Chapter 9

Program Participation in the Show Me State

Missouri Responds to the Great Recession

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In this chapter, we examine the overlap between Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participation in Missouri using data that include the full universe of the state's participants in both programs. Despite the conservative political swing of the state in recent years, historically Missouri has pursued a policy of facilitating SNAP participation. In the first decade of the century, participation rates were reported to be among the highest in the nation. Even when participation estimates of over 100 percent were revealed as being the result of a programming error, it was clear that the state maintained relatively client-friendly administrative structures, despite the slow adoption of modernized application processes. In many respects, the economy of Missouri is quite representative of the United States as a whole. The timing and extent of the Great Recession there corresponded closely to that of the United States, as did the growth in both SNAP and UI participation. Within this context, we explore issues related to the patterns and timing of joint receipt, the connection between program participation and state economic and political conditions, the characteristics of the recipients, and the effectiveness of the safety net to buffer the impact of the Great Recession.

In Fiscal Year 2012, the Department of Social Services (DSS) in Missouri serviced the fifteenth-largest SNAP caseload in the country—948,000 individuals—accounting for 2.0 percent of the national caseload of 46.6 million participants (USDA 2013). Over the period from 2004 to 2014, the growth in the Missouri SNAP caseload was slower than the growth of the national caseload (which nearly doubled in the period from 2007 to 2013). It was also somewhat slower than in the other five states examined in this volume. Still, the caseload growth was substantial, increasing by just under 50 percent between 2007 and 2011 before experiencing a modest decline. Below, we explore the changing caseload composition, dynamics, and joint participation of UI with SNAP.

In terms of state-specific SNAP policies, Missouri removed the vehicle tests for most families in October 2001,[1] and narrow categorical eligibility became effective in May 2000 (Trippe and Gillooly 2010). Simplified reporting for both expenses and resources was implemented in 2001 (Trippe et al. 2004). However, unlike most states, as of 2012 Missouri had no waiver of the face-to-face interview, did not use call centers, and did not accept online applications. Furthermore, Missouri did not adopt broad-based categorical eligibility, which increased the population eligible for SNAP benefits in states that did adopt the policy.

In contrast to SNAP, during the period of our study, 2007–2011, UI was a less generous program in Missouri than in most other states. In Missouri, monetary eligibility for UI required one of three things:

1) Employment in the first four of the past five quarters (the "base period")

2) A total minimum earnings of $2,250 over this period, with no more than two-fifths of earnings in a single quarter

3) Wages received in at least two quarters of the base period and exceeding 1.5 times the Missouri maximum taxable wage base for the year

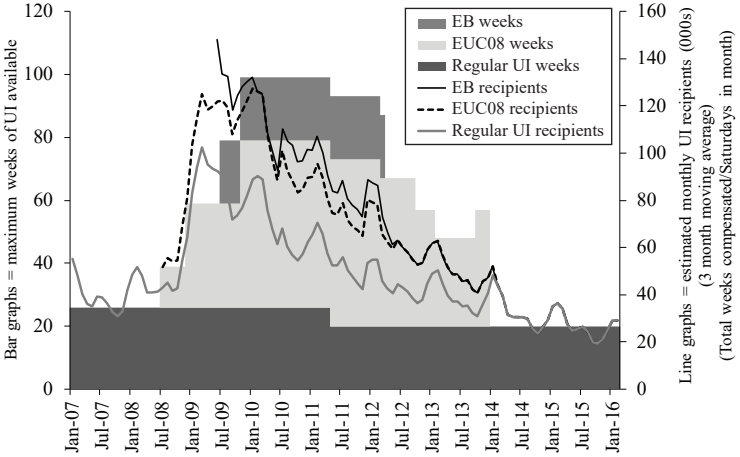
Workers had to have separated from their employers through no fault of their own or to have moved with military spouses. In contrast to many states, separations were not acceptable if they were due to personal or family illness, if they were made because of an unreasonable commute, or for comparable reasons. Missouri did not provide a dependency allowance, and benefits ranged from a minimum weekly level of $35 to a maximum of $320—among the bottom fifth of states and the second-lowest outside the states of the old Confederacy. As in most states, the maximum number of weeks of benefits available through the state-funded program was 26 during most of the period of our study, but with federal additions it was extended to a maximum of nearly two years.[2] Thus, in terms of the SNAP income requirements, UI participants without other sources of income would generally have been eligible for SNAP, although Missouri's SNAP asset limit—corresponding to the federal default allowing a maximum of $2,000 in liquid funds for most families—would have reduced the number of people eligible.

Figure 9.1 provides information on the maximum weeks of UI benefits available to Missouri UI recipients over the time of our study, as well as an estimate of the number of recipients by month for each program. We see that there was a two-year period when the maximum number of eligible weeks is close to the 99-week maximum and when eligibility exceeded the prior 26-week maximum by a substantial margin for most of our study period. Federal EUC and EB legislation played an important role in increasing the UI caseload, given that more than half of the caseload can be traced to these programs during the period of the study.

DATA

Data used for this project were produced by Missouri's Department of Economic Development as part of the Workforce Data Qual-

Figure 9.1 Total Number of UI Recipients by Program Source and Maximum Weeks of UI Available: Missouri



NOTE: Monthly UI recipients estimated as the total weeks compensated in a month divided by the number of Saturdays in the month.
SOURCE: Rockey (2015).

ity Initiative, pursuant to funding by the U.S. Department of Labor. The ultimate source for each data set was the Missouri agency charged with maintaining the data for the purpose of administering programs focused on serving residents in the state.

Wage record data, which provide information on quarterly earnings for employees within the state who work for firms covered by UI legislation, were provided by the Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations. The Department of Labor and Industrial Relations also provided comprehensive claims information as well as weekly payment information for the period of our study. Missouri's Department of Social Services, Family Support Division, provided information on SNAP recipients for each month, identifying both household units and eligible individuals receiving benefits. Benefits were paid on a monthly basis, and any month in which a benefit check was provided to the household is counted as a month of SNAP receipt for each eligible individual in the household.

As in the analyses reported in the other state chapters, core analyses focusing on SNAP use the household as the unit, and the study group is limited to households with eligible recipients aged 18 to 64 at their last birthday. Households are identified as receiving UI based on UI receipt by SNAP-eligible members. However, analyses that consider the universe of UI recipients are based on individuals aged 18 to 64, and, in this case, joint receipt is defined as occurring when an individual is an eligible UI recipient in a SNAP household.[3] Our analysis focuses on the period from July 2007 through December 2011.

