

14.3 EMERGENCY SNAP ASSISTANCE FOR DISASTER VICTIMS

The choice of whether to implement Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP), a modified version of regular SNAP, or to utilize regular SNAP depends on the nature of the disaster.

A. PRE-CONDITION FOR AUTHORIZATION OF THE DISASTER PROGRAM

The following pre-conditions must be met before the D-SNAP can be authorized:

- The President must proclaim a disaster **with individual assistance** in a designated area of West Virginia.
- Commercial channels of food distribution (wholesale and retail food outlets) must have been disrupted and subsequently restored.
- The regular SNAP must be unable to handle the increased number of households needing food assistance expeditiously.

Commercial channels of food distribution are disrupted under one or more of the following conditions directly caused by the disaster:

- Retail food outlets are closed.
- Normal operating hours of food outlets are reduced to the extent that a household's opportunity to purchase food supplies is significantly reduced
- Power failure significantly restricts the operation of food outlets.
- Household access to retail food outlets is limited because of disruption to transportation such as damage to roads, bridges or disruption of public transportation.
- Unusually heavy demand for food exists such that a household's opportunity to purchase food supplies is significantly reduced.
- Delivery of food supplies to food outlets is disrupted to the extent that a household's opportunity to purchase food supplies is significantly reduced.

Commercial channels of food distribution will be considered restored when conditions of operations have been improved to the extent that households have reasonable access to food outlets with sufficient food supplies.

Authorization of emergency SNAP benefits to affected areas is issued by USDA.

B. DISASTER DECLARATION PROCEDURES

The Agency must determine if the regular SNAP can meet the needs of the affected area when a part of the State has been affected by a disaster. When the regular SNAP cannot respond due to the number of affected households, the Agency must request and receive approval from the United State Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to operate Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP) or Modified Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Requests should be addressed to the SNAP Director of the Regional Office.

FNS will approve or deny the request to implement disaster certification and issuance procedures based on the information provided in the application. If the request is denied, the Agency may request that FNS review the decision based on additional information when appropriate.

NOTE: The President must proclaim a disaster **with individual assistance** in a designated area of the state before the Agency can submit a request to operate D-SNAP. The D-SNAP can only be operated within the specified geographic area. All other disaster-related SNAP needs will be addressed through either a modified version of regular SNAP or regular SNAP.

The request should include at least the following information:

- Date and type of disaster
- Description of the geographic areas
- Statutory prerequisites
- Food needs cannot be met by the regular SNAP
- Number of households expected to apply
- Expected length of the application period
- Expected length of the benefit period
- Residency requirement
- Security plan
- Crowd control measures
- Fraud control measures
- Process by which applications will be processed and benefits issued
- Description of planned post-disaster review activities

C. SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Specific eligibility criteria vary for each disaster. Eligibility guidance will be given as the state agency prepares to implement D-SNAP.

D. CLIENT NOTIFICATION AND FAIR HEARINGS

The Worker must advise the applicant of his eligibility status at the time the application is completed. If eligible, the applicant must be advised of the amount of the allotment and the period the benefits are intended to cover. This information is provided verbally and must be followed up in writing.

Applicants who are denied must be notified in writing. Form FS-D-2 is available for this use or the Worker may complete an ES-NL-A for each individual denial. As with any other Department action, the client has the right to request a Fair Hearing. The denied applicant must be offered an immediate, on the spot, supervisory review of the Worker's action. This supervisory review is in addition to the right to a Fair Hearing, not a replacement for it.

DUE TO DELETION OF MANUAL MATERIAL

PAGES 15 – 19

RESERVED FOR FUTURE USE.