

TO: Food SNAP Coalition Members
FR: Pat Baker

As noted in an earlier email, Tuesday's Coalition meeting (6/29/2010) will also include a discussion/update about the SNAP Outreach initiative to implement the FY2011 state budget language. Here's some background information on the Outreach initiative some important resources.

1) SNAP Outreach Initiative:

* Update on Mass SNAP Outreach Plan Implementation for coming federal fiscal year (Oct 1, 2010 through Sept 2011): The following update is from Lauren Arms Ledwith, now of UMass Medical (UMMS):

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program allows states to claim 50% federal reimbursement for application/retention assistance activities included in the USDA-approved SNAP Outreach Plan. Until recently, DTA had no authority to retain federal funding for outreach expenditures.

Language in the state FY 2011 budget now allows DTA to retain federal SNAP outreach funds for payment to Outreach Partners incurring said costs. Mass Law Reform Institute and the Western MA Food Bank were instrumental in drafting the budget language and then convincing the legislature to make this important change.

DTA has contracted with UMMS to implement the SNAP Outreach Partner Reimbursement Project. DTA and UMMS plan to ensure that the project provides a streamlined process for claiming expenditures which maximizes Outreach Partner reimbursement. DTA plans to follow the model Washington State developed in FFY 2008. The Washington State model identifies pay points and pay point amounts to simplify outreach provider claiming.

On 6/14/2010, DTA and UMMS met with ten Virtual Gateway Providers to ask for their help in developing the Massachusetts pay point system. These providers are currently completing SNAP Outreach Cost Surveys. Once the surveys are reviewed and analyzed by UMMS, DTA and UMMS will meet with FNS/NERO to negotiate a fair and reasonable cost reimbursement system. UMMS will update the SNAP Outreach Plan to include the SNAP Outreach Partner Reimbursement Project. DTA and UMMS anticipate implementation on 10/1/2010. In the coming months DTA and UMMS will solicit interested SNAP outreach partners for participation in the project.

* SNAP Outreach resources: The following are great resources for SNAP Outreach available to all organizations, whether or not your organization participates in the FY2011 Mass SNAP Outreach Plan. Although we have emailed some of this information before, just want to be sure you have all the great

weblinks:

FRAC SNAP Outreach and Access Toolkit: This terrific FRAC resource is essential for community organizations engaged in SNAP Outreach. It walks you through the funding sources, model practices and creative pilots to reach needy households. Contributors to the Toolkit include FRAC Fellow Anne Bellows, and Massachusetts's very own Lauren Arms Ledwith! The toolkit is available at: http://www.frac.org/snap_outreach_access_toolkit_2010.htm

AARP's SNAP Outreach Resource: AARP has put together very snappy, accessible SNAP outreach materials for its network, recently distributed at the AARP webinar:

<http://www.createthegood.org/sites/default/files/how-to/PublicBenefit.pdf>

USDA's SNAP Outreach Tools: The Obama Administration has issued a wide range of outreach materials essential for community groups, including ready to roll fliers and posters (in multiple languages, sample press releases and more. This website also includes the nitty gritty of state Outreach Plans.

Keep this link handy! <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/outreach/default.htm>

2) Boston Bounty Bucks: Yesterday's Globe included an article on the City of Boston's efforts to encourage use of food stamp/SNAP benefits at farmer's markets through the Boston Bounty Bucks program. Kudos to the Mayor and his staff for this important initiative.

http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2010/06/23/program_makes_local_food_more_affordable/

The Food Project staff will be bringing more information and fliers on Boston Bounty Bucks program to the Coalition meeting.

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