RESULTS

The discussion of this study's results is divided into four sections:

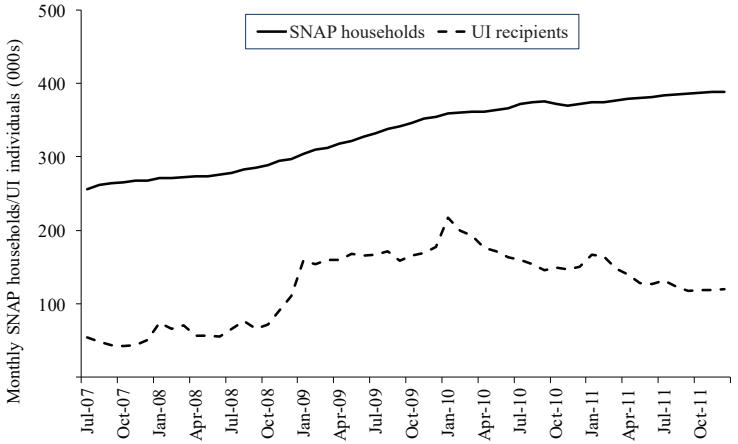
1) The overlap between UI and SNAP receipt
2) The connection between UI and SNAP take-up and economic development and policy evolution
3) Demographic characteristics of SNAP households
4) The labor market, UI, and SNAP benefits

Overlap between UI Receipt and SNAP

In this section, we present detailed information about joint SNAP-UI use for the state of Missouri and describe the dynamics of joint receipt. We discuss changes in the characteristics of the SNAP and joint SNAP-UI caseloads over time. With data for the full universe of UI participants in the state, we are able to present statistics on joint participation using the UI caseload as the denominator, providing a picture of joint participation from the viewpoint of the UI system.

As a reference, we begin by presenting in Figure 9.2 the total monthly household SNAP and UI recipients for Missouri from July 2007 to December 2011.[4] In each month, the SNAP caseload (solid

Figure 9.2 SNAP Households with Recipients Aged 18 to 64 and UI Recipients: Missouri

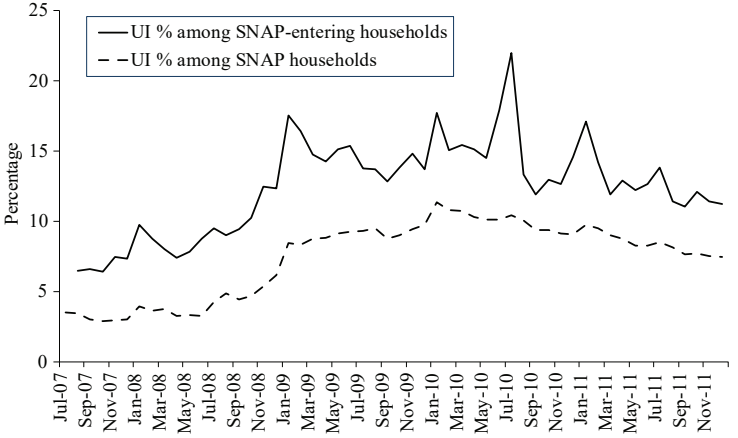


SOURCE: Authors' computations based on Missouri program administrative data.

line) was much larger than the UI caseload (dashed line); however, both caseloads show a growth of about 150,000 cases to their maximum levels during the observation period. As a consequence, given the much lower base for UI, the caseload growth as a percentage change was much larger for UI than for SNAP. The two programs have very different patterns of growth as well over this period. There was little growth in either program during 2007 and into early 2008. The UI caseload sharply increased in late 2008, reflecting the job loss associated with the financial crisis and federal UI program extensions, while SNAP slowly drifted upward and remained at 2010 levels through 2011. The UI caseload, in contrast, fell nearly continuously from its peak in January 2010.

Among all SNAP households in our sample, joint receipt with UI in Missouri—shown in triangles in Figure 9.3—was very low (3 to 5 percent) through most of 2008. With the onset of the Great Recession, joint participation doubled, peaking at over 10 percent in 2010 before slowly dropping. However, even by the end of 2011, joint partici-

Figure 9.3 UI Receipt among SNAP Households with Recipients Aged 18 to 64: Missouri

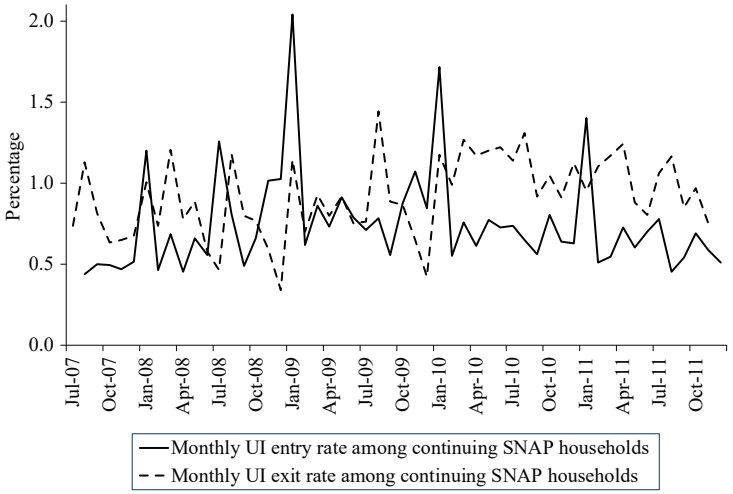


SOURCE: Authors' computations based on Missouri program administrative data.

pation remained substantially above the original level. Joint receipt with UI among new entrants to SNAP (solid line) was 3 to 5 percentage points higher before the Great Recession than joint receipt for all SNAP households (dashed line), reflecting the fact that many of those who enter SNAP while receiving UI soon exhaust benefits. Although consistently higher than that of the full SNAP caseload, joint participation among new SNAP entrants generally followed a similar pattern to that for all SNAP households, notwithstanding greater noise (Figure 9.3).

