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UCOWF Applauds USDA's Child Support Enforcement Efforts

"Rescinding Biden-Era Guidance Reins in Deadbeat Dads"

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Earlier this week, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Rollins rescinded the Biden Administration's June 6, 2024 memo that discouraged states from using SNAP child support enforcement options, reinstating instead its 2019 guidance. States are NOW encouraged to consider requiring custodial and noncustodial parents to cooperate with child support agencies. Further, states may also disqualify individuals from the SNAP program who refuse to cooperate or are delinquent on court-ordered child support - subject to applicable or court-mandated exceptions.

(<https://www.fna.usda.gov/snap/state-policy-options-csa>)

"This is a welcome and positive move," explained Keith Miskie, President of the United Council on Welfare Fraud (UCOWF). "Our organization has long advocated for child support cooperation as a condition of SNAP eligibility. The practical result is that USDA now 'strongly encourages' states to evaluate and implement available opportunities promoting parental responsibility. This does not make child-support cooperation mandatory nationwide, but rather it remains a state option."

"It's our sincere hope that all states will embrace this option and other federal agencies - like CMS - will follow USDA's lead in putting forth clear and unequivocal guidance to help the nation curb fraud, waste and abuse at all levels."

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UCOWF is the only national professional organization solely dedicated to the prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution, and recovery of fraud in public assistance programs. Our members are the boots on the ground in states, counties, territories, and federal agencies. They see where the systems fail, how fraudsters exploit those failures, and how federal policy can either help or hinder a successful investigation. (www.ucowf.net)

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