

## Department of Planning and Budget 2018 Fiscal Impact Statement

**1. Bill Number:** SB203

<b>House of Origin</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Introduced	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Engrossed
<b>Second House</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> In Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Enrolled

**2. Patron:** Favola

**3. Committee:** Rehabilitation and Social Services

**4. Title:** Food stamp eligibility; drug-related felonies.

**5. Summary:** Provides that a person who is otherwise eligible to receive food stamp benefits shall not be denied such assistance solely because he has been convicted of a first-time felony offense of possession with intent to distribute more than one-half ounce but not more than five pounds of marijuana, provided that he complies with all obligations imposed by the criminal court and the Department of Social Services, is actively engaged in or has completed substance abuse treatment, and participates in drug screenings. Current law prohibits denial of such benefits only if such persons have been convicted of felony possession of a controlled substance.

**6. Budget Amendment Necessary:** Yes, Item 348.

**7. Fiscal Impact Estimates:**

**7a. Expenditure Impact:**

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Positions</i>	<i>Fund</i>
2018	-	-	-
2019	\$30,000	-	General fund
	\$45,000	-	Nongeneral fund
2020	-	-	-
2021	-	-	-
2022	-	-	-
2023	-	-	-
2024	-	-	-

**8. Fiscal Implications:** §63.2-505.2 of the Code of Virginia currently states that eligibility to receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits shall not be denied to individuals convicted of a felony offense of possession of a controlled substance. This legislation adds a stipulation that individuals shall also not be denied eligibility for SNAP benefits due to a first-time felony offense of possession with intent to distribute more than one-half ounce, but not more than five pounds, of marijuana. Because the legislation restricts the cases to first time offenses and marijuana distribution only, the changes will likely cause only a minimal increase in SNAP cases. The increase in workload for these cases can be

absorbed by the local departments of social services (LDSS). Agency SNAP data shows that from May 2016 through December 2017, an average of 115 applications per month were denied due to drug related charges. National data suggests that only about 12.4 percent of these drug charges were for marijuana and another 25 percent of those are individuals with first time offenses. Consequently, the Department anticipates that 43 ( $115 \times 12 \times 12.4\% \times 25\%$ ) new SNAP applications would be approved annually because of this legislation.

Based on Random Moment Sampling statistics, there are approximately 1,530 SNAP workers who handle an average of 232 cases each; therefore, the impact on the caseload increases will be minimal and can be absorbed into the current appropriation across the 120 LDSS. In order to implement the changes in the bill, modifications to the Virginia Case Management System (VaCMS) will be necessary. One-time modification costs in FY 2019 are estimated at \$75,000 (60% or \$45,000 nongeneral funds and 40% or \$30,000 general fund).

**9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected:** Department of Social Services, local departments of social services

**10. Technical Amendment Necessary:** No.

**11. Other Comments:** None.