



Department of  
Job and Family Services

Ted Strickland, Governor  
Douglas E. Lumpkin, Director

**FAMILY ASSISTANCE LETTER #99**  
**December 13, 2010**

TO: Directors, County Department of Job and Family Services

FROM: Trudie J. Bormann, Deputy  
Family Assistance, Office of Families and Children

**SUBJECT: OHIO DISASTER FOOD ASSISTANCE SYSTEM ENHANCEMENTS**

**Background**

In January 2009 the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) sent a memorandum regarding the need for all State Disaster-SNAP (D-SNAP) eligibility determination systems to be able to:

1. Enter information on every applicant household member and every denied application; and
2. Perform participation checks for duplication of both other D-SNAP cases and regular SNAP cases.

The memorandum required that each State system be designed and tested to perform the applicant entry and duplicate participation checks by October 1, 2010. To comply with this requirement the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), Office of Families and Children recently promoted several CRIS-E enhancements to provide the State the flexibility and capability to issue benefits more efficiently in the event of disaster incidents and to ensure the above requirements were met.

**Enhancements**

CRIS-E system enhancements were implemented at the end of September 2010 to include the capability to accommodate the following types of issuance:

*Mass Replacements*

In the event of a disaster the State can ask FNS for a waiver to issue mass food assistance replacements. A disaster replacement would provide part of a household's previously issued allotment to compensate them for food destroyed in the disaster. Previously these replacements had to be done manually with a JFS 07222 required for each assistance group; however, with the

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system enhancements and the approved waiver from USDA these replacements could now be issued automatically by ODJFS and can be done by zip code. The state would request the waiver in consultation with the affected counties when the disaster is significant enough that the regular disaster replacement process is not an efficient mechanism for issuing replacements.

*Disaster Benefits - New Disaster Driver*

In the event of a disaster declared by the President, ODJFS may seek approval from FNS to employ Ohio's Disaster Food Assistance Program. This program loosens the eligibility criteria for food assistance benefits and requires less verification. If an individual is determined eligible they would receive the maximum allowable amount of food assistance for their assistance group size. These benefits are only available for those individuals not already receiving benefits. Existing recipients would receive a replacement of original benefits and a supplement amount up to the maximum allowable amount of benefits for their assistance group size. With the CRIS-E enhancements a new disaster driver was created to facilitate the authorization and issuance of these benefits. To receive these benefits individuals will be required to fill out a separate application, the JFS 07199.

*Mass Supplements*

In the event of a disaster the State may ask FNS for a waiver to issue mass food assistance supplements. A food assistance supplement would give previously certified assistance groups additional food assistance benefits to automatically bring their allotments to the maximum allowable amount for their assistance group size. This option would typically only be employed in conjunction with implementation of a full Disaster Food Assistance program under a disaster declared by the President. Previously these replacements had to be done manually; however, with the system enhancements and the approved waiver from USDA these replacements can now be issued automatically by ODJFS. If necessary these can be issued by zip codes.

*Early Release of Recurring Benefits*

The system now has the capability to issue recurring benefits before their scheduled issuance date. With this option the staggered issuance schedule set by the county agencies would be removed. In the event of a disaster, to address the immediate need for food assistance benefits without issuing additional benefits the State could choose to issue the recurring benefits an assistance group is already entitled to early.

Ohio's federal fiscal year 2011 Disaster Food Assistance Program plan is available at <http://innerweb/OFam/foodstamps.shtml> . Training on these enhancements will be conducted at the December video conference. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact the TANF\_FSTA mailbox.

c: Douglas E. Lumpkin, Director  
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