SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP) TASK FORCE

Contents

I. United States Department of Agriculture ................................................................. 3
   USDA: Education Department Amplifies USDA Expansion of SNAP Benefits to Help Students
   Pursuing Postsecondary Education During Pandemic ....................................................... 3
   USDA SNAP–Extension of Temporary Increase in Maximum Allotments due to COVID-19 ................................................................. 3
   USDA Extends Free Meals to Children through Summer 2021 Due to Pandemic ........ 4
   USDA: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – SNAP Provisions in the
   American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 ........................................................................ 6

II. New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance ................................. 8
   General Information System (GIS) Message: Demonstration Project – Conducting
   Hearings by Telephone, Video, and Other Means of Communication ...................... 8
   General Information System (GIS) Message: Exemption from Supplemental Nutrition
   Assistance Program (SNAP) Work Requirements for a Parent or other Household
   Member Responsible for the Care of a Child Under the Age of Six ............................ 9
   Program (HEAP) Revised Component Closing Dates, Second Emergency Benefit,
   and Concurrent Issuance of Regular and Emergency HEAP Benefits ..................... 10
   Allotments to SNAP Households .............................................................................. 10
   Monthly Caseload Statistics – December 2020 ....................................................... 11

III. Reports, News and Notable Items ............................................................................. 12
   Department of Homeland Security (DHS) .................................................................. 12
   Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) .................................................................... 13

V. Other Items .................................................................................................................. 13
   HRA Mediations Liaison Update ............................................................................... 13
   HRA Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) Cards ....................................................... 14
I. United States Department of Agriculture

**USDA: Education Department Amplifies USDA Expansion of SNAP Benefits to Help Students Pursuing Postsecondary Education During Pandemic**

As part of its ongoing efforts to ease the economic burden on millions of Americans during the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Department of Education—in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)—issued guidance to postsecondary institutions to inform them about temporarily expanded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) eligibility for students in need.

"Since the onset of this pandemic, college students already living with low incomes have experienced significant life disruptions including increased food insecurity," said Acting Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education Michelle Asha Cooper. "No student should have to worry about where their next meal will come from while balancing their studies. Informing eligible students of these benefits can help ease that uncertainty."

The guidance encourages institutions of higher education to coordinate with campus stakeholders to notify eligible students. Today's action follows Jan. 29 guidance reminding institutions that they have the authority to adjust financial aid packages to account for students' and families' current financial circumstances. These outreach efforts align with President Biden's Jan. 22 Executive Order directing all federal agencies to address the economic crisis resulting from the pandemic.

Under regular SNAP eligibility requirements, students enrolled at least half-time in an institution of higher education are typically ineligible for SNAP benefits unless they meet certain specific exemptions. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 temporarily expands SNAP eligibility to include students who either:

- Are eligible to participate in state or federally financed work study during the regular academic year, as determined by the institution of higher education; or
- Have an expected family contribution (EFC) of 0 in the current academic year. This includes students who are eligible for a maximum Pell Grant.

Beginning Jan. 16, 2021, students who meet one of the two criteria outlined above may receive SNAP benefits if they meet all other financial and non-financial SNAP eligibility
criteria. The new, temporary exemptions will be in effect until 30 days after the COVID-19 public health emergency is lifted. More information can be found on the SNAP benefits for students webpage and Q&A on student eligibility.

**USDA SNAP–Extension of Temporary Increase in Maximum Allotments due to COVID-19**

(SNAP) – Extension of Temporary Increase in Maximum Allotments due to COVID-19  
[azureedge.net]


FY 2021 maximum allotments for each household size for the 48 contiguous States and D.C., Alaska, Hawaii, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands from January 1, 2021, through September 30, 2021.

**SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**  
**MAXIMUM MONTHLY ALLOTMENTS**  
**JANUARY 1, 2021 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2021**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Size</th>
<th>48 States and DC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$1,114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>$1,232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$1,408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each additional person</td>
<td>$176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
USDA Extends Free Meals to Children through Summer 2021 Due to Pandemic

WASHINGTON, March 9, 2021 — The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the nationwide extension of several waivers that allow all children to continue to receive nutritious meals this summer when schools are out of session. These flexibilities are now available through Sept. 30, 2021.

