

MAPOC (Full Council) November 14, 2025 Zoom Meeting

Meeting summary

Quick recap

The meeting began with administrative discussions and announcements about a live broadcast on CTN. The main focus was on HR1's impact on SNAP benefits, including distribution updates and the emergency fund passage, along with discussions about call center staffing and technology improvements. The conversation ended with updates on SNAP program changes affecting non-citizen refugees and asylees, followed by discussions about Medicaid work requirements, exemptions, and ongoing committee activities related to maternal health and care management.

Next steps

- [Tracy Wodatch: Reach out directly to DC Canada to discuss dedicated phone line for providers and communication about phone system updates](#)
- [DC Canada: Partner with Tracy Wodatch to understand provider phone line opportunity and discuss internally after the meeting](#)
- [DSS: Send metrics on new phone system performance to committees of cognizance as the system takes shape](#)
- [DSS: Provide additional information about the standard deduction for self-employed individuals and documentation requirements to Ellen Andrews and committee members](#)
- [DSS: Circulate one-pagers about HR1 SNAP changes to stakeholders who want to share in their networks](#)
- [DC Hadler: Clarify and communicate the timeline for when 2,400 qualified aliens will lose SNAP eligibility](#)
- [DSS: Continue monitoring and tracking data on people losing SNAP benefits, including reasons and barriers encountered, for real-time adjustments](#)
- [DSS: Onboard 30 new call center staff starting December into January](#)
- [DSS: Continue rolling out new phone system across 12 office locations over coming months](#)
- [DSS: Wait for federal approval of technology reimbursement application](#)
- [DSS: Await ICD-10 codes for medical frailty definition expected to be revealed at Medicaid Medical Director National Conference next Tuesday](#)
- [DSS: Provide regular updates on the at-risk population numbers as they change](#)
- [Women's and Children's Health Committee: Schedule Dr. Katherine Baca to present qualitative study results on December 8th](#)
- [Women's and Children's Health Committee: Schedule DSS presentation on Limited HUSKY Family benefit and OB pay for performance/maternity bundle update for December 8th](#)

- [Complex Care Committee: Schedule presentation by complex care children's nurses for January 15th meeting at 1pm](#)
- [MAPOC: Schedule next meeting for Friday, December 12th at 1pm via Zoom](#)

Summary

SNAP Benefits Distribution Update

The meeting focused on updates regarding HR1, particularly its impact on SNAP benefits and administrative processes. Commissioner Andrea Barton Reeves reported that 100% of eligible October benefits were distributed to recipients, with remaining applications being processed by DC Canada and VARS. The DSS team, alongside legislative support, managed to navigate the challenges of the shutdown and distribute benefits efficiently, emphasizing the bipartisanship of hunger relief efforts. The \$500 million emergency fund passed in the special session was acknowledged as crucial for ongoing support, and the team expressed gratitude for legislative assistance and resources.

Phone System Expansion and Staffing

DC Easha Canada provided updates on the agency's federal reimbursement application for technology investment, expected to be reviewed by mid-December, and the rollout of a new phone system launching next week with a phased approach across 12 office locations. She confirmed the addition of 30 new phone staff, including 24 agents, 3 leads, and 3 supervisors, to address call center wait times. Rep. Nuccio inquired about the sufficiency of new staffing resources, and DC Canada indicated they would monitor performance and provide metrics to committees, while Commissioner Barton Reeves noted they were still assessing the agency's staffing needs in light of the recently passed emergency fund.

Call Center Staffing and Technology

The meeting focused on updates and concerns regarding the call center's staffing and technology improvements. Tracy raised issues about communication with Medicaid and waiver providers and requested a dedicated phone line for eligibility and redetermination processes. DC Canada agreed to follow up with Tracy Wodatch on these matters. Sheldon Toubman expressed concerns about the 15-minute average wait time goal and requested more staff and reporting on staffing levels. DC Canada explained that the 15-minute goal was based on industry standards and that they were working towards reducing wait times further, with plans to monitor staffing and evaluate the need for additional staff.

Call Center Wait Time Improvements

The meeting focused on improving call center wait times and staffing for public benefits applications. Sheldon requested updating the 15-minute average wait time standard, citing data showing high

abandonment rates and the need for a lower standard given upcoming work requirements. DC Canada confirmed they are actively recruiting for 30 new positions and expect to begin onboarding in December, with full staffing expected in January after training. Commissioner Barton Reeves explained that SNAP has a separate queue with dedicated staff for interviews and discussed legislative efforts to reduce SNAP error rates through a standard deduction approach.

SNAP Program Communication Strategy Update

DC Peter Hadler provided an update on the impacts of HR1 changes to the SNAP program, affecting approximately 2,400 non-citizen refugees and asylees losing benefits, and 36,000 others at risk due to new work requirements. He detailed the communication efforts, including a pre-screening tool on the website, media campaigns, and direct client communications, which have been effective in informing the public about these changes. DC Hadler emphasized the importance of maintaining a multifaceted communication strategy to keep stakeholders informed as more changes roll out over the coming months. FNS - Food and Nutrition Services, Under the United States Department of Agriculture, which administers SNAP. www.ct.gov/snap/abawd

SNAP Benefits Eligibility Changes

The meeting focused on SNAP benefits and upcoming changes. DC Hadler explained that about 2,400 qualified aliens will lose their eligibility starting December 1st, with renewals being evaluated individually. Matt Barrett thanked the Commissioner and DSS for their efforts in restoring SNAP benefits during the shutdown. The group discussed potential state-level food benefits for those losing SNAP eligibility. Ellen Andrews requested more information on tracking those losing benefits and the standard deduction changes. DC Hadler promised to provide more details on the latter. The meeting also addressed communication efforts during the shutdown and clarified that no state dollars were used to fund SNAP benefits in November. Mark Schaefer inquired about SNAP exemptions for physically or mentally unfit individuals, and C Hadler explained the current documentation process and potential for alignment with Medicaid.

Medicaid Exemptions and Program Alignment

The meeting focused on work requirements and exemptions for Medicaid, with Bill Halsey presenting an updated slide deck showing progress in analyzing exemption categories and reducing the at-risk population from 189,000 to 169,000. Karen Siegel raised questions about aligning medical frailty definitions across programs and engaging Medicaid members in the process, which Commissioner Barton Reeves addressed by describing ongoing efforts to gather feedback from beneficiaries. The committee also discussed pending technology reimbursement applications and the need to build systems for automating exemption categories. Updates were provided on various committee activities, including maternal health data presentation by Amy Gagliardi from the Women & Children's Health Committee and upcoming meetings for the Care Management and Complex Care Committees.