

Bob Taft
Governor



Barbara Riley
Director

30 East Broad Street • Columbus, Ohio 43215-3414
jfs.ohio.gov

Office of Family Stability Letter #40
October 11, 2005

TO: Directors, County Departments of Job and Family Services

FROM: Jeanne Carroll, Deputy Director
Office of Family Stability

**SUBJECT: HURRICANE KATRINA: REFUGEE CASH ASSISTANCE AND
REFUGEE SOCIAL SERVICES**

We have received guidance from Health and Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) providing information regarding eligibility for ORR benefits and services for individuals who were evacuated or displaced as a result of the effects of Hurricane Katrina.

Many individuals that remain eligible to receive ORR benefits and services (refugees, asylees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, Amerasians and Victims of Trafficking) have been evacuated or displaced from communities impacted by Hurricane Katrina. As a result of the national evacuation effort, a large number of these individuals are currently residing in shelters and temporary housing across the country.

Lack of documentation

Many of these individuals no longer have access to important documents and identification that are typically used for the purpose of determining ORR eligibility. The applicant may have been evacuated from the affected area with little or no notice and the documents may have been destroyed or misplaced.

ORR has asked that agencies use the attached 'Declaration for Victims of Hurricane Katrina' document for applicants who have evacuated from the affected areas and have no documentation with them when they arrived in Ohio. If the declaration indicates that the applicant is within an immigration status that would confer eligibility for ORR benefits and services, and the individual has been displaced as a result of Hurricane Katrina, the CDJFS may conclude that the applicant is eligible for ORR benefits and services.

NOTE: The eight-month time limited receipt of Refugee Cash Assistance is not extended due to Hurricane Katrina.

Treatment of Disaster Assistance Payments

Many of those impacted by Hurricane Katrina have received various forms of disaster assistance, including cash payments. Benefits have been provided by federal, state and local governments as well as numerous non-profit organizations. Any form of disaster assistance received from any source by an individual/family receiving Refugee Cash Assistance or Refugee Social Services who have been displaced or evacuated as a result of Hurricane Katrina is to be disregarded.

Technical Assistance

Questions regarding Refugee Cash Assistance should be directed to Fayette Moore, Program Policy Services Section at 866-886-3537 (option 6) or through the TANF-FSTA mailbox.

Questions regarding Refugee Social Services should be directed to Steve Walker, Refugee Services Section at 614-466-4815.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Attachment

JC:ke

c: Barbara Riley, Director
Fred Williams, Assistant Director
Bruce Madson, Assistant Director
China Widener, Chief of Staff
ODJFS Deputy Directors
Family Stability staff
Loretta Adams, OJFSDA
Crystal Allen, PCSAO
Kim Newsome, OCDA
Larry Long, CCAO