USDA is extending these waivers to provide local program operators with clarity and certainty for the summer months ahead, when many children cannot access the school meals they depend on during the academic year. The waivers were previously extended only through June 30, 2021.

“We will do everything we can to make sure children get access to healthy, nutritious meals regardless of their families’ financial circumstances,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “Our child nutrition professionals are doing a heroic job ensuring kids across the country have proper nutrition throughout this public health emergency, often times with limited resources. USDA is committed to providing local operators with the flexibilities and resources they need to continue offering the best meal service possible to their children, given their day-to-day realities.”

The waivers extended today allow for safe meal distribution sites that serve all children for free, regardless of income. In addition, the waivers:

- Allow meals served through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Seamless Summer Option (SSO) – collectively known as “summer meal programs” – to be made available in all areas at no cost;
- Allow meals to be served outside of the normally required group settings and meal times; and
- Allow parents and guardians to pick-up meals for their children, including bulk pick-up to cover multiple days of feeding children.

Right now, up to 12 million children are living in households where they may not always have enough to eat. These critically needed summer meals will provide relief to many children in families who have been hard-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and are fighting daily to put food on the table.
Summer meal sites are places where children and youth age 18 and under can receive meals at no cost in a safe environment. The meals are also available to persons over age 18 with mental or physical disabilities. Sites may be located in a variety of settings including schools, parks, community centers, libraries, churches and more.

USDA is issuing this guidance as early as possible toempower communities to establish as many meal sites as they can effectively manage this summer. To learn more about how the program works and the role of sponsors and meal sites, visit www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/how-become-sponsor.

**USDA: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – SNAP Provisions in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021**

On March 11, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (the Act). Enclosed is an implementation memorandum describing the provisions of the Act that affect Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (the Act) was recently signed into law. The Act contains changes that extend the temporary increase to SNAP benefit maximum allotments, allocate new administrative funding, and provide support for SNAP online purchasing. The Act also provides additional funding for the Nutrition Assistance Programs in Puerto Rico, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

In addition, the Act includes provisions that may affect SNAP eligibility and benefit allotments, including extended unemployment assistance, additional recovery rebates, and changes to the Child Tax Credit for 2021.

**Nutrition**

**Section 1101(a) – Value of Benefits** This section provides that SNAP benefits will continue to be calculated using 115 percent of the June 2020 value of the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) through September 30, 2021. This extends the provision enacted in Section 702(a) of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, which would have expired after June 30, 2021. FNS will reissue the memorandum entitled SNAP – Temporary Increase in Maximum Allotments due to COVID-19, originally issued December 28, 2020, to reflect this change.
Section 1102 – Additional Assistance for SNAP Online Purchasing and Technology Improvements
The Act provides up to $25 million, through Fiscal Year 2026, for the following: • Technological improvements for the SNAP online purchasing program; • Electronic benefit transfer modernization to support mobile payment demonstration projects and the use of mobile technologies as authorized by Section 7(h)(14) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008; and • Technical assistance to educate retailers on the process and technical requirements for the acceptance of SNAP benefits online, mobile payments and electronic benefit transfer modernization initiatives.

Section 1103 – Additional Funding for Nutrition Assistance Programs
This section provides $1 billion to Puerto Rico, American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands for nutrition assistance in response to a COVID-19 public health emergency, of which $30 million shall be available to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. This funding will remain available through September 30, 2027. FNS will work with these territories to revise their plans of operation and memoranda of understanding as necessary to provide these additional funds.

Section 9011 – Extension of Pandemic Unemployment Assistance
This provision extends Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) payments through September 6, 2021. PUA provides unemployment benefits to people who do not otherwise qualify for unemployment compensation and is provided for under Section 2102 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (the CARES Act; P.L. 116-136), as amended. PUA is considered unearned income for SNAP purposes.

