



## SNAP E&T Pilot Evaluation

### Study Overview for *Illinois* staff



### Session Overview

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- **Illinois' role in a high profile national evaluation**
- **The Illinois SNAP E&T Pilot**
- **Random Assignment: What is it and why is it necessary?**



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## The National Evaluation

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## The Evaluation of the SNAP E&T Pilots

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### What is it?

- Illinois is 1 of 10 states selected from a national competition to be a SNAP E&T Pilot!
- Each pilot tests strategies to increase SNAP participants' employment and earnings, and reduce dependence on public assistance.
- The Farm Bill required an evaluation to determine if the pilot services helped clients.
  - Mathematica is leading the evaluation; MDRC is a subcontractor to Mathematica



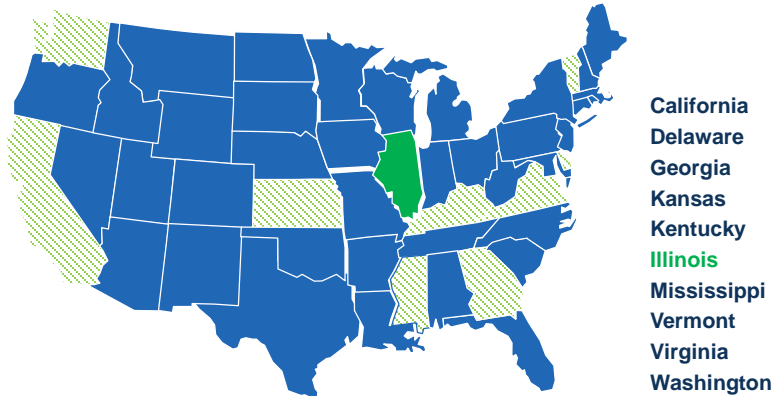
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4



## The 10 SNAP E&T Pilot States

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## How Will Information from the Pilots Be Used?

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- Policymakers and administrators are counting on the pilots to tell them what works and for whom.
- Findings from the Illinois pilot may lead to important policy and program improvements for the state and nationally.

6



## **What Do We Hope to Learn?**

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- **Does participating in the pilot services help clients:**
    - Find good jobs?
    - Enable them to support themselves without SNAP or other public assistance?
  - **What services are most helpful to the clients?**
  - **Who are they most helpful for?**
  - **What can we recommend to other states based on the experiences of the pilots?**
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7



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**Illinois SNAP E&T:  
Employment Opportunities, Personalized  
Services, Individualized Training, & Career  
Planning (EPIC)**

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8

## Preparing SNAP Recipients for Good Jobs

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- The goal of the Illinois pilot is to prepare SNAP recipients for jobs in demand.
  - Services include:
    - Adult basic education to upgrade education and basic skills
    - Career technical education, leading to industry-recognized credentials
    - Paid work experience needed for jobs that offer career opportunities
    - Personalized assistance
    - Assistance with job placement
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9

## EPIC Pilot Services

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- EPIC Services:
    - Model 1: Bridge program for reading/math and English as a second language
    - Model 2: Adult Basic Education and Career Technical Education for those who need to earn a high school equivalency, industry-recognized certificate, or other training credentials
    - Model 3: Short-term skills training for those who don't lack basic educational skills, but need skills upgraded to obtain a better paying job in a high demand career track
    - Paid work experience, for those who need it
    - 90 day post-placement services
    - Supportive services
    - **Service Duration: depends on skills training but could range from 3 months to 1 year**
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10

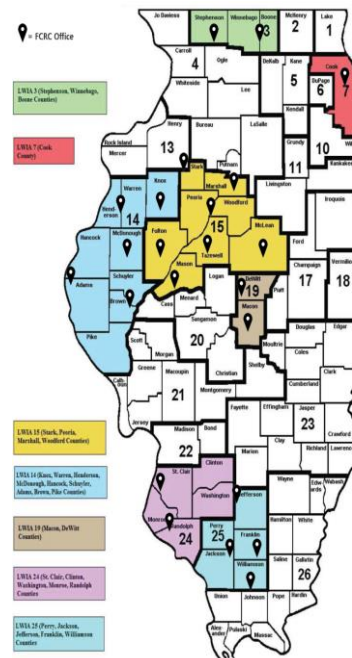
## Who is Eligible to Participate?

