



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 6229

January Session, 2021



**AN ACT ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF FOOD-INSECURE STUDENTS
AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) (a) As used in this section,
2 "food insecurity" or "food insecure" means the lack of financial resources
3 needed to consistently access enough food for an active and healthy life.

4 (b) Not later than March 1, 2022, and biennially thereafter, each public
5 institution of higher education in the state shall administer a survey to
6 each student enrolled at such institution for the purpose of collecting
7 data on the number of students who are food insecure and the causes of
8 and reasons for such food insecurity. Such survey shall include, but
9 need not be limited to, questions regarding a student's (1) demographic
10 background, including age, race, ethnicity, gender identity, marital
11 status, income, education and employment; (2) specific barriers to food
12 access; and (3) awareness or use of community or institutional resources
13 to address food insecurity and any barriers to accessing such resources.

14 (c) Not later than October 1, 2022, and biennially thereafter, each
15 public institution of higher education shall evaluate any services and
16 programs offered by such institution to address the needs of food-
17 insecure students. Based on the results of the survey administered
18 pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, each institution shall amend

19 any existing or establish new services and programs to address the
20 needs of food-insecure students. Such services or programs may
21 include, but not be limited to, (1) assistance and support for students to
22 enroll in the supplemental nutrition assistance program pursuant to the
23 federal Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 or any other state or federal
24 program for nutrition assistance or financial aid, including programs for
25 families, if applicable to the student; (2) providing low-cost food or meal
26 plan options on campus; (3) allowing students additional meals through
27 extra card swipes on meal plans; (4) providing financial assistance or
28 other financial student aid; (5) establishing or expanding a food pantry
29 on campus; or (6) initiating a fruit and vegetable incentive program, or
30 making such program available to students through agreement with a
31 community nonprofit organization or governmental agency that
32 provides such program. When amending or establishing any services or
33 programs pursuant to this subsection, each institution shall have the
34 goal of providing such services and programs to not less than ten per
35 cent of the number of students identified as being food insecure in the
36 survey administered pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

37 (d) Not later than January 1, 2023, and biennially thereafter, each
38 public institution of higher education in the state shall submit a report,
39 in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,
40 to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having
41 cognizance of matters relating to higher education, regarding any food
42 insecurities among the students at such institution, including, but not
43 limited to, (1) results from the survey administered pursuant to
44 subsection (b) of this section, (2) services and programs to address the
45 needs of food insecure students, including any amendments made to
46 such services or programs pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, and
47 (3) the number of students who utilized such services and programs
48 during the preceding two years.

49 Sec. 2. Section 17b-105f of the general statutes is amended by adding
50 subsections (e) and (f) as follows (*Effective July 1, 2021*):

51 (NEW) (e) (1) Not later than January 1, 2022, and annually thereafter,

52 the Board of Regents for Higher Education and the Board of Trustees of
53 The University of Connecticut shall consult with the Department of
54 Social Services for the purpose of identifying any educational program
55 offered at an institution of higher education governed by said boards
56 that qualifies as an employment and training program which increases
57 a student's employability and complies with the requirements for an
58 exemption, as specified in 7 CFR 273.5(b)(11), as amended from time to
59 time, from the supplemental nutrition assistance program eligibility
60 rule in 7 CFR 273.5(a), as amended from time to time. In identifying such
61 educational programs, the department and said boards shall seek to
62 maximize the number and types of employment and training programs
63 offered at the institution of higher education governed by said boards.

64 (2) Any independent institution of higher education in the state may,
65 in such institution's discretion, consult with the Department of Social
66 Services for the purposes set forth in subdivision (1) of this subsection.

67 (NEW) (f) Not later than July 1, 2022, the Department of Social
68 Services, the Board of Regents for Higher Education and the Board of
69 Trustees of The University of Connecticut shall each post, and regularly
70 update, on their Internet web site, the list of educational programs
71 offered at each institution of higher education governed by said boards
72 that has been qualified as an employment and training program
73 pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (e) of this section.

74 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) For the purpose of determining
75 eligibility for the supplemental nutrition assistance program pursuant
76 to the federal Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended from time to
77 time, the Department of Social Services shall consider any student
78 enrolled in an institution of higher education in the state to be
79 participating in a state or federally financed work-study program if such
80 student receives approval of work-study as part of a financial aid
81 package to attend such institution of higher education, regardless of
82 whether such student has received his or her work-study program
83 assignment.

84 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) Each public institution of higher
85 education shall notify any student identified by the financial aid office
86 of such public institution of higher education as potentially eligible for
87 the supplemental nutrition assistance program pursuant to the federal
88 Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended from time to time,
89 regarding (1) the qualification requirements for such program, (2) the
90 application procedure for such program, and (3) where to obtain
91 assistance in completing an application for such program.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	17b-105f
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section

HED *Joint Favorable Subst.*