Of course, changes in joint participation levels can reflect both the extent to which new SNAP recipients receive UI benefits and the rates of UI entry or exit for SNAP recipients. Figure 9.4 presents the percentage entering and exiting UI each month among continuing SNAP households. Interestingly, for the first year of the study period, exits from UI exceeded entries, reflecting the fact that almost all UI recipients exhausted their available benefits after six months. The percentage of the SNAP caseload receiving UI benefits therefore

Figure 9.4 UI Entries and Exits for Continuing SNAP Households Relative to Total SNAP Caseload: Missouri Households with Recipients Aged 18 to 64

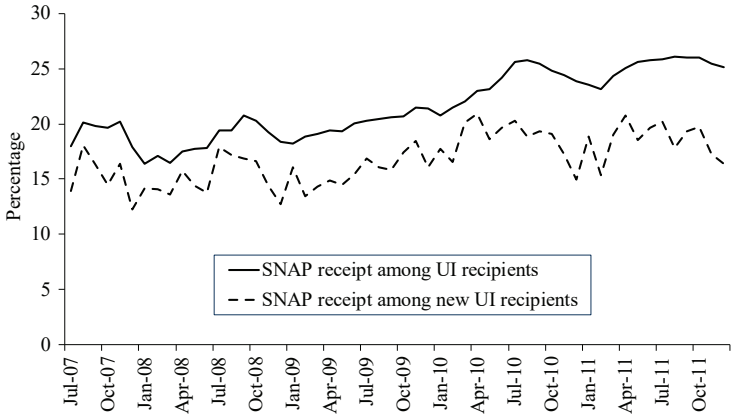


SOURCE: Authors' computations based on Missouri program administrative data.

remained constant due to the replenishment of UI, which stemmed from the high levels of UI receipt among new SNAP entries. Despite some month-to-month variation, entries and exits from UI among continuing SNAP recipients were basically in balance from late 2008 through 2009. Hence, the dramatic growth in UI use observed in Figure 9.3 is due to the high percentage of new SNAP recipients receiving UI. After 2010, the percentage of the SNAP caseload leaving UI was higher than the percentage entering UI among continuing SNAP households. Thus, the mechanism behind the falling joint receipt levels among SNAP households after 2010 was the higher levels of UI exits combined with a decline in the UI receipt of new SNAP entrants.

The statistics presented above suggest that, despite its substantial increase during the Great Recession, joint SNAP-UI receipt was of only modest importance in Missouri. However, viewed in terms of the universe of UI recipients, a different pattern emerges. Figure 9.5

Figure 9.5 SNAP Receipt among Individuals Receiving UI: Missouri

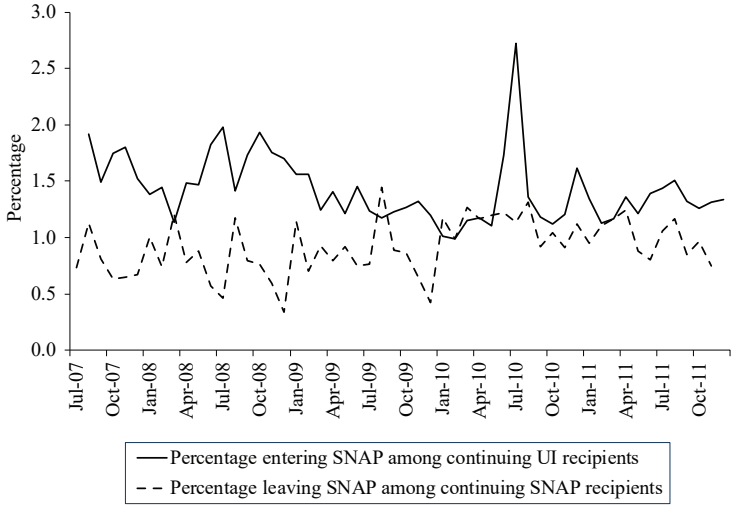


SOURCE: Authors' computations based on Missouri program administrative data.

shows that SNAP receipt among UI recipients was relatively common, with one in five UI recipients receiving SNAP before the Great Recession. This percentage remained at a constant level as the number of UI recipients tripled between the middle of 2008 and early 2010. In 2010, when the number of UI recipients peaked, the proportion of SNAP recipients among UI recipients began to increase, reaching about one in four by the end of 2010 and remaining near that level to the end of our observation period in December 2011. SNAP receipt among new entrants to UI was a few percentage points below that for all UI recipients, since UI recipients often turn to SNAP following extended unemployment. The percentage of new entrants receiving SNAP increased very modestly over our period of observation.

Given that the percentage of new UI recipients receiving SNAP changed relatively little, the primary determinant of growth identified in the upper line in Figure 9.5 would be the relative number of entrants to and exiters from the SNAP program among continuing UI recipients. Figure 9.6 plots the percentage of continuing UI recipients entering and exiting SNAP each month. Among continuing UI

Figure 9.6 SNAP Entries and Exits Each Month for Continuing UI Recipients Relative to Total UI Caseload: Missouri Households with Recipients Aged 18 to 64



SOURCE: Authors' computations based on Missouri program administrative data.

recipients in Missouri, fewer than 1 percent left SNAP each month while still on UI, a number that actually increased over the period of our observation. The initially low level reflects the fact that, prior to the recession, very few UI recipients received UI for more than six months, so most SNAP recipients would have left UI before exiting SNAP. As the recession hit, the length of spells of UI increased dramatically, due partly to the recession but also due largely to federal legislation, which extended UI eligibility to nearly two years. Interestingly, the percentage of UI recipients entering SNAP *declined* slightly over the period.

Taken together, the exit and entry changes do not suggest the reason for the increase in SNAP receipt among UI recipients, since they show that entries exceeded exits prior to the recession but then converged as the recession hit. In fact, the reason for the increase stems from the length of UI spells. When the recession hit, the lengthening

of UI spells meant that a larger proportion of UI recipients experienced extended periods during which they could enter SNAP, and given that entry rates exceeded exit rates, this caused the proportion jointly participating in SNAP and UI to grow. The longer UI spells were a joint result of increased difficulties in obtaining reemployment and the federal extensions in UI eligibility. Given that UI benefits replaced only about two-fifths of prior earnings for a UI recipient in Missouri, an extended period of unemployment would very likely deplete family resources, leading the family to seek SNAP support.[5]

Connection between UI and SNAP Take-Up and Economic Development and Policy Evolution

In Missouri, according to data for 2012, the average duration of UI benefits was 14.9 weeks, which was below the national average of 17.1 weeks. The proportion of recipients exhausting UI benefits in Missouri was almost half (48.7 percent)—very similar to the national average of 47.2 percent (Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations 2014). On the other hand, the unemployment rate in Missouri declined somewhat faster during 2011 than that in the United States, falling to a level of about 7.5 percent, nearly a percentage point below the U.S. average at that point. The return to economic growth has been slower in some states, and, assuming the process of recovery is similar, Missouri's pattern may correspond to what these states will experience as their recoveries blossom.

