

**Policy Clarifications - Food Stamps
PFS13606511**

Submitted: 2/27/07

Agency: CAOs

Citations:

Subject: Homeless Shelters and Food Stamp Use

There is a non-profit homeless shelter in our county that does not participate in the food stamp program. They do not qualify under any of the provisions of Chapter 511 of the handbook. The shelter provides breakfast and dinner every day. They also provide lunch on weekends and in inclement weather. They called the CAO to ask whether the client can buy groceries with their food stamp allotment and contribute them to the supplies of the shelter. Any direction is appreciated.

Response By: Barbara Hummel

Date: 11/05/07

No, there is no provision in regulations to allow the homeless household to use its food stamp benefits to contribute groceries to the shelter.

Food stamp benefits may be used only by the household to purchase eligible foods for the household for home consumption. [7 CFR 274.10(d) and 273.1(a)]. The only exceptions for homeless households are:

- Meals prepared or served by an authorized public or private non-profit establishment (soup kitchen, temporary shelter) approved by an appropriate state or local agency that feeds homeless persons.
- Meals prepared by a restaurant which contracts with an appropriate state agency to serve meals to homeless persons at low or reduced prices.

Since the shelter is not authorized to accept food stamps, and the food purchase would not be used for the household, this is not permissible.

See [FSH Section 510.2](#), Household Members.