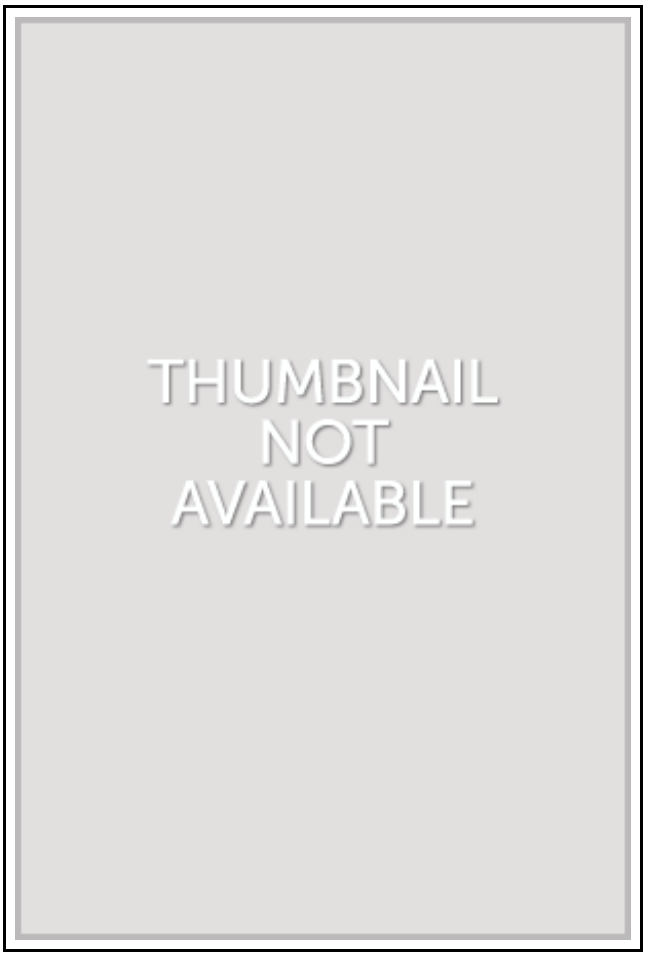
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DRUG TESTING AND CRIME-RELATED RESTRICTIONS IN TANF, SNAP, AND HOUSING ASSISTANCE

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CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. Paperback. Book Condition: New. This item is printed on demand. Paperback. 38 pages. Dimensions: 11.0in. x 8.5in. x 0.1in.Throughout the history of social assistance programs, administrators have attempted to limit access only to those families considered worthy of assistance. Policies about worthiness have included both judgments about needgenerally tied to income, demographic characteristics, or family circumstancesand judgments about moral character, often as evidenced by behavior. Past policies evaluating moral character based on family structure have been replaced by todays policies, which focus on criminal activity, particularly drug-related criminal activity. The existing crime and drug-related restrictions were established in the late 1980s through the mid-1990s, when crime rates, especially drug-related violent crime rates, were at peak levels. While crime rates have since declined, interest in expanding these policies has continued. The three programs examined in this reportthe Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly Food Stamps), and federal housing assistance programs (public housing and Section 8 tenant and project-based assistance)are similar, in that they are administered at the state or local level. They are different in the forms of assistance they provide. TANF provides cash assistance and other supports to low-income parents and their children, with a specific focus on promoting work. SNAP provides food assistance to a broader set of poor households including families with children, elderly households, and persons with disabilities. The housing assistance programs offer subsidized rental housing to all types of poor families, like SNAP. All three programs feature some form of drug- and other crime-related restrictions and all three leave discretion in applying those restrictions to state and local administrators. Both TANF and SNAP are subject to the statutory drug felon ban, which bars states from providing assistance to persons convicted of a drug-related...

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