SNAP participation is directly tied to the economic condition of the state for the able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) population, who may be required to obtain employment or engage in job search activities as a condition for continued receipt beyond three months in a three-year period. Such restrictions are waived in counties with higher unemployment rates, and states may also choose to exempt a portion of their caseloads from these rules.

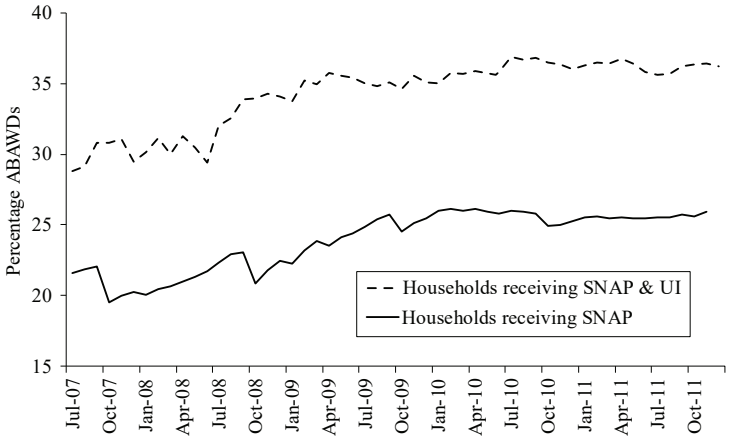
The entire state of Missouri qualified for ABAWD waivers beginning in Fiscal Year 2010 and continuing through the end of our

research window. Prior to that time, in Fiscal Years 2008 and 2009, 28 out of the 114 counties and one independent city qualified as labor surplus areas (USDA 2013). In Figure 9.7, we see that the ABAWD caseload increased during the Great Recession, as one might expect, from a low of 19.8 percent in October 2007 to 26.4 percent in January 2010.[6] However, the portion of the Missouri SNAP caseload with recipients aged 18 to 64 accounted for by this group remained relatively stable at approximately 26 percent throughout 2010 and 2011. Notably, the increased percentage of SNAP recipients who were ABAWD came after the full-state expansion of the employment and training waivers.

Demographic Characteristics of SNAP Households

In this section, we focus on changes in the characteristics of SNAP recipients in Missouri. Large changes in their composition were clearly visible over the period from July 2007 to December

Figure 9.7 Percentage ABAWD Households, for SNAP Households and SNAP Households with UI Recipients: Missouri Households with Recipients Aged 18 to 64

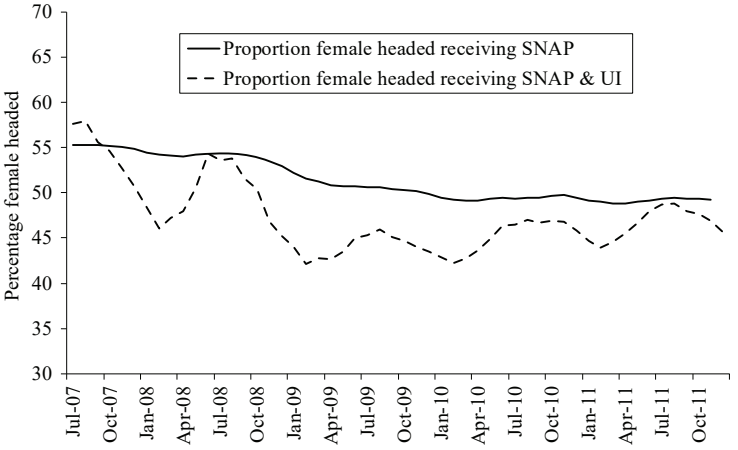


SOURCE: Authors' computations based on Missouri program administrative data.

2011. Whereas the characteristics changed in predictable ways in response to the Great Recession, demographic patterns varied greatly in response to the economic recovery. Below, we present SNAP characteristics by household structure (female-headed versus multiple adults), age of recipients (presence of children or, in a separate analysis, elderly recipients), disability, race, and residence in a nonmetropolitan county. As above, all analyses use a study group limited to households with SNAP recipients aged 18 to 64.

As shown in Figure 9.8, the percentage of all SNAP households with a female head fell by approximately 6 percentage points during the early part of the recession, from around 55 percent in July 2007 to 49 percent in 2010, and remained at that level through 2011. Among the SNAP recipients receiving UI, the decline in the percentage of all households with a female head decreased by somewhat more—approximately 10 to 15 percentage points—although the trend is partly obscured by seasonal effects. Starting at a level of 58 percent

Figure 9.8 Percentage Female-Headed, for SNAP Households and SNAP Households with UI Recipients: Missouri Households with Recipients Aged 18 to 64

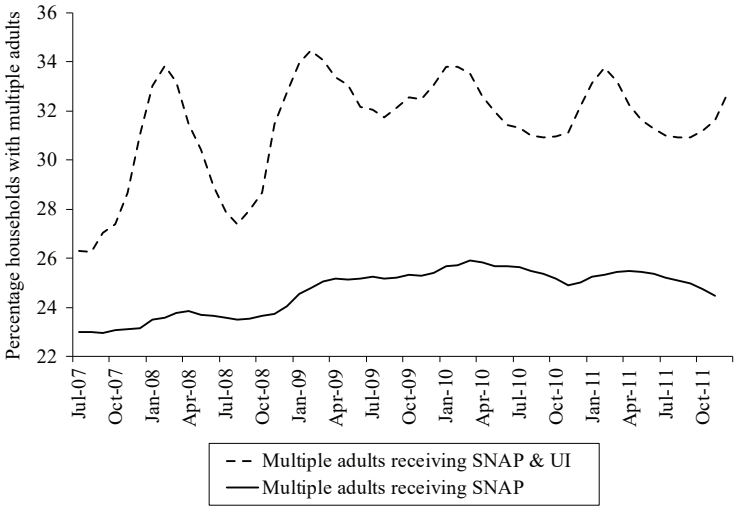


SOURCE: Authors' computations based on Missouri program administrative data.

in July 2007, it declined to 42 percent in February 2009. From there, it increased, though only to a below-prerecession level of 49 percent in August 2011. This pattern is consistent with the rise in the male unemployment rate in Missouri and the increase in the SNAP caseload for ABAWDs. The annual pattern reflects gender differences in unemployment and layoffs across seasons.

