



The Research Packet For

THE SNAP TASK FORCE

Meeting of April 16, 2020



Prepared by the staff of Food Bank For New York City
39 Broadway, 10th Fl.
New York NY 10006
Tel: 212.566.7855
Fax: 212.566.1463
www.foodbanknyc.org

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP) TASK FORCE

Contents

I. United States Department of Agriculture	4
USDA Approves Program to Feed Kids in Rhode Island.....	4
Florida and Idaho Added to Innovation SNAP Pilot Program.....	4
https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2020/04/11/florida-and-idaho-added-innovative-snap-online-pilot-program	5
Background:	5
II. New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance	5
General Information System (GIS) COVID-19 Emergency Allotments to SNAP Households Resources Page.....	5
General Information System (GIS) Message- COVID-19 April 11, 2020 Executive Order Expiration Date	6
General Information System (GIS) Message: Emergency Relief - Treatment of Families First Coronavirus Response Act payments for Temporary Assistance (TA), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)	7
General Information System (GIS) Message, COVID-19 SNAP Interview Requirements	8
General Information System (GIS) Message, -Temporary Able-bodied Adults without Dependent (ABAWD) time limit suspension due to COVID-19 Pandemic.....	9
General Information System (GIS) Message, COVID-19 Certification Period Extensions.....	9
Monthly Caseload Statistics – January 2020	9
III. New York City Human Resources Administration	10
POLICY BULLETIN #20-09-OPE- Self-Attestation of Shelter Expenses for non-cash Assistance Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (NCA SNAP) households	10
Policy Bulletin #20-12-SYS - Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) System.....	11
Department of Social Services (DSS)/Human Resources Administration (HRA)/Department of Homeless Services (DHS) In Respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic	11

Foodbank for New York City – Facing Food Insecurity on the Front Line-The New York Times..... 12

Food Bank for new York City- Fight for our Low Income Neighbors 13

FRAC- Latest Emergency Package Includes Important Investment, But more needs to be done to Help Struggling Households Keep Food on the Table 13

I. United States Department of Agriculture



USDA Approves Program to Feed Kids in Rhode Island

<https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2020/04/13/usda-approves-program-feed-kids-rhode-island>

<https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2020/04/09/usda-launches-new-program-feed-kids-michigan>

(Washington, D.C., April 13, 2020) – U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue today announced Rhode Island has 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.

The implementation of Pandemic EBT is in line with USDA's commitment to keep Americans safe, secure, and healthy during this national emergency and to keep kids fed when schools are closed. USDA is working with states and local authorities to ensure schools and other program operators can continue to feed children. This latest action complements previously-announced flexibilities for the Child Nutrition programs that:

- Allow parents and guardians to [pick up meals](#) to bring home to their kids;
- Temporarily waive [meal times requirements](#) to make it easier to pick up multiple-days' worth of meals at once;
- Allow meals be served in [non-congregate settings](#) to support social distancing;
- Waive the requirement that [afterschool meals and snacks](#) served through certain programs be accompanied by educational activities to minimize exposure to the novel coronavirus; and
- Allow states, on an individual state-by-state basis, to serve free meals to children in *all* areas, rather than only those in areas where at least half of students receive free or reduced-price meals.

Florida and Idaho Added to Innovation SNAP Pilot Program

<https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2020/04/11/florida-and-idaho-added-innovative-snap-online-pilot-program>

(Washington, D.C., April 11, 2020) – U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue today announced approval for Florida and Idaho’s request to provide online purchasing of food to SNAP Households in the States of Florida and Idaho. 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. Florida’s SNAP participation is nearly 3 million individuals, about 1.5 million households, and totals nearly \$4 billion annually in federal funding. Idaho’s SNAP participation is nearly 150,000 individuals, more than 67,000 households, and totals nearly \$200 million annually in federal funding. This announcement further demonstrates President Trump’s whole of America approach to fighting the coronavirus pandemic by ensuring those affected are fed.

Background:

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.

Though the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is receiving interest to expand the SNAP online pilot program, the responsibility is on state agencies, their third-party processor, and any retailers who wish to participate. To ease the process, FNS put together a simplified template for states who wish to enter the online pilot which is provided as an attachment to this letter.

II. New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance



General Information System (GIS) COVID-19 Emergency Allotments to SNAP Households Resources Page

<https://otda.ny.gov/policy/gis/2020/20DC029.pdf>

April 10, 2020 The purpose of this GIS is to advise social services districts (districts) that Emergency Allotments (EA) will be issued to some Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipient households that received benefits for the months of March 2020 and/or April 2020. The allotments were authorized by the Families First Coronavirus

Response Act of 2020 and are being issued in accordance with the terms of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) memorandum of March 20, 2020.

