

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 16, 2008

FOOD STAMP REPLACEMENT PROCEDURES

The Sept. 14 wind storm that left more than 2 million Ohioans facing long-term power outages is more than an inconvenience to food stamp recipients. According to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, food purchased with food stamps can be replaced in certain circumstances, including if it spoils because of a power outage lasting longer than 4 hours.

To replace spoiled food purchased with food stamps, individuals must visit their county department of job and family services (CDJFS) and complete and submit a **“Statement Requesting Replacement of Food Stamp Benefits”** form. This form must be submitted within 10 days of when the food spoiled due to the September 14 event, or, if the person was away from home, 10 days from when the food spoilage was discovered.

When filling out the form, individuals should request an amount equal to the amount of food lost. This amount cannot exceed the individual’s food stamp allotment for the month in which the disaster occurred (in this case, September 2008).

The federal Food Stamp Program ensures that the nation’s neediest families still get the basic nutrition they need. Most households whose gross monthly income is within 130 percent of the federal poverty guideline qualify for this assistance, which amounts to an average of about \$100 in benefits a month per recipient. Food stamp benefits can be used to pay for groceries only.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) administers the food stamp program, and the federal government pays for all benefits. States pay about half the program’s administrative costs.

For more information, individuals should call their local CDJFS or visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/County/cntydir.stm>.