In contrast, as shown in Figure 9.9, the percentage of SNAP households in Missouri with multiple adults rose from about 23 percent in 2007 to nearly 26 percent in March 2010. It then began an unsteady decline, though not to its earlier level. While the magnitude of the change overall was quite small (only 3 percentage points), interestingly, this change did not mirror the change in female-headed households during the recovery period. The pattern is slightly different among households receiving both SNAP and UI in that the

Figure 9.9 Multiple Adults, for SNAP Households and SNAP Households with UI Recipients: Missouri Households with Recipients Aged 18 to 64

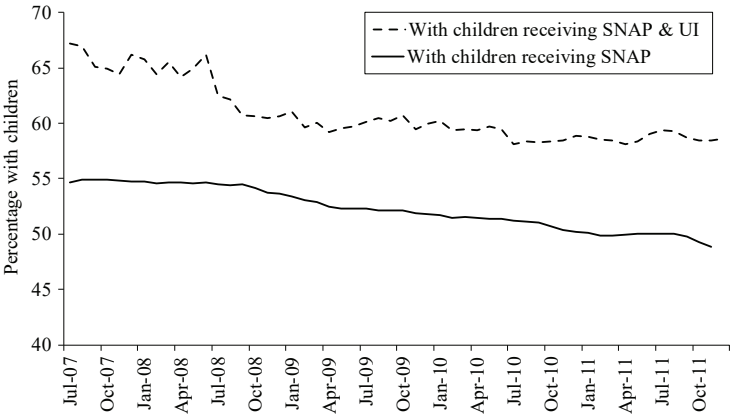


SOURCE: Authors' computations based on Missouri program administrative data.

increase was somewhat greater, starting at 26 percent in July 2007 and increasing, although not steadily, to more than 30 percent by February 2009. There was little change during the recovery period.

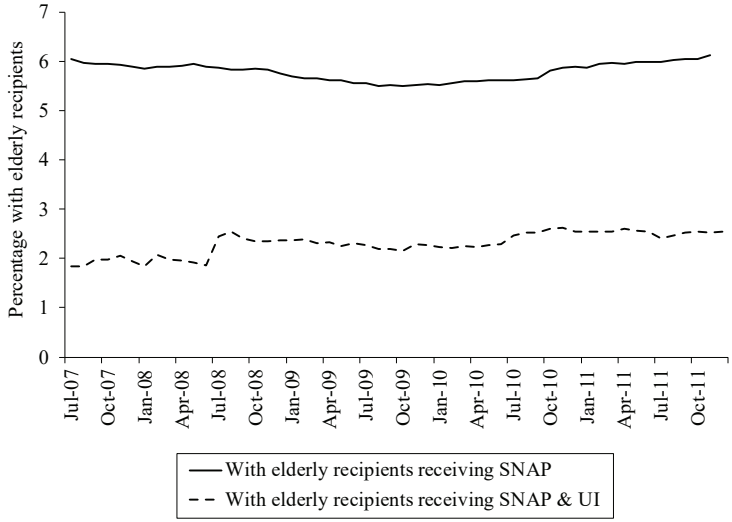
The age distribution of households with recipients aged 18 to 64 in the Missouri SNAP caseload changed dramatically during our observation period, as shown in Figures 9.10 and 9.11. While 55 percent of SNAP households had children in July 2007, the percentage fell at a nearly constant rate to 48 percent in December 2011 (Figure 9.10). SNAP households with UI fell from 67 percent in July 2007 to just over 58 percent in July 2010, and the decline was particularly steep during 2008. In contrast, the percentage of households with an elderly recipient showed a very slight U-shape (Figure 9.11), with less than half a percentage point change over the observation period. The percentage of SNAP households with an elderly recipient receiving UI was quite small and increased slightly over this period, from 1.8 percent in July 2007 to 2.5 percent in December 2011.[7]

Figure 9.10 Percentage with Children, for SNAP Households and SNAP Households with UI Recipients: Missouri Households with Recipients Aged 18 to 64



SOURCE: Authors' computations based on Missouri program administrative data.

Figure 9.11 Percentage with Elderly Recipients, for SNAP Households and SNAP Households with UI Recipients: Missouri Households with Recipients Aged 18 to 64

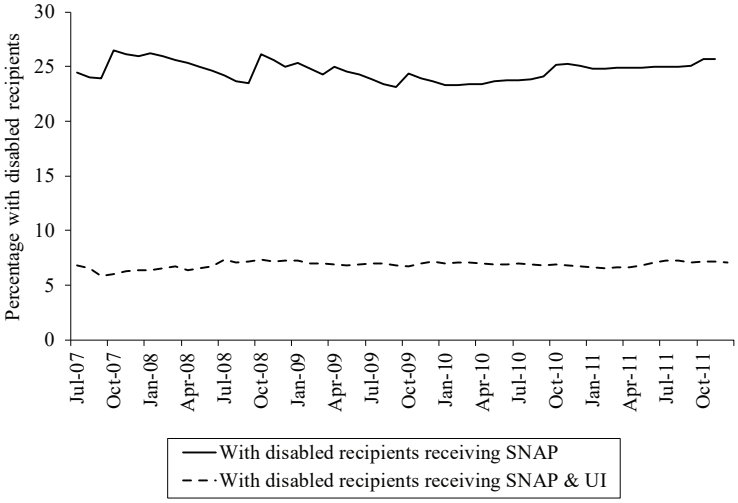


SOURCE: Authors' computations based on Missouri program administrative data.

The percentage of SNAP households with a disabled recipient, shown in Figure 9.12, fluctuated around 25 percent over the observation period, with a small and noisy downward trend until 2010, approaching a lower bound of 23 percent in 2009–2010. During the beginning of Missouri's economic recovery in 2011, this percentage gradually moved upward to just above 25 percent. The growth in the number of disabled recipients as a percentage of the SNAP caseload may be the result of able-bodied recipients leaving SNAP at higher rates during the recovery. In contrast, among the SNAP recipients with UI, the percentage of households with a disabled recipient remained fairly close to 7 percent over most of the observation period.