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.

Only SNAP households that did not receive the maximum benefit for the size of the household for March or April or for both months are eligible for the EA supplement. This includes households that received a pro-rated, partial issuance for either of the months for which the supplements are being issued.

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

Social Media Announcement



EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR SNAP HOUSEHOLDS

All New Yorkers enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program will receive **the maximum monthly benefit for March and April**. Those not previously receiving the maximum benefit will receive a **one-time payment** that will vary by household size.

For more information, visit
otda.ny.gov/SNAP-COVID-19



SNAP
Supplemental Nutrition
Assistance Program

A Program of the Office of
Temporary and Disability Assistance

General Information System (GIS) Message- COVID-19 April 11, 2020 Executive Order Expiration Date

<https://otda.ny.gov/policy/gis/2020/20DC028.pdf>

April 10, 2020, In response to the outbreak of COVID-19 and in accordance with Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's Executive Order 202.1, the Office of Temporary and

Disability Assistance (OTDA) released GIS 20 TA/DC016 advising social services districts (districts) of the ability to conduct TA eligibility interviews, drug/alcohol screenings and domestic violence screenings by telephone through April 11, 2020.

GIS 20 TA/DC016 also advised districts that Common Benefit Identification Card (CBIC) for TA applicants or recipients could be issued without photographs affixed through April 11, 2020.

The purpose of this GIS is 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.

General Information System (GIS) Message: Emergency Relief - Treatment of Families First Coronavirus Response Act payments for Temporary Assistance (TA), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

<https://otda.ny.gov/policy/gis/2020/20DC027.pdf>

The purpose of this GIS message is to provide guidance to social service districts (districts) on how to treat stimulus rebate payments from the Federal Government's H.R. 748 Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). The CARES Act provides a one-time stimulus rebate payment of up to \$1,200 to eligible individuals and \$2,400 to eligible married couples and up to an additional \$500 per qualifying child of eligible individuals or families. 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.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) For SNAP, the Payment(s) received under the CARES Act are not to be counted as income. They must be excluded as a non-recurring, lump sum payment under the federal regulations at 7 CFR 273.9(c)(8). For new SNAP applicant households, the Payment(s) are excluded from consideration as a resource in the month received, and the month after under the federal regulations at 7 CFR 273.8(e)(12)(i). Any remaining balance would be counted as a resource in the months thereafter. For households already receiving SNAP benefits when they receive the Payment(s), the payments are excluded from consideration as a resource for a period of 12 months following receipt of the payments under the federal regulations at

7 CFR 273.8(e)(12)(ii). Any remaining balance would be counted as a resource in the months thereafter.

General Information System (GIS) Message, COVID-19 SNAP Interview Requirements

<https://otda.ny.gov/policy/gis/2020/20DC026.pdf>

April 03, 2020, The purpose of this GIS is to advise social services districts (districts) that the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has adjusted the interview requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

These adjustments will be in effect from the date of issuance of this GIS through May 31, 2020. Interviews at Initial Application and Recertification Districts will not be required to interview a household at initial application or recertification, provided that both of the following conditions have been met: • 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. Every attempt shall be made to verify household circumstances through data matching and information currently present in the State and district systems.

Initial Applications Eligible for Expedited Processing As districts are aware, for applications eligible for expedited processing, the only information that must be verified prior to the initial expedited issuance is the applicant's identity. (An applicant's identity can be verified via the SSN validation process in accordance with Section III.E.1 of 12-INF-06.) All other verification required and necessary to establish eligibility for ongoing benefits and to determine the ongoing benefit amount may be pended but must be provided prior to the issuance of ongoing SNAP benefits.

Until May 31, 2020, any applications for SNAP that are screened and found eligible for expedited processing, if the identity of the applicant has been verified, and if sufficient information for making a determination of eligibility and for calculating a benefit has been provided (verification of this information can be pended), the application may be processed and an expedited benefit issued without an interview being attempted or taking place.

Mandatory Verification Federal regulation 7 CFR 237.2(f) requires the following information to be verified at application. SNAP policy guidance on the verification of the following mandatory eligibility factors has not changed in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency:

1. Identity 2. Social Security Number 3. Residency 4. Gross non-exempt income (earned and unearned) 5. Disability 6. Alien eligibility

General Information System (GIS) Message,-Temporary Abled -Body Adults without Dependent (ABAWD) time limit suspension due to COVID-19 Pandemic

<https://otda.ny.gov/policy/gis/2020/20DC021.pdf>

The purpose of this GIS is to advise social services districts (districts) of the Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) time limit suspension due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

On March 18, 2020, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (Public Law 116-127) was enacted which temporarily and partially suspends the time limit for Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

This suspension applies during the period of April 1, 2020 through the end of the month following the month in which the public health emergency declaration based on an outbreak of COVID-19 is lifted.