Section 9013 – Extension of Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation
This provision extends Federal pandemic unemployment compensation payments (FPUC) by way of additional $300 payments through September 6, 2021. FPUC provides additional weekly compensation on top of regular unemployment compensation provided by State law. This includes the initial payments of $600, the additional $300 payments, and the $100 Federal mixed earner unemployment compensation payments, all of which are provided for by Section 2104 of the CARES Act, as amended.

Promoting Economic Security

Section 9601 – 2021 Recovery Rebates to Individuals
This provision further amends the Internal Revenue Code to authorize additional $1400 rebate payments to eligible individuals, including children, similar to those authorized under the CARES Act Section 2201 and the Consolidated Appropriations Act Section 272 and 273. Pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 6409, these rebates are excluded from consideration as income in the month of receipt and as a resource for 12 months following receipt for SNAP purposes. Receipt of these payments could affect a household’s eligibility after 12 months if the payments cause the household to exceed the resource limit.
Section 9611 – Child Tax Credit Improvements for 2021

Section 9611(a) makes the Child Tax Credit fully refundable so that it is available in full to children in families with low or no earnings, increases the maximum credit to $3,000 per child or $3,600 for children under the age of six, and extends the credit to 17-year-olds. These changes only apply to calendar year 2021. Section 9611(b) allows the Child Tax Credit to be provided in advance monthly payments. Pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 6409, the Child Tax Credit, whether received as an annual credit or in the form of advance payments, is excluded from consideration as income in the month of receipt and as a resource for 12 months following receipt for SNAP purposes. A household would not be considered to have exceeded the income limit due to these payments because they are excluded, but receipt of these payments could affect a household’s eligibility after 12 months if the payments cause the household to exceed the resource limit.

II. New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

General Information System (GIS) Message: Demonstration Project – Conducting Hearings by Telephone, Video, and Other Means of Communication


On March 12, 2020, and in accordance with Social Services Law § 36-a and 18 NYCRR § 300.11, the OTDA Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) initiated a demonstration project to ascertain the viability of conducting fair hearings to the greatest extent possible utilizing telephone, video, and other means of communication. These alternatives to conducting hearings in-person should improve timeliness and reduce unnecessary travel for all the hearing participants, while protecting the parties respective due process rights. These alternative methods of conducting hearings also reduce the number of individuals at OAH’s main hearing site at 14 Boerum Place in Brooklyn, where hearings had commonly been held in-person. As detailed in OAH transmittal 20-04, dated July 12, 2020, OAH offices at 14 Boerum Place in Brooklyn reduced density significantly. That trend continues. Additionally, the number of appellant appearances at hearings has increased.

The demonstration (currently expected to expire on or about March 12, 2021), will be extended through March 12, 2022. The conditions and expectations outlined in transmittals 20-01, 20-02, 20-03, and 20-04, remain in effect. Local social services districts and their agents are reminded of their responsibility to cooperate in this demonstration project.
Questions about this demonstration project should be directed to OAH Deputy Commissioner Roy A. Esnard at Roy.Esnard@otda.ny.gov and 718.923.4334 or Director Samuel Spitzberg at Samuel.Spitzberg@otda.ny.gov and 518.486.9570.

OTDA appreciates the on-going cooperation and new initiatives tried during the demonstration project. Together, we are providing impartial fair hearings in a timely and fair manner notwithstanding the public health emergency.

General Information System (GIS) Message: Exemption from Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Work Requirements for a Parent or other Household Member Responsible for the Care of a Child Under the Age of Six


The purpose of this GIS is to inform social service districts (districts) of recent clarification the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) received from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) regarding the exemption from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) work requirements for a parent or other household member responsible for the care of a dependent child under the age of six (6).

USDA FNS has clarified that an exemption from the SNAP work requirements may be applied to more than one adult when the household contains more than one child under the age of six (6) and child care needs of the household are identified and documented.

Federal regulations require that districts determine the employability (or work registrant) status of each SNAP applicant and recipient, including those individuals who are concurrently applying for or receiving Temporary Assistance (TA). An individual’s SNAP employability status indicates if they are subject to SNAP work requirements. During the eligibility interview districts must screen all members of the household that are age 16 through 59 at the time of the interview for an exemption from the SNAP work requirements. The employability status should also be reviewed at recertification and any time there is a reason to believe that the employability status may have changed. The criteria that would render an individual exempt from SNAP work requirements is listed in 18 NYCRR § 385.3.