Missouri has a large African American population but is generally less ethnically diverse than the nation as a whole; Hispanics make up a smaller portion of the total population in Missouri than in the United

Figure 9.12 Percentage with Disabled Recipients, for SNAP Households and SNAP Households with UI Recipients: Missouri Households with Recipients Aged 18 to 64

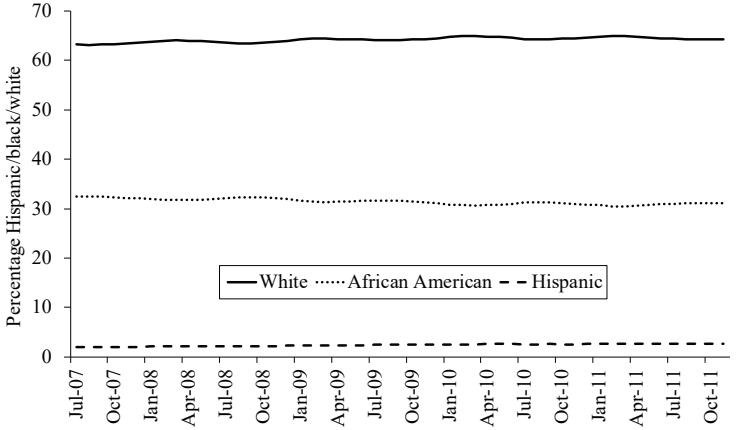


SOURCE: Authors' computations based on Missouri program administrative data.

States overall. Figure 9.13 demonstrates that there was little change in the racial composition of SNAP recipients, with only a very slight displacement of African Americans by whites, reflecting the relative increase in white joblessness during the recession. The percentage of SNAP households coded as Hispanic continued a long-term trend, increasing by about 0.75 percentage points—small in absolute terms but substantial relative to an initial value of about 2 percent. Among the SNAP recipients receiving UI (Figure 9.14), the basic long-term patterns were the same, although we observe an important seasonal effect, as the percentage of African American recipients increases during the spring and reaches an annual peak in the summer.

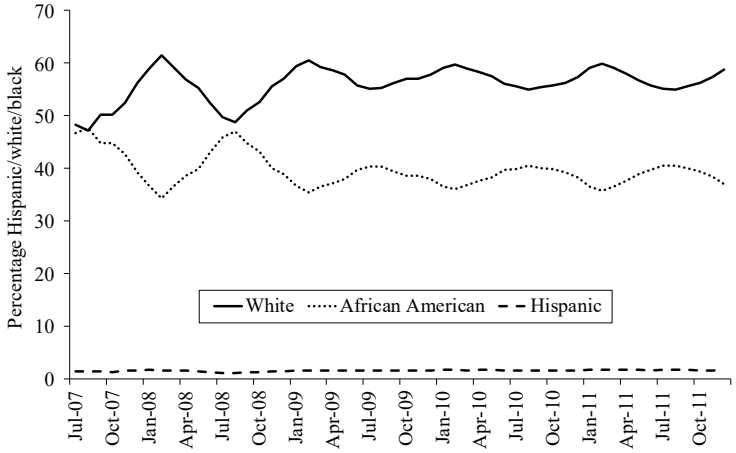
Figure 9.15 shows the percentage of SNAP households living in nonmetropolitan counties. Missouri has two large metropolitan areas—St. Louis and Kansas City—as well as several smaller metropolitan areas, with the rest of the state population living in nonmet-

Figure 9.13 Racial and Ethnic Composition, SNAP Households in Missouri with Recipients Aged 18–64, July 2007–December 2012



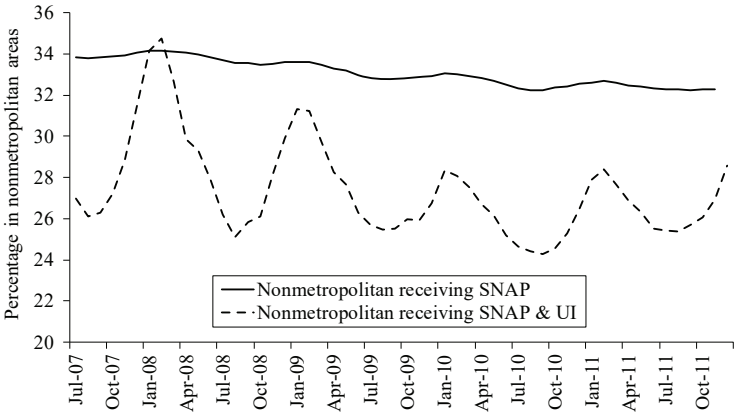
SOURCE: Authors' computations based on Missouri program administrative data.

Figure 9.14 Racial and Ethnic Composition of SNAP Households with UI Recipient in Missouri with Recipients Aged 18 to 64, July 2007–December 2011



SOURCE: Authors' computations based on Missouri program administrative data.

Figure 9.15 Nonmetropolitian Areas, for SNAP Households and SNAP Households with UI Recipients: Missouri Households with Recipients Aged 18 to 64



SOURCE: Authors' computations based on Missouri program administrative data.

ropolitan counties. In Missouri in 2007, approximately one in three SNAP recipients lived in a nonmetropolitan area. The percentage of the total SNAP population living in rural areas declined by approximately 1.5 percentage points from 2008 to 2010 and then remained relatively stable through 2011. Looking at SNAP households with members receiving UI, we see a similar decline, although seasonal cycles (with the nonmetropolitan recipients 4 to 8 percentage points higher in the winter) make the trend harder to identify.

Overall, the characteristics of SNAP recipients in Missouri changed in expected ways due to the recession and the recovery. In some areas, we see responses to the recession and do not observe a return to the prior level in the period of recovery. For example, the percentage of households with female heads, the percentage with children, and the percentage in nonmetropolitan counties declined with the recession, and, in each case, these percentages continue at or below those seen during the recession. In contrast, the decline in percentage of SNAP households with elderly or disabled recipients that occurred when the recession hit reversed itself during the recovery.

Given the dramatic increase in the number of SNAP households that occurred over the period of our study, it is perhaps not surprising that their characteristics changed as well. The decline in female-headed households reflects the fact that the men were disproportionately more likely to experience job loss during the Great Recession. The increase in the share of ABAWDs was partly a response to the suspension of rules limiting ABAWD participation in SNAP. Not only did the Great Recession increase the number of SNAP households, but it clearly changed their composition as well.

The Labor Market, UI, and SNAP Benefits

In this section, we present information to evaluate the relative effectiveness of SNAP and UI in terms of providing financial support to low-income households before, during, and after the Great Recession. Additionally, we provide information about how the connection of SNAP recipients to the paid labor force changed throughout this period. In particular, we present income from earnings, SNAP, and UI by time period, both for the new entrants to SNAP and for those exiting SNAP during the period of our study.

