

<http://www.MSCNews.net/news/index.cfm?nk=34864>

Advocates Say Missouri Setting Barriers For Food Stamp Recipients

(AP) - Advocates for the poor say Missouri is making it harder for the state's neediest residents to receive food stamps.

Officials with the Missouri Association for Social Welfare tell the St. Louis Post-Dispatch that Missouri is the only state where fewer people have received food stamps through the Federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance in recent years amid the recession and a subsequent slow recovery.

The state saw a 10.5 percent decrease in participants over the past five years, while other states had increased participation. State officials attribute the decreases to an improving economy. Activists counter that job cuts in the state's Family Support Division offices are preventing clients from easily meeting with case workers, as the law requires.

Associated Press