

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 701  
By: Walle  
Human Services  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

It has been suggested that the process for obtaining SNAP benefits, which involves a great deal of paperwork and can be quite time-consuming, is overly burdensome, particularly for the elderly and for individuals with a disability. H.B. 701 seeks to address this issue by establishing simplified certification and recertification requirements for SNAP benefits for certain elderly or disabled individuals.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 701 amends the Human Resources Code to require the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to develop and implement simplified certification and recertification requirements for SNAP benefits for individuals with a disability or who are 60 years of age or older and who reside in a household in which every household resident has a disability or is 60 years of age or older. What constitutes a person with a disability is determined by HHSC rule. The simplified requirements must do the following:

- allow an individual to waive recertification interview requirements;
- simplify and reduce the number of verification requirements for certifying and recertifying eligibility to receive benefits; and
- allow an individual to remain eligible for benefits for 36 months after certification and after each recertification.

H.B. 701 requires a SNAP recipient to whom the simplified certification and recertification requirements apply to do the following:

- submit to HHSC a change reporting form every 12 months during the 36-month eligibility period; and
- report to HHSC, in accordance with federal law, when the individual receives an increase in income.

The bill requires HHSC, in a manner that complies with federal law, to use data matching to help enroll in SNAP eligible individuals who are receiving Medicaid benefits. The bill authorizes HHSC to seek or use private funding or contract with a public or private entity to carry out the bill's provisions, which apply only to an application or recertification of eligibility for SNAP benefits submitted on or after January 1, 2022.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2021.