Are parents with a child support order more likely to be eligible for both SNAP and subsidized child care?

The child support program (referred to as the IV-D program) is open to any parent or person with custody of a child that needs help establishing paternity, setting a child support or medical support order, or collecting child support payments. Parents not in the IV-D program may benefit from receiving child support services.

Families without Formal Child Support Orders

- 6.8 million custodial parents do not have formal child support orders
- 6.5 million noncustodial parents without formal orders

- 1.1 million custodial parents without formal orders are eligible for SNAP and CCDF
- 186,000 noncustodial parents without formal orders that are eligible for SNAP and CCDF

17 out of every 100 custodial parents without a formal child support order are eligible for both SNAP and CCDF

3 out of every 100 noncustodial parents without a formal child support order are eligible for both SNAP and CCDF

This analysis builds on the ASPE publication on child support cooperation requirements to determine the overlap in the populations of custodial and noncustodial parents with and without formal child support orders, that are eligible for both Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and subsidized child care (CCDF).

Why is this important?

Understanding the overlap of these populations has policy implications for integrated eligibility systems and benefits determination, as well as outreach and recruitment to the child support program.

The analysis finds dual eligibility rates for SNAP and CCDF are highest among custodial parents, regardless of formal order status.
Families with Formal Child Support Orders

5.8 million
custodial

11 million
parents have formal child support orders

5.2 million
noncustodial

849,000
custodial parents with a formal order are eligible for both SNAP and CCDF

14 out of every 100
custodial parents with a formal order are eligible for both SNAP and CCDF

97,000
noncustodial parents with formal orders are eligible for both SNAP and CCDF

2 out of every 100
noncustodial parents with a formal child support order are eligible for both SNAP and CCDF

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The data used in this brief are based on TRIM3 analysis of the 2016 Current Population Survey Child Support Supplement match file and the 2016 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement. Data Limitations: the TRIM3 baseline alignment process uses administrative data that does not directly control for custodial or noncustodial parent status, or for the overlap in participation between SNAP and CCDF.

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