SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP) TASK FORCE

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I. United States Department of Agriculture

Farmers to Families Food Box Program Reaches 50 Million Boxes Delivered


(Washington, D.C., July 29, 2020) – U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced today that the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Farmers to Families Food Box Program has distributed over 50 million food boxes in support of American farmers and families affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The delivery of 50 Million food boxes has helped an incredible number of Americans in need,” said Secretary Perdue. “I couldn’t be prouder of the great job done by the food box program staff and the many farmers, distributors and non-profits that helped to get this program off the ground for the American people. The Farmers to Families Food Box Program got off to a strong start, delivering over 35.5 million boxes in the first 45 days, and has now reached over 50 million boxes delivered – a testament to everyone’s hard work. I have been meeting with food banks and recipients across the country and it’s been heartening to hear all the positive feedback on how the program has saved businesses and fed Americans in need. We are well into the second round of deliveries and we’re working harder than ever to continue to build on the success of the program.”

USDA Announces a Third Round of Farmers to Families Food Box Program Purchases


(Washington, D.C., July 24, 2020) – U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue today announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will launch a third round of Farmers to Families Food Box Program purchases with distributions to occur beginning by September 1 with completion by October 31, 2020. The purchases will spend the balance of $3 billion
authorized for the program. So far, over 46 million Farmers to Families Food Boxes have been invoiced and delivered.

“This third round of Farmers to Families Food Box Program purchases is a testament to the great work done by vendors in support of American agriculture and the American people. It is also a testament that the program is accomplishing what we intended – supporting U.S. farmers and distributors and getting food to those who need it most. It’s a real trifecta, which is why we call it a win-win-win,” said Secretary Perdue. “The efforts of everyone involved form the backbone of the Farmers to Families Food Box Program and its goal to help fill the hunger gap in all of our communities.”

**USDA Approves Arkansas and Hawaii to Accept SNAP Benefits Online**


**USDA is expanding access to innovative online food purchase program**

(∗Washington, D.C., July 23, 2020) – U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue today announced approval of a request from Arkansas and Hawaii to provide online purchasing of food to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) households. This approval will allow Arkansas and Hawaii to expedite the implementation of online purchasing with currently authorized SNAP online retailers with a target start date to be announced at a later time. Arkansas’ SNAP participation is more than 354,000 individuals, more than 159,000 households, and totals $460 million annually in federal benefits. Hawaii’s SNAP participation is more than 144,000 individuals, more than 74,000 households, and totals $448 million annually in federal benefits. This announcement further demonstrates President Trump’s whole of America approach to fighting the coronavirus pandemic by ensuring those affected are fed.

**II. New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance**

Statewide Waiver of the Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) Time Limits

The purpose of this GIS is to provide social services districts (districts) with an update on the federal able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD) waivers. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) limits an able-bodied adult without dependents (ABAWD) to three months of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in a 36-month period unless the individual is working or participating in certain employment and training activities. Federal statute authorizes the ABAWD requirements to be waived in states or areas within a state which are determined to meet or exceed certain unemployment rates.

Additionally, as described in GIS 20 TA/DC021, on March 18, 2020, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (Public Law 116-127) was enacted which temporarily and partially suspends the time limit OTDA-4357-EL (Rev.02/20) 40 North Pearl Street, Albany, NY 12243-0001 www.otda.ny.gov 2 for ABAWD participation in SNAP. This suspension began April 1, 2020 and continues until the month following the month in which the public health emergency declaration due to COVID-19 is lifted. Districts must continue to not impose ABAWD requirements at this time. On June 22, 2020, the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) submitted a request to USDA for a statewide waiver of the ABAWD work-based eligibility requirements for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2021. This waiver request was based upon New York State’s eligibility for extended unemployment benefits, a criterion for statewide waiver approval provided by SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 273.24. USDA has approved OTDA’s request to waive the ABAWD time limit in all areas of the State for the period October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021, or until the date at which the new waiver standards become effective, whichever occurs earlier. Therefore, ABAWDs residing in all areas of New York State are not subject to the ABAWD requirements beginning October 1, 2020. Effective October 1, 2020 all districts must waive the ABAWD time limits. Please note that waiving the ABAWD requirement does not preclude districts from offering or requiring non-exempt SNAP applicants and recipients to participate in work activities consistent with your local employment plan approved by OTDA. Districts accessing SNAP E&T funds are reminded of the need to ensure that, at a minimum, job search assistance is available to SNAP participants.

