

FISCAL NOTE

September 13, 2018

Bill No:	HB 1618	Printer's No:	2140	Sponsor:	Walsh (R)
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COST / (SAVINGS)

Fund (s)	2018-19	2019-20
General Fund	\$2 million	See fiscal impact

SUMMARY: Requires that assistance not used within six months of receipt be forfeited.

ANALYSIS: The bill requires that any assistance received and not used within six months be forfeited, including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits; Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); State Supplemental Assistance (SSP); and General Assistance (GA).

Currently federal regulations state SNAP benefits may be stored offline if an EBT card is inactive for three months, but the offline funds must be made available upon reapplication by the household if the reapplication occurs within 12 months of the benefit being issued. After 12 months without contact the SNAP benefit must be expunged.

For other programs, benefits are expunged after 12 months to align policies with SNAP.

FISCAL IMPACT: The commonwealth currently has no mechanism to separate benefit dollars between funds on an individual card beyond cash and SNAP benefits without also affecting non-assistance payments, such as child support and support arrears. The department projects significant system changes for this purpose.

The commonwealth has limited authority to recover much of these benefits due to federal fund utilization, and an adjusted expungement timeframe from 12 months to six months for state supported programs such as SSP and GA would have minimal fiscal impact.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is 100 percent federally funded. Any changes to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families in implementation would misalign the benefit with SNAP which may violate federally required access for recipients. State Supplemental Assistance recipients eligible for forfeiture totaled 1,455 in May 2017 with a maximum benefit of \$22.10 per month. General Assistance was eliminated by Act 80 of 2012, however the program has been reauthorized due to a recent court decision.

Other cash benefits deposited onto an EBT card, such as child support and tax intercepts of support, currently are unable to be separated from other benefits on an individual card.

A cost of \$2 million would be incurred as a result of system upgrades to separate funds for forfeiture, with minimal opportunities for future savings presented to the commonwealth.