

Operations Memorandum - SNAP

OPS12-11-04

November 16, 2012

SUBJECT: Automatic SNAP Benefit Replacement for Food Lost Due to Hurricane Sandy for October 2012
TO: Executive Directors
FROM: Richard Wallace, Acting Director, Bureau of Operations

Purpose

To inform County Assistance Offices (CAOs) of the automatic replacement of October's SNAP benefits for recipients who lost food due to Hurricane Sandy, which occurred on October 29, 2012. Recipients will receive 40 percent of October's SNAP benefits in the severely affected counties of: Bucks, Cameron, Chester, Clearfield, Delaware, Juniata, Lehigh, Monroe, Montgomery Northampton, and Pike.

Background

The Department of Public Welfare (DPW) requested and has been granted approval to waive regulations at 7 CFR 274.6(a) to replace SNAP benefits to households whose food was destroyed as the result of Hurricane Sandy. Automatic replacement benefits will provide administrative relief for both the CAO and SNAP recipients. DPW has estimated approximately 140,828 households were affected and the replacement estimate would be over \$15 million.

FNS estimated the 40 percent benefit replacement by assuming that reasonable usage of benefits and consumption of food had already occurred for October 2012, since power outages began on October 29, 2012.

Discussion

Headquarters will implement a batch process to automatically replace 40 percent of food lost for current regular SNAP recipients for October 2012 in Bucks, Cameron, Chester, Clearfield, Delaware, Juniata, Lehigh, Monroe, Montgomery Northampton, and Pike Counties.

These benefits will be available to households on Saturday November 17, 2012. The replacement benefits will use reason code 168; transaction ID is SNDYRP; worker number will be 20123; and from and through period is 10/31/12-10/31/12. For those recipients who receive the minimum benefit, the replacement amount will be 40 percent of October's benefit amount. Benefits will be issued in whole dollar amounts. Cases in which a replacement benefit has already been issued will not receive an additional benefit when batch runs.

Recipients do not have to complete an affidavit of food lost in order to receive the 40 percent replacement. If a recipient believes their loss was above forty percent of their October monthly benefit, an affidavit must be completed ([See attached affidavit](#)). Workers will ask why the recipient lost more than forty percent of October 2012 benefits. CAOs should use reason code 168 to issue the supplemental amount and narrate the additional replacement and reason in the case record. Recipients may not receive an amount above their SNAP allotment for the month.

DPW is currently researching several options to inform recipients of the replacements in the 11 counties which may include, but is not limited to, social media, press releases, and notices in the CAOs.

Next Steps

1. Share this information with all staff.
2. Post the attached notice in your reception area
3. Direct all questions to your Area Manager.