



Pennsylvania Voters Support Structural Welfare Reform

A new poll from the Center for Excellence in Polling shows that voters in Pennsylvania support meaningful reforms to the Keystone State's welfare programs.

From Medicaid to food stamps to public housing, **Pennsylvania voters support reforms to promote work and root out waste, fraud, and abuse** in welfare programs. While support for welfare reform is highest among Independents and Republicans, **many reforms garner bipartisan backing**, with a majority of Democratic voters also expressing support.

Voters support eligibility verification measures designed to root out waste, fraud, and abuse.

79% ...of likely voters support **more robust data cross-checks in Medicaid and food stamps**, ensuring that recipients remain eligible for the program. Additionally, more than two-thirds (68%) of voters want hospitals to verify a patient's Medicaid eligibility before charging HealthChoices for services.

77% ...of likely voters support **restricting food stamp purchases to foods with high nutritional value**, eliminating the ability to purchase junk food, such as soda and candy, with taxpayer-funded benefits.

70% ...of likely voters support **requiring non-custodial parents to cooperate with the state's efforts to collect child support** in order to remain eligible for food stamps.

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Work requirements are popular with Pennsylvania voters.

A wide swath of voters express support for modest but meaningful welfare work requirements—just 20 hours per week to maintain eligibility for taxpayer-funded benefits—for able-bodied adults with no young children at home. More than seven in 10 voters **(71%) support Medicaid work requirements**, while more than six in 10 voters **(62%) support work requirements for food stamps**. Meanwhile, 78 percent of voters back **work requirements for those living in public housing**, with 60 percent saying working adults should move to the top of public housing waitlists ahead of individuals who are not working.

The bottom line

Pennsylvania voters apparently recognize the benefit of a social safety net for the truly needy. However, they broadly **support reforms designed to promote work over welfare and to preserve welfare resources for the truly needy**. Keystone State policymakers have an opportunity to enact commonsense welfare reforms—many with broad and bipartisan support—that are popular with a vast majority of voters.