



NYC SNAP TASK FORCE MEETING
Facilitated by Food Bank For New York City
Thursday, April 16, 2020 1:00 – 3:00 pm

**Minutes of
SNAP Task Force Meeting of April 16, 2020**

AGENDA

- I. **Welcome**
- II. **National Updates – presented by Ellen Vollinger, Food Research and Action Center (FRAC)**
- III. **Research Packet Overview**

National Updates presented by Ellen Vollinger, FRAC

Ellen provided information on latest emergency package but the need more to be done for struggling households to keep food in the table.

DSS-HRA –DHS COVID 19 UPDATES Meeting, Commissioner Steven Banks provides weekly calls to provide partners updates. We are waiting to hear back on State and federal governments to waive signature requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program SNAP/Food Stamps and Cash Assistance (CA) to assist clients who need help from HRA and providers to apply through ACCESS HRA.

Nancy Miranda – presented the SNAP Research package

USDA:

1. Approves Program to Feed Kids, Michigan First and Rhoden Island second state have been approved to operate Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT), a new program authorized by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), signed by President Trump, which provides assistance to families of children eligible for free or reduced-price meals dealing with school closures.

2. Florida and Idaho Approved to the SNAP online Pilot, This approval will allow the States to expedite the implementation of online purchasing with currently authorized SNAP online retailers with a target start date later this month. The [SNAP online pilot](#) is currently operational in Alabama, Iowa, Nebraska, New York, Oregon, and Washington State. Nebraska joined the pilot on April 1, 2020. California and Arizona were announced on April 8, 2020. The authorized retailers working with all pilot states are Amazon and Walmart, while Wrights Market and ShopRite are working with Alabama and New York respectively.

OTDA:

1. Emergency Allotments to SNAP Household ,The EA benefits will be issued as supplements only to SNAP households that have not or will not receive the maximum household benefit, based on the household's size, for March and for April 2020. The supplement for each month will be the difference between the amount of SNAP





benefits the household received for the month and the maximum benefit amount for the household's size. **New York City**- The EA supplements will be issued in ten cohorts, based on the case toe-digit, from 4/14/2020 through 4/18/2020, and from 4/21/2020 through 4/25/2020.

2. Execute Order of Expiration, to inform districts of the issuance of Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 202.14 which extends previous suspensions of law and allows districts to conduct TA eligibility interviews, drug/alcohol screenings and DV screenings by telephone through May 7, 2020. Additionally, Executive Order 202.14 allows the issuance of a CBIC for TA applicants or recipients without photographs affixed through May 7, 2020. The expiration of provisions contained in this message may be extended by future guidance.

3. Emergency Relief Treatment of Families First Coronavirus Response Act payments, Temporary Assistance (TA) For Family Assistance (FA), Safety Net Assistance (SNA), Emergency Assistance to Needy Families with Children (EAF) and Emergency Safety Net Assistance (ESNA), any federally funded stimulus rebates paid directly to individuals related to the 2020 coronavirus pandemic (hereinafter referred to as "Payment(s)") must be excluded as income for initial and recurring TA eligibility determinations and benefit calculations.

4. SNAP Interview Requirements: New SNAP applicants will not have to have an interview as long as the applicant's identity has been verified; and all other mandatory information and verification has been provided and is valid. If either of these conditions has not been met, then an interview will be required according to regular interview policy and processes. Districts will be required to interview the household if any of the information or verification submitted is unclear or cannot be verified through separate verified-upon receipt data matches. This information was support also from Derek Sigh from HRA.

5. Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) , time limit suspension due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

6. Certification Period Extended, A three-month extension of SNAP benefits will be given to SNAP recipients who were to re-certify for SNAP in March (and have not done so yet), April, or May.

SNAP –HRA Local level – Questions & Answers from HRA and DSS

Derek Singh from HRA answer questions about HRA

1. Questions: For SNAP Recertification cases that were submitted before March 30, who should they contact with mediation cases?

Answer: Cases should be submitted to SNAP liaison and if need through Mediation Model.

2. Questions: Are new applicants receiving by mail their EBT Card or they have to go Brooklyn to obtain their benefit card?

Client that have an emergency needs, they can go right away to center, to received card. System will generated EBT Card to be mail, but it takes some time (5-10 days) to received card. CBO ask if client had an old benefit card, Medicaid card can benefit be issue in that card. Derek from HRA noted that system when generating issued of benefits, as long as system shows client have old EBT Card ,Medicaid card it will be issue on that card. Also to understand there may be some delays on getting new card.

3. Question; How soon are the emergency SNAP issue to clients?

Answer: it is usually by the 5th business day on normal time, but because of the crisis ,there are challenges in time, HRA is trying to do its best to issue benefits as possible they can. HRA also advice for client to try to submit their documents as soon as possible within 10 days of applying.

4. Questions: New applicants do not have proof of residency for their children, what documents can be used to support children residence with applicant?

Answer: Landlord letter, a doctor letter, if don't have any proof ,client can provided landlord phone number for verification of children reside. An attest letter from landlord





5. Question: Is HRA mediation Model Still in place?

Answer: Mediation Model is still in place no changes to the list, however need to understand that it takes longer for a liaison to respond due to the high of new cases coming in.

Question: Applicant applied in February and was denied wrongfully. CBO assisted client to reapply in March, now case shows two different case numbers. HRA stated that even though client reappplied there is a need to do a mediation case because client didn't receive benefits they were entitled for, that's depriving client of the time of the original time applied. HRA suggested even though reappplied, present a mediation case for the first time application and denied wrongfully.

6. Question: Is the Info Line working 718-557-1399, call in and states, you have reached a non-working number?

Answer: Yes the Info Line number should be working, the 718-557-1399.

DSS –Access HRA , Ariel Salazar

1. Questions: Applicants have issues uploading documents to HRA, Freezes when uploading.

Answer: Sometimes new releases may cause issues when uploading documents. Advice to try closing app, or delete app and download it again.

2. Questions: Creating an account for client encounter issues, error message shows and does not allow to create account. Multiple times try in different hours and still not able to create client's account?

Answer: DSS informed they have not heard issues with creating an account. DSS ask to provide details of case to identify what might be the issue.

Ariel provided information about upcoming trainings for partners on Access HRA, Cash assistance, SNAP and provider portal.

3. Question: To create an Access HRA account, can an account be created without using an email, as many clients served do not have email.

Answer: Access HRA account does not require an email in order to create client Access HRA account. Client can create an account using a username.

Ariel from DSS informed of upcoming webinar trainings for Access HRA, on Public Assistance, SNAP.

Training information will be provided and email to partners.

SNAP partners ask for email or contact person from HRA/DSS when they encounter issues with Access HRA system, updated on number client can call in for information on HRA.

Information will be mail of contacts given by HRA and DSS.

SNAP March Mediation Analysis report not provided as many organizations right now are closed.

Enclosed is the February Mediation Analyses Report.

SNAP Taskforce meeting adjourn with a possible early date of meeting as we keep receiving updates from HRA and DSS.

