

**NEVADA STATE DIVISION OF WELFARE & SUPPORTIVE SERVICES
PUBLIC HEARING TO ADOPT THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING (SNAPET) SFY 2018 STATE PLAN.**

The public hearing to adopt the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAPET) SFY 2018 State Plan was brought to order by Naomi Lewis, Deputy Administrator of the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, July 18, 2017. This meeting was video-conferenced between the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, Professional Development Center, 701 N. Rancho Drive, Training Room 5, Las Vegas, Nevada and Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, Central Office, 1470 College Parkway, Room 149, Carson City, Nevada.

STAFF PRESENT:

Naomi Lewis, Deputy Administrator
Lynette Giles, Acting SSPS 3, Administration
Lori Wilson, Chief, Employment and Support Services
Maria Wortman-Meshberger, SSPS 3, Employment and Support Services
Kim Schlesener, Executive Assistant
Delmy Chicas, Administrative Assistant

STAFF PRESENT IN THE SOUTH

Karen Wells, Administrative Assistant 4, SNAP ET
Robin Wright, Administrative Assistant 4, SNAP ET

GUESTS PRESENT:

North

Leandra Copeland, Fiscal Analyst, Legislative Counsel Bureau

South

Ryan Sunga, Deputy Attorney General
Ruby Scott, SNAP E&T Program Developer, Three Square
Alice Gonzalez, Benefit Services Outreach Director, Three Square
Kimike Carr, Las Vegas West Lied Memorial Boys & Girls Club

Ms. Lewis opened the public hearing at 9:00 a.m. and explained how the hearing will proceed. She explained this public hearing was noticed in accordance with the Open Meeting Law and posted on the Division's website. She asked everyone to please sign in and include e-mail addresses to be included on the Division's mailing list.

***I. PROPOSED UPDATE FFY 2018 STATE PLAN:**

Ms. Wortman-Meshberger announced the proposed updates to the FFY 2018 SNAP E&T State Plan as follows:

- Additional community based organizations will be added to provide educational services for SNAP E&T participants to gain the skills and certifications necessary to obtain self-sustaining employment and reduce or eliminate the need for SNAP

assistance. The educational component would be reimbursed at 50% of the actual expenditures.

- The relevant dates, funding, and applicable tables and attachments will be updated throughout the document. In Section V of the plan, Consultation with Tribal Organization was added per the new Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) format. Clarifications were made regarding assessments. Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) waiver information will be updated once a decision has been made by the federal government. Community based organization budget information will be updated as it is received. The program's budget information has been updated based on projected expenditures and federal funding.

Ms. Lewis asked if there were any questions or comments from the north.

Hearing none, Ms. Lewis asked if there any questions or comments from the south.

Ms. Gonzalez provided the following testimony:

“Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about the SNAPET State Plan for Fiscal Year 2018.

My name is Alice Gonzalez and I am the Benefit Services Outreach Director at Three Square Food Bank, which serves the residents of Clark, Lincoln, Nye and Esmeralda counties in Southern Nevada. Three Square is one of the fastest growing food banks in the nation, with more than 1,300 community partners. We distribute more than 40 million pounds of food and grocery product annually to those struggling with hunger.

As you know, one of the proposed updates to the SNAPET State Plan is the addition of community-based organizations to provide educational services for SNAPET participants. This proposal aligns closely with Three Square's mission to passionately pursue a hunger-free community. Every day, we provide food, referrals and other assistance to individuals who are willing and able to work if only someone will give them a chance. One of the ways we are committed to fulfilling our mission is to take our SNAP outreach efforts to the next level by creating a pilot training program for Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents, or ABAWDs.

Our objective at Three Square is to help individuals acquire the necessary skills to become economically self-sufficient, while simultaneously meeting the needs of local employers to build a skilled workforce. There are three training areas that can leverage Three Square's resources and core competencies. The first area is culinary. Three Square has a state-of-the-art commercial kitchen where a number of culinary students currently serve their internships. The second area is logistics, warehousing and supply chain management. Together, Three Square's two warehouses encompass 120,000 square feet and are ideally suited for training. The third area, and the one that we will focus on initially, is call-center work, using the resources of our Three Square Center. There is high demand for workers in this field, especially in Southern Nevada. There are at least 164 call centers in Nevada, not including companies that have internal call centers, and earlier this year, a global customer service company called TeleTech announced it was opening a 500-person call center in Las Vegas. As a result of this high demand, most call centers pay competitive wages and many offer benefits such as medical and 401k plans.

With this in mind, last year we approached the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services with an offer to leverage Three Square resources to provide call-center training to SNAP ABAWDs. The response was very positive and we are awaiting the state's guidelines for E&T third-party training providers, which we understand are currently under review.

In the meantime, we are working with curriculum developers and corporate partners to create the necessary training. We have reached out to community and DWSS partners to provide case management, supportive services, and job search and retention assistance. We have also outfitted the necessary classroom space adjacent to our call center. Although the deadline for inclusion in the 2018 plan has passed, we have been assured that the plan can be amended to allow the launch of a Three Square pilot training program later in the fiscal year.

The need for such a commitment on the part of Three Square is especially pressing in light of the impending reinstatement of the time limits on SNAP participation. As you know, Nevada's statewide waiver for ABAWDs will expire at the end of the year. This means that as many as 65,000 SNAP recipients could begin losing their benefits as early as April 1, 2018. In addition, as the state's new workfare program is implemented, SNAP ABAWDs will have to comply with the work requirements to retain their benefits. Training initiatives such as the one being created by Three Square will not only help them to satisfy these requirements, but can also lead them into sustainable, living-wage employment.

In conclusion, Three Square supports the adoption of the SNAPET 2018 State Plan as a first step and it is our hope that the plan will only expand as more community-based organizations step up to offer training that will set thousands of our fellow Nevadans on the path to economic self-sufficiency.

As the saying goes, *"Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime."*

Thank you for your time and we look forward to continuing our work with the State of Nevada on this very important initiative."

Ms. Lewis asked if there was any public comment not related to the agenda items in the north.

Hearing none, Ms. Lewis asked if there was any public comment not related to the agenda items in the south.

Hearing none, Ms. Lewis adopted the SFY 2018 SNAPET State Plan updates on behalf of the Director of the Department of Health and Human Services, effective October 1, 2017.

Ms. Lewis thanked those in attendance for their participation in this public hearing. She closed the public hearing at 9:09 a.m.