General Information System (GIS) Message: Lifeline Program Resources During the COVID-19 Pandemic


08/13/2020, The purpose of this General Information System (GIS) message is to provide information to social services districts (districts) about Lifeline Telephone Service (Lifeline) benefits for which applicants and recipients may be eligible. Many New Yorkers may
be eligible for the Lifeline program, but not be aware of the program or how to apply. Attached to this GIS is a copy of the Lifeline brochure with information about program eligibility and steps to apply for Lifeline. This information is also available on the New York State Department of Public Service Lifeline Telephone Service website, which includes links to the latest COVID-19 related updates to the program, such as the Federal Communications Commission’s temporary easing of documentation requirements for those who seek to qualify for the Lifeline program based on their income. Districts may wish to add Lifeline information to their district websites as a resource for applicants and recipients during this time.


**August 11, 2020.** 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 August 2020. 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/DC062, which issued Emergency Allotments for June.

Only SNAP households that did not receive the maximum benefit for the size of the household for August are eligible for the EA supplement. This includes households that received a pro-rated, partial issuance for August. SNAP Households that received the maximum benefit, based on their household’s size, for August are not eligible for an EA supplement.

The EA supplements will be issued automatically by OTDA. An Exception Report listing those cases that were unable to be automatically issued the EA supplements will be generated for district action. The initial supplemental issuance will be provided to currently active and closed SNAP cases that received benefits less than the maximum amount based on the household’s size for the month of August 2020. Subsequent “clean-up” issuances will be run to issue benefits to newly approved SNAP cases that received benefits for August that were less than the maximum benefit for the household’s size. Please Note: Only EA supplements will be automatically issued by OTDA. Districts must continue to process cases and issue regular SNAP benefits for August as usual. The mass issuance of

**EA supplements for August 2020 will be issued on** staggered schedules as described below. New York City The EA supplements will be issued in ten cohorts, based on the
Rest of State  The EA supplements will be issued in seven equal cohorts, divided on a random basis across each district’s caseload, from 8/10/2020 through 8/13/2020 and from 8/17/2020 through 8/20/2020. In other words, each district’s caseload will be randomly divided into eight groups, and the first group will get the supplemental issuance on 8/10, the second group on 8/11 and so forth. Benefits will be available to the household the following day.

Monthly Caseload Statistics – May 2020


Table 1
TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE CASES
May 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>272,301</td>
<td>79,812</td>
<td>192,489</td>
<td>664,043</td>
<td>1,574,339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>195,642</td>
<td>49,322</td>
<td>146,320</td>
<td>394,491</td>
<td>942,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of State</td>
<td>76,659</td>
<td>30,490</td>
<td>46,169</td>
<td>269,562</td>
<td>631,827</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MEMORANDUM - Telephone Application and Recertification Submission Process for Job Center #90 During COVID-19 Emergency

July 24, 2020

PURPOSE
The purpose of this memorandum is to discuss changes to the application and recertification submission process for individuals who are unable to use ACCESS HRA or come into one of the open Job Centers. The process will be handled through Job Center #90 during the COVID-19 Emergency through August 31, 2020. Applicants and participants who contact the Office of Constituent Services (OCS) requesting assistance in submitting an application or recertification will be informed that they have the following options to submit an application or recertification:

- in person at one of the open Job Centers; or
- online through ACCESS HRA; or
- through the mail; or
- over the telephone if other submission methods are not viable options for the applicant; or
- a home visit, if necessary. Regardless of submission method, OCS will assess for the potential need for home visit status and the need for a referral to Center #90 through probing questions, as per their regular operating procedure. All referrals to Center #90, whether for HVN or for telephone submission, will be made in the AT-HOME system.

You can send these forms back to us using any of the following methods:

E-Mail: ctr90hvnrequests@hra.nyc.gov
Fax: 917-639-0433
Mail: HRA Homebound Center 90 109 East 16th Street New York, NY 10003
ACCESS HRA's Mobile App:
Go to www.nyc.gov/hradocs on your mobile device. Or, you can get the mobile app for free in the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store.

POLICY BULLETIN #20-41-ELI EXPIRATION OF FEDERAL PANDEMIC UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

July 15, 2020. The purpose of this policy bulletin is to inform all Job Center, Non-Cash Assistance (NCA) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Center, and HIV/AIDS (HASA) staff that the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) supplement of $600 per week to an individual’s regular unemployment benefits will expire on July 31, 2020 unless an Act of Congress extends the payments.
As a result of the expiration of the FPUC supplements on July 31, 2020, all budgets for Cash Assistance (CA) and/or SNAP that are authorized for the 8/A/20 cycle or later are not to include the FPUC supplement of $600 per week.

