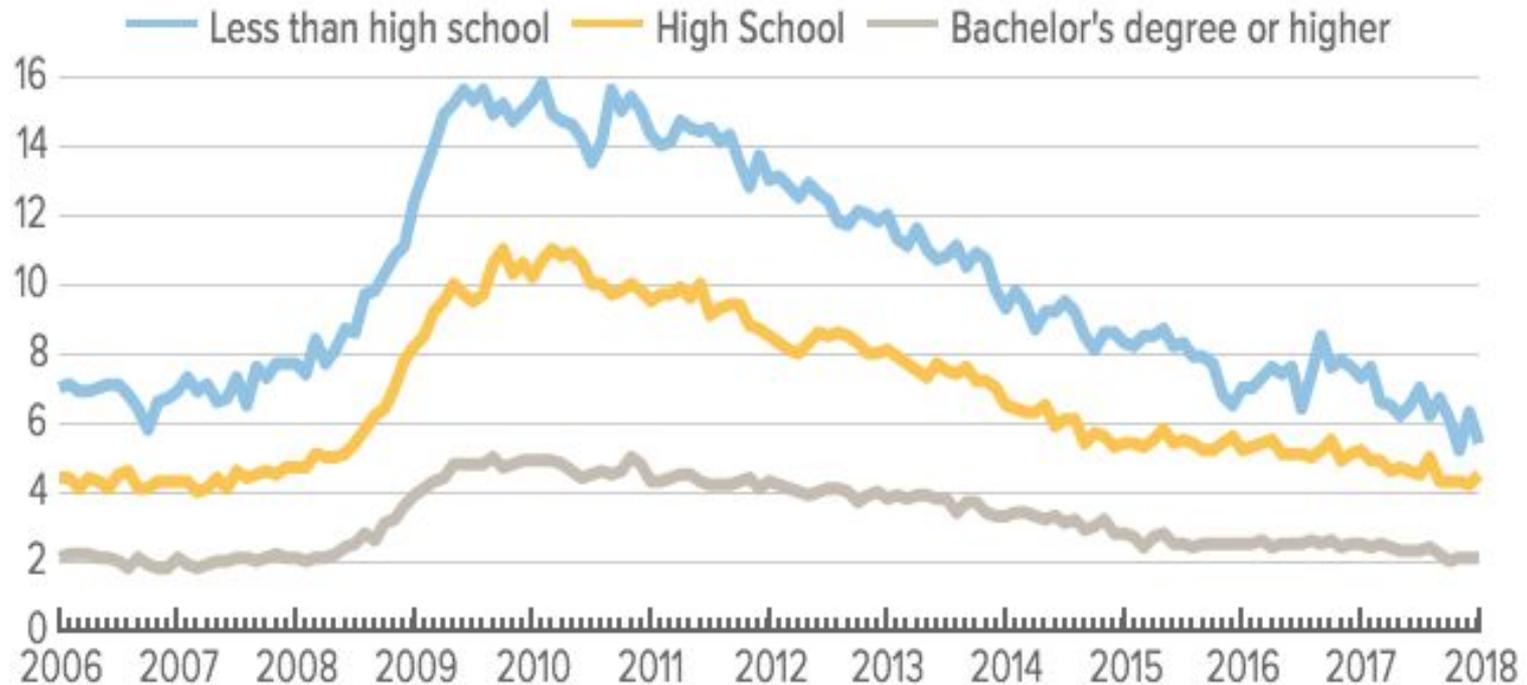


SOURCE: Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce analysis

Note: Numbers may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

# Unemployment Rates by Educational Attainment

Monthly unemployment rate of the civilian population 25 years and over by educational attainment



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

# Skills-based SNAP E&T: SNAP to Success

Tapping into the potential of SNAP to Success in Illinois will allow IDHS and partner organizations to drastically increase the number of individuals that can be supported on their paths to self-sufficiency.

- Partnerships between IDHS and employment and training providers recognize the expertise of providers and diversity of provider offerings.
  - SNAP to Success providers are chosen based on a successful participant job placement track record
- SNAP participants benefit from a larger network of providers offering broader, more diverse services.
- **Federal match** (also called 50% reimbursement) allows SNAP E&T providers to expand resources and serve more individuals.
- Provides **job-driven, skills-based training** that equips SNAP participants with **credentials and support** to find good jobs.