Federal regulations at 7 CFR 273.7(b)(1)(iv) state that a parent or other household member responsible for the care of a dependent child under six (6) or an incapacitated person are exempt from SNAP work requirements. USDA FNS has clarified that this exemption can apply to multiple adults in a household when there are multiple children under six if each of the adults are responsible for the care of a dependent child under six. This exemption is applied on a one child for one adult basis.
It is the responsibility to make this determination, keeping in mind that this exemption is intended for an individual who cannot seek employment because they are responsible for providing care to a dependent child or an incapacitated person. It is important to note this is not a blanket exemption for all households with multiple children under six, but it does allow for additional adults to be exempt when more than one adult in the household is responsible for the care of a child under the age of six and it is documented in the case record. When screening adults for an exemption from work requirements in a SNAP household with multiple children under the age of six, eligibility workers must screen each adult individually for an exemption from the SNAP work requirements. If each adult reasonably demonstrates they are responsible for the care of the children under the age of six, the eligibility worker must document the screening discussion in case notes and may assign SNAP employability code 29 (parent or caretaker of a child under the age of six, exempt) to both adults. SNA


The purpose of this GIS is to inform social services districts (districts) of changes to the 2020-2021 Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). The dates of operation for the Regular and Emergency benefit components will be extended from March 15, 2021 to April 30, 2021, and a second HEAP Emergency benefit for heat and heat-related emergencies will be available starting March 8, 2021. Effective immediately, new applicants for Regular HEAP benefits who are experiencing a crisis or lifethreatening emergency must also be evaluated for an Emergency HEAP benefit. If eligible, the household may receive an Emergency heat and/or heat-related HEAP benefit concurrently with their Regular HEAP benefit. Benefit Component Extension: The Regular benefit and Emergency benefit components are scheduled to operate through the close of business (COB) April 30, 2021, or until the funds allocated to these components are exhausted, whichever occurs first.


The purpose of this GIS is to advise social services districts (districts) that Emergency Allotments (EA) will be issued to some Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipient households that received benefits for the month of March 2021. The allotments were authorized by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act of 2020 and are being issued in accordance with the terms of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) memorandum of March 20, 2020. This GIS builds upon GIS 20 TA/DC098, which issued Emergency Allotments for October.

Only SNAP households that did not receive the maximum benefit for the size of the household for March are eligible for the EA supplement.

New York City The EA supplements will be issued in ten cohorts, based on the case toe-digit, from March 16th – March 20th, and from March 23rd – March 27th. Benefits will be available the next day following issuance. The supplement will be issued using Payment Type Codes 20 and 22, and a unique authorization number.

- The supplements will be issued using single issuance code 20 Daily Retroactive Benefit (PA) for PA/SNAP cases.
- The supplements will be issued using single issuance code 22 Daily Retroactive Benefit (NPA) for SNAP-only cases.
- The unique authorization number for these payments is 20200113. Rest of State supplements will be authorized on a staggered basis to all districts outside of NYC as follows:
  - March 8, 2021 – March 11, 2021
  - March 14, 2021 – March 18, 2021

Monthly Caseload Statistics – December 2020
Table 1
TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE CASES
December 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Family Assistance-FP</th>
<th>Safety Net Assistance</th>
<th>Supplemental Security Income</th>
<th>Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New York State</td>
<td>262,497</td>
<td>73,856</td>
<td>188,641</td>
<td>653,456</td>
<td>1,580,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>197,457</td>
<td>47,577</td>
<td>149,880</td>
<td>385,638</td>
<td>968,509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of State</td>
<td>65,040</td>
<td>26,279</td>
<td>38,761</td>
<td>267,818</td>
<td>611,841</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

III. Reports, News and Notable Items

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

2019 Public Charge Rule Vacated and Removed: DHS withdraws Proposed Rule Regarding the Affidavit of Support


WASHINGTON—Today, DHS filed for public inspection with the Federal Register a rule that formally removes from the Code of Federal Regulations the now-vacated 2019 rule on public charge inadmissibility. On March 9, 2021, a court order vacating the 2019 public charge rule went into effect, and DHS immediately stopped applying the rule. Today’s rule completes the last step in implementing that vacatur.

