

News

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CHRISTIE ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES DISASTER FOOD ASSISTANCE FOR NON-SNAP RESIDENTS IMPACTED BY HURRICANE SANDY

An estimated 100,000 households in certain counties may be eligible

TRENTON – The Christie Administration today announced that it will implement a federal food assistance benefit for individuals and families in certain counties, who are not already enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). An estimated 100,000 households hardest hit by Hurricane Sandy may be eligible for at least \$200 in electronic benefits.

Disaster SNAP, called D-SNAP, is administered by the US Department of Agriculture’s Food and Nutrition Services through the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the counties’ Boards of Social Services. Applications for the program will begin on Monday, November 26 and run for seven business days, concluding on either Monday, December 3rd or Tuesday, December 4th, depending on whether a particular county processes applications on Saturday, December 1st.

Eligible recipients will receive their benefits on an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card that only can be used for the purchase of grocery food items.

“Now that New Jerseyans have power restored and most are returned to their homes, the tally of costs associated with cleanup and rebuilding are mounting,” said DHS Commissioner Jennifer Velez. “By providing D-SNAP in the counties that suffered the worst damage, we ensure that people who were struggling financially before the storm, and who now have these unexpected expenses, at least can buy food.”

Application rules and eligibility for D-SNAP have been modified based on lessons learned after Tropical Storm Irene in September 2011. Misinformation about the program caused long lines at designated application sites and created a potential for fraudulent activity. This year, strict criteria must be met in order for people to qualify.

“We know that millions of people throughout the state were without power and as a result lost perishable food supplies, but D-SNAP is a federal safety-net subsidy available only to people who are at risk for hunger because their disaster-recovery expenses have left them without enough money to buy food,” added Velez.

New Jersey was approved to launch D-SNAP for all residents in 16 counties and by zip-code in two other counties. It will be offered in Atlantic, Bergen, Cape May, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union and Warren counties as well as in the following zip codes of Burlington and Cumberland counties: 08224, 08010, 08016, 08515, 08075, 08511, 08562, 08068, 07081, 08088, 07676, 08046, 08562, 08323, 08320, 08311, 08345, 08321, 08315, 08349, 08348, 08324, 08314, 08327, 08329, 08316.

Current SNAP recipients from the 16 counties listed above should not apply for this program because they already received a 30 percent October replacement allocation on their EBT card and will receive a supplemental benefit by December 7, 2012.

Residents of Camden, Gloucester and Salem – counties that were not as affected by Hurricane Sandy - are not eligible for D-SNAP at this time.

Applicants from the designated areas must go to the D-SNAP location in their own county. However, displaced residents can apply in the county where they are currently staying. Residents are strongly encouraged to take note of the required criteria in order to ensure eligibility. For a list of sites, go to www.njsnap.org.

Under the new rules, applicants in the designated counties or zip codes must provide:

- Identification and proof of residency – a driver’s license, for example, would serve as both.

- Pay stubs and bank statements (cash, checking and savings) for the 30 days from October 28th through November 26th. Under the guidelines, for a family of one, the income limit is \$2,268 with a benefit of \$200; a family of two is \$2,965 limit with a \$367 benefit; a family of three is \$3,416 limit with a \$526 benefit; and, a family of four is \$4,034 limit with a \$668 benefit.
- Receipts that show more than \$100 spent on disaster-related expenses between October 28 and November 26. The cost of replacing food cannot be included in the \$100, but restaurant expenses are allowed.

Related expenses may include:

- Temporary shelter in a motel
- Home/business repairs
- Evacuation expenses
- Disaster clean up
- Disaster related vehicle repairs
- Gasoline for a generator
- Replacement of personal items, such as clothing or household items, such as appliances, tools, educational materials.

If any of the purchases were charged to a credit card, the resident must be able to document that they paid the credit card bill for these items by November 26th.

Below is a chart that shows D-SNAP income limits and benefits by family size.

Household Size	Disaster Income Limit	Allotment Amount
1	\$2,268	\$200
2	\$2,965	\$367
3	\$3,416	\$526
4	\$4,034	\$668
5	\$4,452	\$793
Each Additional Member	+ \$384	+ \$150