- Eligible individuals who reside in one of the 33 counties in the study and are:
  - SNAP recipients who are work registrants (85 percent of 5,000 study participants)
  - Employed SNAP recipients, (this is a voluntary population, and will make up 15 percent of the study participants); exempt from work requirement
  - Participation may be mandatory or voluntary, depending on county and work registration status
- Clients must **consent** to participate in the pilot after learning:
  - About E&T services available to them in their regions
  - What participating means for them

11

### Enrollment Goals for EPIC-SNAP Pilot Study

	166 /	LWIA 3
	166	
	1,784 /	LWIA 7
	1,784	
Statewide EPIC = 2,500 Control = 2,500	62 /	LWIA 14
	62	
	197 /	LWIA 15
	197	
	61 /	LWIA 19
	61	
5,000 Total	132 /	LWIA 24
	132	
	98 /	LWIA 25
	98	



## What does Participation Mean for Clients?

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- Participating in the study means that clients have a chance to get the enhanced SNAP E&T pilot (EPIC) services.
  - By consenting to participate, clients volunteer to:
    - Be randomly assigned to one of the two groups
    - Have data about them collected and used for research purposes
    - Comply with the requirements of their assigned group
  - A mandatory work registrant's failure to comply WITH E&T ACTIVITIES TO WHICH THEY ARE ASSIGNED IN THEIR GROUP could result in case closure or reduction in benefits.
  - A voluntary participant who fails to comply with the assigned E&T activity cannot be sanctioned for failure to comply.
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13

## Pilot and Study Timeline

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### 2016

- March:** Orientation begins
- March:** Random Assignment begins
- April-Dec:** Site visits by research staff

### 2017

- March:** Begin administration of 12-month participant survey
- May:** Anticipated end of intake/random assignment
- Jan-Dec:** Site visits by research staff

### 2018

- Jan-Dec:** Site visits by research staff
  - December 31:** Pilot program services LIKELY TO end
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14

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## **Why Random Assignment?**

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15

## **What is Random Assignment?**

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- **It is like a coin toss or lottery.**
  - Clients end up in a group purely by chance
  - Nothing about the person or the worker comes into play in deciding the assignment
- **It is conducted automatically by a computer.**

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16



## Study Design in Illinois

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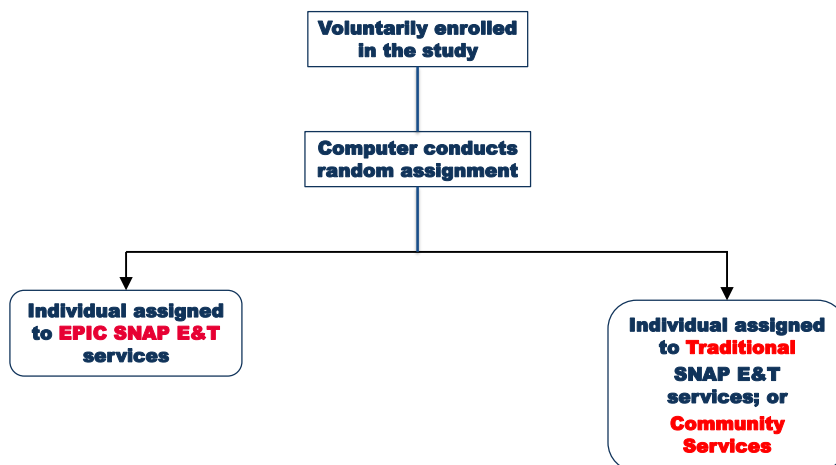
- SNAP recipients interested in participating in EPIC SNAP E&T pilot will be randomized into one of 2 groups:
  - Treatment Group: offered the pilot services in Model 1, 2, or 3, or
  - Control Group: offered core, or existing SNAP E&T services (“business as usual”).
- Exception: In a number of counties, “business as usual” for the controls is no SNAP E&T, so controls will be eligible for whatever services currently exist at large in the community.

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17

## Random Assignment

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## Why Use Random Assignment?

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- It's the only method that policymakers really believe.
  - Random assignment is considered the “gold standard”:
    - It's the only way to determine whether the new services are responsible for any changes in how clients are doing.
    - Since assignment is random, clients in the different groups look the same – only their services are different.
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19