Table 9.1 provides information on income for all new SNAP entrants. This information is organized by calendar quarter, reflecting the structure of our earnings data. New SNAP entrants are defined as those who have not received SNAP in the previous two months. In the earliest time period, September–December 2007 (prior to onset of the recession), 76.5 percent of SNAP entrants continued to receive SNAP benefits through at least the following calendar quarter, and 50.1 percent received SNAP benefits through at least two quarters. The percentage of new entrants receiving SNAP through at least one quarter remained relatively constant over our observation period, implying that very short SNAP spells are not much affected by the recession. In contrast, the percentage receiving SNAP for two or more quarters increased throughout the time period, growing steadily from 50 percent in the first period and reaching 57 percent for those entering SNAP in 2011.

Over half (56 percent) of new SNAP entrants in 2007 were employed (i.e., received some earnings) during the quarter prior to entering SNAP, and this same percentage of entrants were employed in the quarter of SNAP entry. While the percentage of SNAP recipients attached to the labor market declined, approaching 50 percent during the Great Recession, the fact that more than half of entrants had jobs even in the worst period of recession speaks to the strong prior connection of SNAP recipients to the labor market. In fact, the last two columns of Table 9.1 show that positive earnings were quite common among SNAP recipients during the first and second calendar quarters after SNAP entry. Even during the worst period of the recession (2009 and 2010), more than two out of five SNAP recipients were receiving earnings at some point in the quarter.

Comparison of employment and earnings before and after SNAP entry illustrates the decline in labor market prospects for these individuals. Employment rates declined by less than 10 percentage points. But, conditional on employment, earnings declined by much more—approximately one quarter—from an average of around $4,000 before SNAP entry to around $3,000 in the quarter of SNAP entry and subsequent quarters. This pattern is similar across the five periods over 2007–2011, underscoring our observation that the recession's primary impact was on the number of households entering SNAP (compare the first line for each period in Table 9.1). Given that SNAP is available only for those with low incomes, it is not surprising that average earnings for program entrants were not much altered.

As noted above, the level of UI receipt among SNAP entrants increased over our observation period, peaking in 2010 at 17.4 percent in the quarter of SNAP entry (Table 9.1, column 2, panel 4). Additionally, within each year, UI receipt was highest in the quarter of SNAP entry (rather than the quarter before or after SNAP entry), implying that many households took up UI and SNAP in the same quarter. The average value of UI benefits for those households receiving benefits was also highest in 2010, averaging over $2,000 per quarter. In terms of the value of UI benefits relative to time of SNAP entry, with the

Table 9.1 Sources of Income for New SNAP Households with Recipients Aged 18 to 64: Missouri

	All spells		Spells extending through at least 1st quarter after entry quarter	Spells extending through at least 2nd quarter after entry quarter
	Quarter prior to SNAP entry	Quarter of SNAP entry	1st quarter after entry	2nd quarter after entry
SNAP spells beginning September 2007–December 2007				
No. spells	60,357	60,357	46,179	30,225
% of all spells	100.0	100.0	76.5	50.1
% with any earnings	56.0	56.5	51.1	46.8
Average earnings for households with earnings ($)	4,014	3,057	3,159	3,015
% with UI benefits	5.0	8.7	8.5	6.8
Average UI benefit for households with benefits ($)	1,592	1,303	1,831	1,374
Average SNAP benefit ($)		303	660	644
SNAP spells beginning January 2008–December 2008				
No. spells	195,381	195,381	148,257	100,855
% of all spells	100.0	100.0	75.9	51.6
% with any earnings	55.7	55.4	49.4	43.5
Average earnings for households with earnings ($)	4,141	3,018	3,315	3,066
% with UI benefits	5.8	11.4	11.5	11.2
Average UI benefit for households with benefits ($)	1,538	1,582	2,071	2,127
Average SNAP benefit ($)		363	701	732

SNAP spells beginning January 2009–December 2009				
No. spells	230,555	230,555	182,038	126,581
% of all spells	100.0	100.0	79.0	54.9
% with any earnings	53.9	51.7	46.2	42.3
Average earnings for households with earnings ($)	4,313	3,141	3,276	3,107
% with UI benefits	9.5	16.5	16.1	14.8
Average UI benefit for households with benefits ($)	1,964	2,128	2,534	2,442
Average SNAP benefit ($)		439	835	813
SNAP spells beginning January 2010–December 2010				
No. spells	222,178	222,178	169,223	122,880
% of all spells	100.0	100.0	76.2	55.3
% with any earnings	51.2	50.7	45.9	42.6
Average earnings for households with earnings ($)	4,210	3,091	3,285	3,207
% with UI benefits	12.5	17.4	15.7	14.0
Average UI benefit for households with benefits ($)	2,452	2,235	2,339	2,205
Average SNAP benefit ($)		441	814	812
SNAP spells beginning January 2011–December 2011				
No. spells	220,966	220,966	165,133	125,923
% of all spells	100.0	100.0	74.7	57.0
% with any earnings	51.3	50.5	46.4	43.9
Average earnings for households with earnings ($)	4,187	3,079	3,335	3,408
% with UI benefits	10.4	14.7	12.8	11.8

(continued)

Table 9.1 (continued)

	All spells		Spells extending through at least 1st quarter after entry quarter	Spells extending through at least 2nd quarter after entry quarter
	Quarter prior to SNAP entry	Quarter of SNAP entry	1st quarter after entry	2nd quarter after entry
SNAP spells beginning January 2011–December 2011				
Average UI benefit for households with benefits ($)	1,959	1,834	2,111	2,063
Average SNAP benefit ($)		446	808	815
SNAP spells beginning January 2012–March 2012				
No. spells	51,234			
% of all spells	100.0			
% with any earnings	52.4			
Average earnings for households with earnings ($)	4,269			
% with UI benefits	9.2			
Average UI benefit for households with benefits ($)	1,867			

SOURCE: Authors' computations based on Missouri program administrative data.

exception of 2007, the value of UI benefits increased until the first quarter after SNAP entry and remained at about that level, reflecting continuing receipt of UI. In 2007, when few recipients were eligible to receive UI benefits for more than 26 weeks, the drop-off in average UI benefits in the second quarter after beginning SNAP receipt very likely reflects payments that ended during the quarter.