General Information System (GIS) Message, COVID-19 Certification Period Extensions

<https://otda.ny.gov/policy/gis/2020/20DC019.pdf>

<https://otda.ny.gov/policy/gis/2020/20DC019-Attachment-1.pdf>

The purpose of this GIS is to advise social services districts (districts) that the certification periods for Temporary Assistance (TA)/Medicaid (MA) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) cases with certification periods expiring at the end of March, April and May 2020 will be automatically extended for three months.

This extension is being granted because of the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic may have had on the ability of households and local social services districts (districts) to complete the recertification process for these cases. Extending certification periods will ensure that households unable to comply with recertification requirements or whose recertifications could not be processed timely due to the effects of COVID-19 do not lose access to TA/MA and SNAP benefits. The extension also will ease the administrative burden faced by these districts in recovering from this pandemic.

Monthly Caseload Statistics – January 2020

<https://otda.ny.gov/resources/caseload/2020/2020-01-stats.pdf>

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

	This Month	Change From Last Month	Change From Last Year
	2,570,601	-220 (0.0%)	-134,506 (-5.0%)
	\$356,606,380	-\$1.2 mil (-0.3%)	-\$22.5 mil (-5.9%)

Table 1
TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE CASES
January 2020

Region	Cases				
	Temporary Assistance by Program			Supplemental Security Income	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
	Total	Family Assistance-FP	Safety Net Assistance		
New York State	249,463	74,332	175,131	669,132	1,478,960
New York City	171,704	42,803	128,901	398,130	875,030
Rest of State	77,759	31,529	46,230	271,002	603,930



III. New York City Human Resources Administration

POLICY BULLETIN #20-09-OPE- Self-Attestation of Shelter Expenses for non-cash Assistance Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (NCA SNAP) households

March 03, 2020 - The purpose of this policy bulletin is to inform Non-Cash Assistance Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (NCA SNAP) Center staff and Mailer and Match Action Program (MMAP) staff that the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) has expanded the self-attestation of shelter expenses to all NCA SNAP applicant and participant households unless the self-reported shelter expense is questionable.

The self-attestation of shelter expenses for NCA SNAP households applies to shelter expenses reported on any of the following forms:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Application/Recertification (LDSS-4826);
- Periodic Report (LDSS-4310);
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Change Report Form (LDSS-3151);
- NYSNIP Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits Interim Report

(NYC) (LDSS-4836-NYC); or • Important Notice to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Applicants/Participants (W-127 N/P). Self-attestation of shelter expenses is permitted for SNAP applications/recertifications submitted online through ACCESS HRA. SNAP households still need to verify their residence. Sometimes, a household's verification of residence (e.g. lease or a letter from the landlord/primary tenant) will include verification of its shelter expense which can be helpful in addressing questionable information.

Policy Bulletin #20-12-SYS - Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) System

This policy bulletin is being revised to inform staff that effective April 10, 2020, the Brooklyn Common Benefit Identification Card (CBIC) Over-The-Counter (OTC) Site located at 227 Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201, Ground Floor will be the only CBIC OTC site available. Former Manhattan CBIC OTC site located at 109 East 16th Street, New York, NY 10003, Ground Floor will no longer operate.

The citywide CBIC distribution center at 227 Schermerhorn Street in downtown Brooklyn is conveniently served by many subway and bus lines. It is within walking distance of the following subway lines: the 2, 3, 4, and 5 at Nevins Street, the 2 and 3 at Hoyt Street, the B, Q, and R lines at DeKalb Avenue, and the A, C, and G lines at Hoyt-Schermerhorn Street; and the following bus lines: B25, B26, B38, B41, B45, B52, B57, B61, B62, B63, B65, B67, and B103.

Department of Social Services (DSS)/Human Resources Administration (HRA)/Department of Homeless Services (DHS) In Respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic

To help stop the spread of COVID-19, DSS/HRA have consolidated HRA Job, SNAP, and Medicaid Center locations, effective **12:00pm yesterday, Tuesday, March 24**. As we have reported in our previous communications, we asked the State for – and received – permission to accept Cash Assistance (CA) applications online, which, as you know, began on **Friday, March 20**. The interview portion of the CA application process is being conducted by telephone. Please note that SNAP applications, and those for emergency benefits such as utility or rent arrears, were already available through ACCESS HRA. **Cash Assistance (CA)** starting Friday, March 20 Cash Assistance applications can be done online. The interview portion of the application process will be conducted by telephone.