“Today, DHS closed the book on the public charge rule and is doing the same with respect to a proposed rule regarding the affidavit of support that would have placed undue burdens on American families wishing to sponsor individuals lawfully immigrating to the U.S.,” said Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas. “In the weeks ahead, we will work with our federal agency partners and community leaders to ensure immigrants and their families have accurate information about our public charge policies. DHS is committed to implementing reforms that improve our immigration system and reduce unnecessary barriers to legal immigration.”
Food Research & Action Center (FRAC)

Permanent Block of Public Charge Rule Key Steps Forward to Ensuring Immigrants Can Access Critical Nutrition Programs


WASHINGTON, March 10, 2021 — The Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) is beyond pleased that the 2019 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) public charge rule has been blocked permanently nationwide. This exciting news comes on the heels of yesterday’s Department of Justice (DOJ) decision to stop defending the Trump-era public charge regulations and court dismissals of pending appeals by the U.S. Supreme Court and others.

With the new DOJ and court action, DHS can no longer consider an individual’s use and potential use of SNAP, as a factor in a DHS public charge test. As immigrant families have been disproportionately hit by spikes in hunger rates stemming from the public health and economic fallout of COVID-19, the ability to access programs that safeguard their nutrition, health care, housing, and economic security without fear is particularly vital.

While much work remains to undo the fears and obstacles immigrant families face in accessing nutrition and food programs, this action is an essential step that propels our nation forward to a future where all families and individuals, regardless of immigration status, are nourished and healthy.

V. Other Items

HRA Mediations Liaison Update

Reminder SNAP Mediation Liaison:
As a result of the COVID 19 emergency, SNAP has had to change the organization of the manner in which cases are processed. As such we have temporarily reassigned the HRA Mediation Liaisons until further notice. Effective immediately, please instruct the CBOs to send all mediations to Arlene Henry, Amina Serrar, Erica Smith, Juanita Harris, Sharon Russell and Jacqueline Jackson with a copy to Yama Phillips. Please remove
Courtney Herbert. As always Ms. Torres can be notified if mediations exceed the protocol.

Arlene Henry: henrya@hra.nyc.gov
Amina Serrar: serrara@hra.nyc.gov
Sharon Russell: russellsh@hra.nyc.gov
Erica Smith: smither@hra.nyc.gov
Juanita Harris: harrisju@hra.nyc.gov
Jacqueline Jackson: jacksonjacq@hra.nyc.gov
Yama Phillips: phillipsy@hra.nyc.gov

SNAP- NYC Benefit Center: 1(800) 829 7005, number to call for people that want to apply for SNAP and don’t have access to internet or technology

SNAP rescheduling unit phone number (718-722-4924)

FOOD BANK’S FREE TAX FILING SERVICE IS BACK!
MINIMAL CONTACT DROP-OFF LOCATIONS & 100% ONLINE SERVICES AVAILABLE FOR YOUR SAFETY AND CONVENIENCE
https://www.foodbanknyc.org/taxhelp/

HRA Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) Cards

EBT replacement cards can be requested by calling the State OTDA at 888.328-6399. For anyone having difficulty accessing a replacement card by phone, cards can also be requested by setting up an online EBT account at https://www.connectebt.com/. Clients can use this account to request a replacement card, check card balance, review transaction history, change a PIN, and more.

HRA Info Line: 718-557- 1399
P-EBT
NYS OTDA P-EBT HELPLINE -1-833-452-0096
NYS OTDA Email: otda.sm.esp.PEBT@otda.ny.gov
OTDA FAQs: https://otda.ny.gov/SNAP-COVID-19/Frequently-Asked-Questions-Pandemic-EBT.asp#header

Community Meals School Free Meals
https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/food/community-meals

NYC Food Delivery Assistance
https://cv19engagementportal.cityofnewyork.us/#/display/5e7555117ad6750216160409