

## **Revised Policy Clarification**

### **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**

**PFS-22136-580**

**Submitted:** **May 22, 2025**  
**May 7, 2025**

**Agency:** CAOs

**Subject:** **Revised** Time Frame for Replacement of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits for Food Destroyed During the Extended Power Outage in Western Pennsylvania (PA) from April 30, 2025 to May 5, 2025

**Question:** Western PA was hit by powerful thunderstorms that caused hundreds of thousands of households to be without power for at least a full day or longer. With the power being out for so long, some households have been unable to report that they lost food purchased with SNAP benefits and those who have, may not be able to actually sign the affidavit. Will the reporting period be extended? Also, can a telephonic signature be accepted for the affidavit if the household is unable to provide a wet signature?

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**Response By:** DFPPM

**Date:** May 7, 2025

Due to the impact of the thunderstorms and the extended power outage, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has provided a waiver for the timely reporting requirement for household replacements of SNAP benefits. Recipients will have until **May 30, 2025** to request food replacement due to effects of the thunderstorms. This extension for timely reporting food loss and SNAP benefit replacement is for the thunderstorms that occurred on April 29 and 30, 2025, and is limited to the following counties: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Blair, Butler, Cambria, Centre, Clearfield, Greene, Indiana, Mifflin, Washington, and Westmoreland. All other household misfortunes or disasters not relating to the thunderstorms will need to follow the standard 10-day reporting requirement.

County Assistance Offices (CAOs) in these 13 counties should follow the guidance in SNAP Handbook 580.52. Under SNAP Handbook section 580.52, recipients who report a loss of food and request replacement benefits are authorized for the amount of the loss reported based on what the recipient has declared but not to exceed their normal month's benefit. There is no requirement to check Electronic Benefit Transfer balances.

Confirm with the client that they live in the affected area before issuing benefits. The CAO must verify the household misfortune (or disaster) through a collateral contact, documentation from a community agency, or a home visit. The lost food must have been purchased with SNAP benefits.

The client is required to sign an affidavit attesting to the reason for the loss and the amount of the requested replacement. FNS has approved a waiver to allow telephonic signatures for the affidavit specifically for households in these 13 counties for this specific claim period. If a telephonic signature is taken, the CAO must indicate on the affidavit that a telephonic signature was taken; narrate that the telephonic signature was taken; and send a copy of the completed affidavit to the household.

The CAO must use reason code 168 to replace food destroyed in a disaster. **The replacement SNAP benefit needs to be issued 10 days after the reported loss or two days after receiving a completed signed affidavit, whichever is later.**