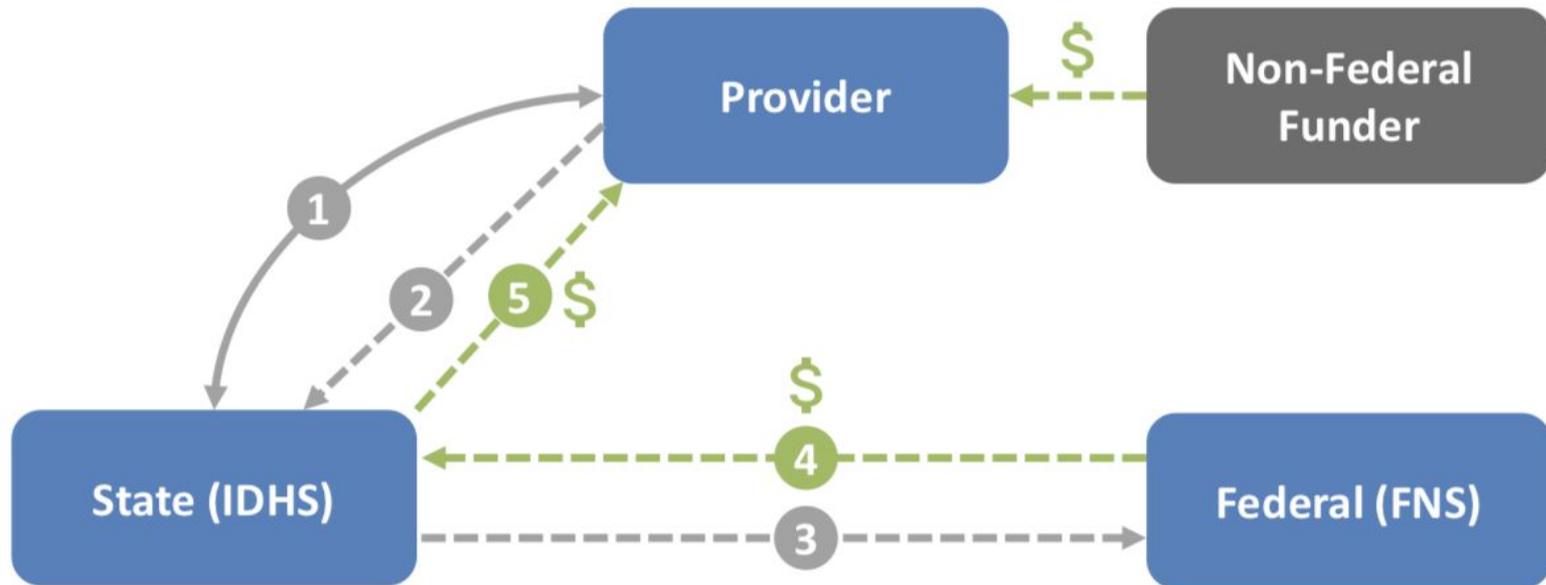
# SNAP E&T Funding

- Illinois has mainly utilized 100% Federal grant dollars to operate it's E&T program (approximately \$6.5 million in FY2020)
- Untapped federal funds can help Illinois to improve the quality of SNAP E&T services throughout the state (i.e. "SNAP to Success", "50 percent funds")

SNAP E&T Funding Streams	Reimbursement Rate	Allowable Costs	Caps
SNAP E&T Management	100%	FNS provides annual E&T grants to cover 100% of the cost of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Implementation</li> <li>• Operation of State program</li> <li>• Administration &amp; staffing</li> </ul>	CAPPED: All federal money
SNAP Administration	50%	Administrative costs not associated with any current State funding	NOT CAPPED: Federal money plus State/other match
3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Claiming	50%	Reasonable & necessary participant expenses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child care not funded through State's Child care program</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Books &amp; supplies</li> </ul>	NOT CAPPED: Federal money plus State/other match

# How does SNAP to Success Funding Work?

SNAP E&T SNAP to Success providers use 100% non-Federal funds initially to pay for training services. Providers are later reimbursed 50% of SNAP to Success program costs. IDHS administers participant enrolment, provider audits, and acts as a pass-through entity for federal funds.



1. IDHS and provider enter into partnership.
2. Provider serves SNAP participant and submits documentation to IDHS.
3. IDHS submits expense documentation to USDA.
4. USDA issues 50% reimbursement to IDHS.
5. IDHS holds 5% for administrative costs and issues remaining 45% reimbursement to provider.

# What are Non-Federal SNAP to Success Funding Sources?

## Allowable Non-Federal Funding Sources

- State, county, city funds (excluding IDHS and funds already claimed)
- Private donations
- Foundation funds
- Social venture/enterprise revenue
- State worker retraining dollars
- Low-income student support
- Tuition set-aside resources
- Private funds/donations for training funds (ex-offender, homeless, non-custodial parents)

# Current SNAP to Success providers in Illinois

- National Able (Cook, Lake, and Dupage counties)
  - GED, general literacy skills, IT training
- Carle Foundation-Carle Hospital (Champaign County)
  - Vocational/job readiness programs for entry level jobs in the Carle Hospital network
- Two Rivers Council of Public Officials (Adams, Pike, Skylar counties)
  - CNA recertification training and license renewal testing
- JARC (Cook County)
  - [Basic education, Welding and manufacturing training](#)
- Inspiration Corporation (Cook County)
  - Culinary job training

# Ways to grow SNAP to Success in Illinois?

- Large administrative burden for SNAP to Success providers
  - Smaller providers do not have the administrative capacity to meet USDA and IDHS reporting requirements
- Providers must recruit SNAP participants to join training programs
  - Many SNAP participants do not trust that SNAP E&T services will be worth the time and effort required. There is a need to increase the amount of high quality programs and improve participant screening.
- Providers must find non-federal funds to finance programing
  - Many community based organizations do not have strong existing connections to foundations or donors
- Currently, it is difficult for SNAP to Success providers to enroll SNAP participants into their training program

# Discussion

Questions, Comments, Thoughts...