Do State SNAP Policies Adversely Affect People with Disabilities?

Focal area 6: Economic security of SSA beneficiaries

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Abstract:

Previous literature (Ganong and Liebman 2018, Johnson-Motoyama & Ginther 2020) found that SNAP policies influence who gains access to benefits. In particular, Johnson-Motoyama et al. (2021) found that states that have policies that disqualify people who have positive drug tests or only allow one vehicle exemption (among other policies) have lower SNAP caseloads. Other state-level SNAP policies such as broad-based categorical eligibility (BBCE), a policy that waives the SNAP asset test and increases income limits for many households, has been associated with higher SNAP caseloads, whereas short recertification periods and biometric requirements (e.g., fingerprinting) are associated with lower caseloads. However, researchers have not investigated the effects of state-level SNAP policies on access to SNAP benefits for the elderly and disabled.

The goal of this study will be to use the SNAP Policy Database to find variation in state SNAP policies and combine it with the SIPP to see if there is causal evidence that these policies disproportionately restrict the elderly and people with disabilities from receiving SNAP benefits. Difference-in-differences models will be estimated using changes in state-level policies. The results of this study will inform the Social Security Administration on whether state-level policies contribute to or hinder the economic security of disabled and elderly households.

References:

Ganong P, Liebman JB. The decline, rebound, and further rise in SNAP enrollment: Disentangling business cycle fluctuations and policy changes. Am Econ J Econ Policy. 2018;10(4):153–76.

Johnson-Motoyama, M and Ginther DK. 2020. State SNAP Policies are Associated with Child Maltreatment and Foster Care Entry. Working paper, University of Kansas.