As a result of these consolidations, we are advising New Yorkers to apply for public benefits online at ACCESS HRA in order to prevent unnecessary visits to an HRA center. For clients who cannot or do not want to apply online, a list of Job, SNAP, and Medicaid center locations that will remain open can be found here: **Job, SNAP, Medicaid**.
HRA OFFICES : <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/locations/locations.page>

Clients are being informed of this change via ACCESS HRA, email, robocalls, text messages, flyers, and signage in our offices as well as social media.



Be Safe, Skip the Trip

All in-person appointments have been cancelled.
NO NEGATIVE CASE ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN.
You can do everything listed below without coming to an HRA Center. Go online to nyc.gov/accesshra, or download the ACCESS HRA mobile app, and log in or create an account.

✔ SNAP

- Apply for SNAP benefits online. SNAP recertifications are currently postponed due to COVID-19.
- Complete your SNAP periodic report online.
- Change or close your SNAP case online.
- Take photos of requested documents with your phone and upload them.
- An interview may not be required, if we need additional information, HRA will contact you.

✔ Cash Assistance

- You can now submit an application for Cash Assistance on ACCESS HRA. HRA will call you for a phone interview. Cash Assistance recertifications are currently postponed due to COVID-19.
- Take photos of requested documents with your phone and upload them.
- Submit an application for a special grant such as Emergency Rental Assistance.

✔ Manage Your Case

- Check your application status.
- Read e-notices online, or sign up to go paperless.
- View the list of documents HRA has requested under 'Required Documents' and those already received under 'Case Record.'
- View your benefit payments.
- Update your contact information.
- Sign up for text alerts for upcoming appointments, and for information regarding when your recertification is due.

IV. Reports, News and Notable Items

Foodbank for New York City – Facing Food Insecurity on the Front Line-The New York Times

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/10/neediest-cases/feeding-america-food-banks-coronavirus.html?searchResultPosition=3>

In an average year, meeting the needs of hungry New Yorkers is challenging.

In 2020, food banks in New York and beyond are finding that taking on this mission requires resourcefulness, resilience and the rethinking of how those in need can be served.

Food Bank for New York City usually supplies about 1,000 institutions, such as food pantries and soup kitchens, with groceries. Now, 40 percent of them have suspended operations because of the coronavirus outbreak, said Leslie Gordon, chief executive of Food Bank for New York City. In response, it has come up with new ways to get food into the hands of New Yorkers.

"We're trying to meet people where they are," Ms. Gordon said.

Dear Community Partners:

Food Bank for new York City- Fight for our Low Income Neighbors

Tell your Member of Congress to focus relief resources for low-income people across America by passing legislation that significantly expands social safety net programs including essential hunger-fighting federal nutrition assistance programs, income and health care support.

Increase SNAP benefits for all recipients to provide economic stimulus and needed nutrition support.

* Increase the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) funding for food and funding to continue to respond to the rapidly increasing need.

* Enhance the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC) to provide more benefit to lower income taxpayers.

* Expand additional health protections including paid leave.

<https://secure3.convio.net/fbnyc/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=528>

FRAC- Latest Emergency Package Includes Important Investment, But more needs to be done to Help Struggling Households Keep Food on the Table

<https://frac.org/news/latest-emergency-package-includes-important-investments-but-more-needs-to-be-done-to-help-struggling-households-keep-food-on-the-table>

WASHINGTON *Statement attributed to Luis Guardia, president, Food Research & Action Center (FRAC)*

March 26, 2020 — The Senate/White House compromise on the \$2 trillion emergency package includes key investments that address some important COVID-19 challenges that workers, health care providers, and state, local, and tribal governments face, but more action is needed to help struggling households keep food on the table. Specifically, lawmakers must boost Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in any future stimulus packages.

Although the bill includes \$15.5 billion more for SNAP to cover the projected increase in applications and the costs of relief authorized in [H.R. 6201](#), FRAC is disappointed that lawmakers missed this opportunity to include a 15 percent boost to the SNAP maximum benefit and an increase in the minimum monthly SNAP benefit to \$30. Such boosts and

new investments are critical to ensuring the well-being of vulnerable people and the economy.

The value of SNAP's effective and quick economic impact was demonstrated during the Great Recession, when benefits were temporarily boosted through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Research shows that during an economic downturn, each \$1 of SNAP benefits leads to between \$1.50 and \$1.80 in total economic activity.

FRAC urges lawmakers to start work now on enacting additional emergency relief that leverages SNAP's effectiveness in stimulating the economy and promoting food security and health. Hungry people can't wait.

THE FOOD BANK FOR NEW YORK CITY
2020