POLICY BULLETIN #20-45-OPE- REVISION TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP) NOTICE OF REQUIRED INTERVIEW (FIA-1152D) AND REMINDER DON'T LOSE YOUR SNAP BENEFITS (FIA-1152E) DURING COVID-19

July 27, 2020, The purpose of this policy bulletin is to inform all Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Center staff revisions to the SNAP Notice of Required Telephone Interview (COVID-19) (FIA-1152d) and the Reminder – Don’t Lose Your SNAP Benefits! (FIA-1152e).

Background
For applicants who require an eligibility interview or participants who require a recertification interview, staff must attempt to contact the applicant/participant to conduct the interview. If the contact attempt is unsuccessful, the staff must go through the Streamlined Paperless Office System (SPOS) Interview Activity, defer for any missing documentation by generating the Action is Required! You Must Submit Documents For Your SNAP Case (FIA-1146), and indicate that the contact attempt was unsuccessful in the Print Forms activity. This indication will trigger the system to automatically send the household the revised FIA-1152d.
POLICY BULLETIN #20-47-OPE - HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (HEAP) COOLING ASSISTANCE COMPONENT (CAC) OUTREACH LETTER

August 05, 2020.

The purpose of this policy bulletin is to inform Job Center and NonCash Assistance (NCA) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Center staff of the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) Cooling Assistance Outreach Letter (FIA-1234). The FIA-1234 form informs HEAP households that beginning on July 1, 2020, households living in public or subsidized housing (like NYCHA or Section 8) with heat included in their...
Households in the following shelter type codes are now eligible for a CAC benefit:

- 02 (Rent Public)
- 38 (Subsidized Housing Non-Certificate)
- 40 (Section 8 Voucher 30% Limit)
- 96 (SSI High Shelter)
- 97 (SSI Low Shelter).

HEAP will provide eligible households with one air conditioning unit per household, fully-installed for free. To be eligible for a CAC benefit, a household member must have a documented medical condition that is exacerbated by extreme heat.

Human Resource Administration (HRA): Mediation Model Liaison Update

As a result of the COVID 19 emergency, SNAP has had to change the organization of the manner in which cases are processed. HRA temporarily reassigned the HRA Mediation Liaisons until further notice. Effective immediately all mediations are to be send to Arlene Henry, Amina Serrar and Sharon Russell with a copy to Yama Phillips.

Arlene Henry: henrya@hra.nyc.gov
Amina Serrar: serrara@hra.nyc.gov
Sharon Russell: russellsh@hra.nyc.gov

IV. Reports, News and Notable Items

U.S Citizenship and Immigration Services


Public Charge

As long as the July 29, 2020, SDNY injunction is in effect, USCIS will apply the 1999 public charge guidance that was in place before the Public Charge Rule was implemented on Feb. 24, 2020 to the adjudication of any application for adjustment of status on or after July 29, 2020. In addition, USCIS will adjudicate any application or petition for extension of nonimmigrant stay or change of nonimmigrant status on or after July 29, 2020, consistent with regulations in place before the Public Charge Rule was implemented; in other words, we will not apply the public benefit condition. For more information, see our page on the injunction.

Amid COVID, New York wants to make SNAP benefits permanently available for groceries online


ALBANY - A federal pilot program that lets New Yorkers on food stamps order groceries online would be made permanent under legislation recently passed in the state Legislature.

The measure would codify the program into state law to allow Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants to purchase groceries online.

It was passed by the Legislature last month and would need Gov. Andrew Cuomo's signature before it is law.

Supporters said the goal is to make sure the program can continue for families and seniors during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, while expanding access to nutritional aid without people having to go to a store.

“During these difficult times, families struggling to get by should not need to choose between putting food on the table and protecting their health amid the pandemic,” Sen. Todd Kaminsky, D-Nassau County, one of the bill’s sponsors, said in a statement.

“My bill will ensure our neighbors receiving SNAP benefits can easily purchase groceries online instead of having to risk their safety in a store."
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/](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**

**Pandemic EBT**: NYS OTDA P-EBT HELPLINE -1-833-452-0096

**IMPORTANT**: If you have not already received a letter from OTDA, the P-EBT helpline will not be able to assist you. Information regarding your household’s P-EBT food benefits will only be made available to helpline staff once the P-EBT food benefits have been issued. Please wait to receive a letter before calling the P-EBT helpline and be sure to have the letter available at the time of your call—We will be requesting the case/account number located at the top of the letter.


NYS OTDA Email: otda.sm.eisp.PEBT@otda.ny.gov