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# Nevada Council on Food Security

## 2021 Policy Recommendations

### *Executive Summary*

During the July 17, 2019 meeting, the Nevada Council on Food Security (CFS) re-established the Policy Subcommittee tasked with developing policy recommendations related to food insecurity in Nevada. The Subcommittee was comprised of members from both the public and private non-profit sector, including the Nevada Department of Agriculture, Food Bank of Northern Nevada, Three Square Food Bank, Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada, and Helping Hands of Vegas Valley. The Policy Subcommittee met six (6) times between October 2019 and September 2020 to discuss and identify State and Administrative policy recommendations. At the October 6, 2020 CFS meeting, the Policy Subcommittee presented three (3) policy recommendations for the consideration of CFS members, all of which would require action by the Nevada Legislature:

1. Establish a State Food Purchasing Program.
2. Remove requirements restricting individuals committed of a drug felony within the past 20 years from receiving SNAP.
3. Increase home-delivered meal (HDM) program reimbursement.

**The CFS voted in support of these three (3) policies as effective strategies for addressing food insecurity in Nevada. This Executive Summary provides an overview of the policy and influencing factors considered while developing the State Legislative policy recommendations.**

### *Establish a State Food Purchasing Program*

Create a restricted fund for the purpose of purchasing food for Feeding America affiliated food banks operating in Nevada. Food banks will make this food available at no cost to agencies providing charitable food distribution to those in need. This fund would be reinvested in Nevada's economy through purchases of agricultural commodities grown in Nevada, food products manufactured in Nevada, or food vended by private entities registered for business in Nevada. This initiative will be especially relevant in rural and frontier Nevada, where most of the state's agricultural production takes place.

### *Remove requirements restricting individuals committed of a drug felony within the past 20 years from receiving SNAP*

Remove the treatment program requirement from the Nevada Revised Statutes to allow clients with drug convictions to access the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). When individuals with drug convictions are denied food stamps

and cash benefits, establishing economic stability upon reentry becomes more difficult, which in turn makes their recovery increasingly complicated. By helping individuals lead more stable lives, public assistance and food stamps can help improve reentry outcomes and have a positive effect on public safety. SNAP and TANF benefits are also important for individuals participating in residential treatment and other programs.

*Increase Meals on Wheels reimbursement*

Increase the level of the State of Nevada's reimbursement for HDM programs across the state. HDM programs deliver nutritious meals to the doorsteps of homebound senior citizens who are unable to prepare their own meals or purchase their own groceries. As the need for services increases due to COVID-19, it is essential Nevada's HDM program providers maintain continuity of services to alleviate food insecurity and to provide essential services to community members who are most in need. To maintain the current level of services, Nevada HDM program providers must decrease their funding deficits.