

# **Summary of Nutrition Assistance Program – American Samoa (NAP)**

## **General Information**

In July 1994, American Samoa began operating a capped block grant program, called the Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP).

The American Samoa block grant is authorized under Section 19 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended. NAP is separate from SNAP.

## **Funding Structure and Participation Levels**

American Samoa's block grant pays for 100 percent of benefits to eligible participants and administrative costs. The current block grant for Fiscal Year 2023 is \$10,047,000. The NAP program must set eligibility and benefit levels to stay within the fixed block grant amount. As a result, an increase in NAP participation may result in the decrease of NAP benefits. On average, NAP serves nearly 4,399<sup>1</sup> participants monthly.

In recent years, Congress has authorized additional funding in response to Tropical Cyclone Gita and COVID-19.

## **Program Administration and Operations**

American Samoa's Department of Human and Social Services (DHSS) administers the program. FNS provides oversight for NAP similar to its role of providing oversight for States' and territories' administration of SNAP.

American Samoa designs its own set of program rules for its NAP. FNS approves these rules through an annual Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

## **Program-specific Components**

NAP eligibility criteria are different than that of SNAP. Only low-income elderly (over 60), blind, or disabled individuals are eligible for the NAP program. The block grant allows American Samoa to design a nutrition assistance program tailored to the territory's unique cultural, social, and economic circumstances. For example, 20 percent of each allotment consists of coupons earmarked for the purchase of local commodities to provide work incentives, develop self-sufficiency, and stimulate economic development and local food production. These local commodities include food and nonfood items such as fishing equipment, garden supplies, and livestock.

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<sup>1</sup> This figure is based on the FNS-388 form "State Issuance and Participation Estimates" for the month of July 2022.

American Samoa prints its own coupons. American Samoa NAP and SNAP benefits are not interoperable, meaning it is not possible for an American Samoa coupon to be used outside of American Samoa.

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