The bottom line in each panel of Table 9.1 indicates SNAP benefits received by households during the quarter. The average value of SNAP benefits was in the range of $600 to $800 in each quarter with increases over time, partially reflecting increases in benefit size due to federal legislation. This SNAP benefit average is much smaller than the value of UI benefits (which average around $2,000) for households who receive UI benefits. We also separated out households receiving both SNAP and UI; their SNAP benefits were similar to those not receiving UI. Hence, UI is much more valuable than SNAP for the families receiving both.

Next, Table 9.2 presents sources of income after completion of SNAP spells. Here, the universe consists of all SNAP spells that end in the given period. Earnings and UI information are provided for the quarter after the quarter in which the SNAP exit occurred. In 2008, 54.2 percent of all SNAP exiters had positive earnings in the quarter following the exit. If SNAP spells are split by duration into short term (three or fewer quarters of receipt) and long term (four or more quarters of receipt), positive earnings are more common among those receiving short-term benefits (55.8 percent) than those receiving long-term benefits (47.2 percent). While the specific levels vary across our observation period, the general pattern is quite consistent, with 2009 standing out as the year when employment was lowest. In contrast, households leaving SNAP who were employed had higher earnings in 2009 than in the other years. Interestingly, for those employed, average earnings were similar for short-term and long-term SNAP recipients.

A surprisingly high percentage of SNAP spells ended while the household continued to receive UI income in the quarter after SNAP

Table 9.2 Sources of Income after Completion of SNAP for Households with Recipients Aged 18 to 64: Missouri

	Quarter after last quarter of SNAP		
	All spells	Spells spanning 3 or fewer calendar quarters	Spells spanning 4 or more calendar quarters
SNAP spells with last SNAP in July 2007–December 2007			
No. spells	82,039		
% of all spells	100.0		
% with any earnings	55.6		
Average earnings for households with earnings ($)	4,301		
% with UI benefits	4.4		
Average UI benefit ($)	59		
Average UI benefit for households with benefits ($)	1,348		
SNAP spells with last SNAP in January 2008–December 2008			
No. spells	166,469	121,376	45,093
% of all spells	100.0	72.9	27.1
% with any earnings	54.2	55.8	47.2
Average earnings for households with earnings ($)	4,399	4,365	4,359
% with UI benefits	6.4	7.1	6.7
Average UI benefit for households with benefits ($)	1,742	1,838	1,624
SNAP spells with last SNAP in January 2009–December 2009			
No. spells	173,998	109,277	64,721
% of all spells	100.0	62.8	37.2

% with any earnings	50.8	52.7	45.6
Average earnings for households with earnings ($)	4,395	4,452	4,255
% with UI benefits	12.5	14.9	8.8
Average UI benefit for households with benefits ($)	2,473	2,621	1,991
SNAP spells with last SNAP in January 2010–December 2010			
No. spells	206,646	115,508	91,138
% of all spells	100.0	55.9	44.1
% with any earnings	52.0	54.3	47.2
Average earnings for households with earnings ($)	4,559	4,624	4,451
% with UI benefits	10.8	13.1	8.1
Average UI benefit for households with benefits ($)	2,218	2,398	1,686
SNAP spells with last SNAP in January 2011–December 2011			
No. spells	206,555	105,208	101,347
% of all spells	100.0	50.9	49.1
% with any earnings	52.6	55.2	46.9
Average earnings for households with earnings ($)	4,766	4,756	4,699
% with UI benefits	8.9	10.8	7.3
Average UI benefit for households with benefits ($)	1,969	2,116	1,632

SOURCE: Authors' computations based on Missouri program administrative data.

exit: 12.5 percent in 2009. As might be expected, UI receipt was much higher among short-term SNAP recipients compared to longer-term recipients in each of the years observed. The value of UI benefits received after SNAP exit (for those receiving UI) peaked at $2,473 per quarter in 2009. While the value of earnings does not vary consistently between short-term and longer-term SNAP recipients, the value of UI benefits was consistently lower among the longer-term SNAP recipients.

In summary, these tabulations confirm that, in Missouri, SNAP recipients were generally strongly connected to the labor market: changes due to the recession in the patterns of earnings for those entering or exiting SNAP are relatively minor. The level of UI receipt and the average benefit contingent on receipt increased during 2009 and 2010, as did the value of SNAP. However, since UI is a much more generous program than SNAP, UI provided a much greater buffer for those households that received it. The overwhelming majority of the SNAP households, however, did not receive any UI benefits.

CONCLUSION

The economy of Missouri largely mirrors the country as a whole in terms of industrial structure, demographic composition, and average income, as well as in the timing of the Great Recession. Patterns of UI and SNAP receipt also correspond to those of the country as a whole, although Missouri's relatively permissive approach to SNAP means participation was somewhat higher than might be expected. In common with most programs, Missouri's UI program experienced substantial strain in the face of the Great Recession, and, following the recession, Missouri joined a handful of states that chose to reduce the number of weeks of eligibility, as it cut the maximum period of benefits to 20 weeks from the previous level of 26 weeks, a level that had been all but universal. Within Missouri's political and economic context, we have documented the changing patterns in joint participa-

tion in UI and SNAP, the changing characteristics of the caseloads, and the relative importance of program benefits and earnings around the point of household participation in these safety net programs.

Notes

1. The federal regulations at the time, which applied prior to passage of Missouri's rules, specified that a vehicle's fair market value below $4,640 was to be exempted from a household's asset-limit calculations. The rules applied to one vehicle for each adult household member and included various exemptions (see USDA [2002]).
2. In 2011, Missouri reduced the number of regular weeks of benefits from a maximum of 26 to a maximum of 20 (see Figure 9.1).
3. Conventions for coding dates of program participation correspond to those used in other state chapters in this volume.
4. Note that the UI caseload reported in Figure 9.1 differs from that in Figure 9.2 because the former is based on federal figures as well as several approximations (Rockey 2015). Figure 9.2 is based on weekly numbers of UI recipients aged 18 to 64, translated into monthly totals.
5. The U.S. Department of Labor publishes two measures of the replacement ratio. For Missouri, these varied from 35 percent to 43 percent during the period of our study. The replacement rate measures are several percentage points below the U.S. average.
6. ABAWDs are explicitly identified for administrative purposes on the data file we received, and we used this indicator for the tabulations in Table 9.7.
7. Elderly recipients are those aged 60 or older. To be included in our analysis sample, a household must have had at least one eligible recipient aged 18 to 64. Hence, a household would be in our sample and counted as including an elderly recipient if there was at least one individual aged 60 to 64. A household with an individual aged 65 or older would be in our sample only if there were also an eligible individual aged 18 to 64.

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