## Is Random Assignment Fair?

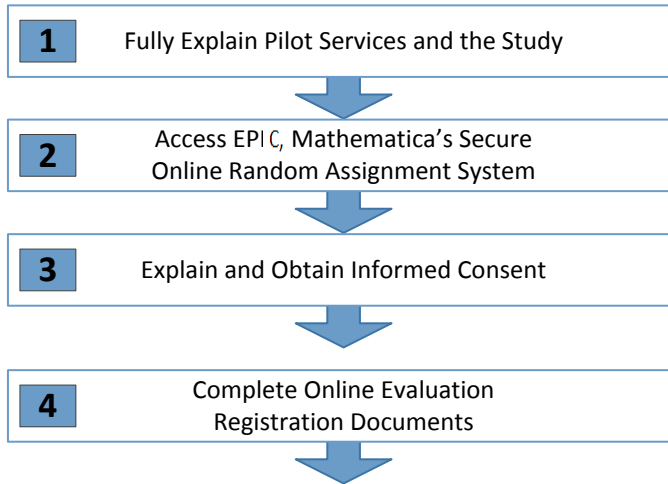
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- Yes, with limited funding, random assignment is actually the fairest way to select clients.
    - It does not let people decide who goes where
    - It's more fair than first come, first serve
  - Clients volunteer to participate IN THE STUDY after being informed thoroughly about the procedures and providing their informed consent.
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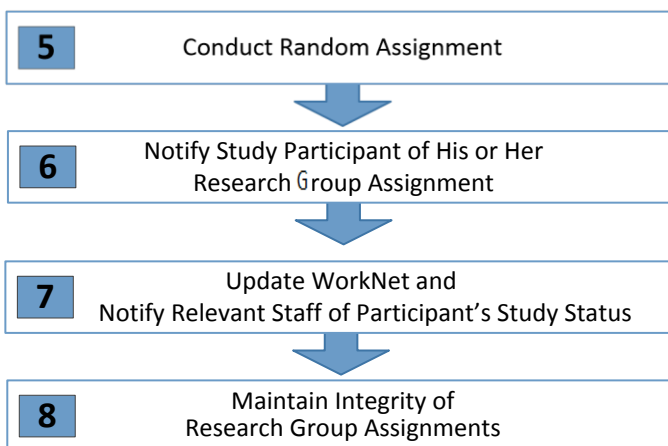
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## The Eight Key Steps

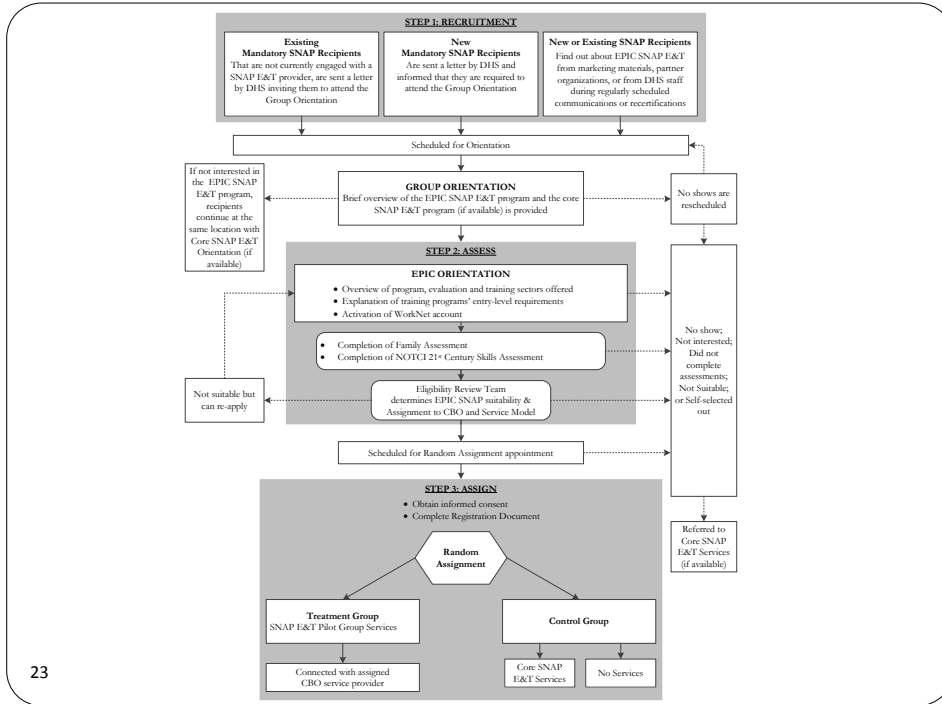


21

## The Eight Key Steps Continued



22



## Random Assignment

- Program intake will occur at 21 DHS offices across the state.
- Interested prospective study participants will:
  - Attend an orientation at DHS office
  - Complete an Application/Baseline Assessment
  - Complete NOTCI 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Assessment
  - Identify 3 industries of interest
- Based on assessments and determination of “good fit”, eligible SNAP recipients will be invited back for random assignment.

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**THANK YOU!**

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