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(Meza, Klick)

S.B. No. 1445

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to simplified certification and recertification requirements for certain persons under the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 33.015(a), Human Resources Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) In administering the supplemental nutrition assistance program, the commission shall, except as provided by Subsection (c) and Section 33.019, allow a person to comply with initial eligibility requirements, including any initial interview, and with subsequent periodic eligibility recertification requirements by telephone instead of through a personal appearance at commission offices if:

(1) the person and each member of the person's household:

(A) have no earned income; and

(B) are elderly or persons with disabilities; or

(2) the person is subject to a hardship, as determined by commission rule.

SECTION 2. Subchapter A, Chapter 33, Human Resources Code, is amended by adding Section 33.019 to read as follows:

Sec. 33.019. SIMPLIFIED CERTIFICATION AND RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN SNAP APPLICANTS AND RECIPIENTS. (a) The

1 commission shall develop and implement simplified certification  
2 and recertification requirements for supplemental nutrition  
3 assistance program benefits for individuals who are 60 years of age  
4 or older and who reside in a household in which every individual  
5 residing in the household is 60 years of age or older. The  
6 simplified requirements must:

7 (1) allow an individual described by this section to  
8 waive recertification interview requirements;

9 (2) simplify and reduce the number of verification  
10 requirements for certifying and recertifying eligibility to  
11 receive benefits, which must include the use of a shortened  
12 application form; and

13 (3) allow the individual to remain eligible for  
14 benefits for 36 months after certification and after each  
15 recertification.

16 (b) An individual described by this section is required to:

17 (1) submit to the commission a change reporting form  
18 every 12 months during the 36-month eligibility period; and

19 (2) report to the commission, in accordance with  
20 federal law, when the individual receives an increase in income.

21 (c) The commission shall, in a manner that complies with  
22 federal law, use data matching to help enroll in the supplemental  
23 nutrition assistance program eligible individuals described by  
24 this section who are receiving Medicaid benefits. The commission  
25 may seek or use private funding or contract with a public or private  
26 entity to carry out this section.

27 SECTION 3. Section 33.019, Human Resources Code, as added

1 by this Act, applies only to an application or recertification of  
2 eligibility of a person for supplemental nutrition assistance  
3 program benefits submitted on or after January 1, 2020.

4 SECTION 4. If before implementing any provision of this Act  
5 a state agency determines that a waiver or authorization from a  
6 federal agency is necessary for implementation of that provision,  
7 the agency affected by the provision shall request the waiver or  
8 authorization and may delay implementing that provision until the  
9 waiver or authorization is granted.

10 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.