



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
600 Washington Street • Boston, MA 02111

DEVAL L. PATRICK
Governor


TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
Lieutenant Governor

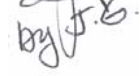
JUDYANN BIGBY, M.D.
Secretary

JULIA E. KEHOE
Commissioner

Field Operations Memo 2008-73 A
December 26, 2008

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff

From:  John Augeri, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations

Re:  Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): Replacement of Food Lost Due to 12/11/08 Ice Storm – Follow-up Procedures

Overview

Field Operations Memo 2008-73 described a USDA waiver received by the Department allowing the mass replacement of SNAP benefits to certain households impacted by the 12/11/2008 ice storm in central and western Massachusetts. It also issued procedures for handling requests for replacement benefits after a loss of food due to household misfortune.

SNAP policy at 106 CMR 364.900 allows for the replacement of food destroyed by household misfortune such as loss of electricity or fire. This policy also states that the household must report the loss of food to the TAO *within 10 days* of the date of the incident.

Because of the length of the power outages in some regions, and the inability of many clients to report losses within the 10-day period due to extenuating circumstances related to the storm and subsequent inclement weather, the Department has requested and received a waiver from USDA that allows households to report a loss of food and request replacement SNAP benefits *through December 29, 2008*.

Purpose of Memo

This Field Operations Memo:

- describes the waiver received from USDA; and
 - transmits procedures for case managers processing requests for replacement SNAP benefits.
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**Waiver to Extend
Food Loss
Reporting
Timeframes**

USDA has granted the Department a waiver that allows households to report the loss of food and request replacement SNAP benefits through December 29, 2008. **This waiver applies only to households that did not receive the 50 percent automated benefit replacement on 12/20/2008, as described in Field Operations Memo 2008-73.**

Households not in receipt of the 12/20/2008 replacement benefit may report a loss of food through December 29, 2008, and attest to this via the *SNAP-9B Statement of Loss/Request for Replacement Food Due to Household Disaster or Misfortune* form. This includes households with grantee SSNs ending in 8 or 9 living in the MEMA-designated areas, or households living in non-MEMA-designated areas that verify loss of food due to the ice storm-related power outages.

**Case Manager
Responsibilities**

When a client who did not receive a 12/20/2008 automated replacement benefit reports a loss of food due to the ice storm and requests replacement SNAP benefits, the case manager must follow Household Misfortune procedures – with the exception that, for this waiver only, the household has until December 29, 2008 to report the loss of food and request replacement SNAP benefits.

- ✓ Have the client complete and sign the *SNAP-9B Statement of Loss/Request for Replacement Food Due to Household Disaster or Misfortune* form (available in Policy Online).
- ✓ If the household resides in a MEMA-designated area (see Field Operations Memo 2008-73), verification of the loss is presumed based on the MEMA report. No further verification is required.
- ✓ If the household resides in any other area, obtain verification of the loss, e.g., a fire department, utility company, or Red Cross report.
- ✓ Issue replacement benefits, if eligible, via the Related Benefits window – FSP Household Disaster selection.
Note: If not eligible, deny the request using the NFL-9 form.
- ✓ Annotate the BEACON Narratives tab with the action taken.

Note: Households that received the automated replacement can no longer request and receive benefits in excess of the 50 percent replacement amount, as they are not a part of this extension waiver and the 10-day timeframe as required by policy has elapsed.

Questions

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline.
