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Subject: COVID-19: VT Emergency Allotments Approval
Date: Friday, March 27, 2020 4:16:14 PM
Attachments: Emergency Allotment Waiver-Revised.pdf

NERO Team,

Please consider this FNS' approval of Vermont's attached request to issue Emergency Allotments (EA) to all ongoing SNAP households in the State of Vermont.

This approval will allow the State to issue EA to ongoing SNAP households for March and April 2020, increasing their current monthly allotment up to the maximum monthly allotment for a household of that size. Ongoing SNAP households that already receive the maximum monthly allotment for their household size are not eligible for EA. All EA will be delivered on ongoing SNAP households' EBT cards.

Please ask the State to confirm receipt and REPLY ALL, upon notice of the State's confirmation of receipt. We would also ask the State to alert any contacts they may have in the retailer community of the emergency issuance and its timing, so stores can stock up in preparation.

Thanks, and please let us know if you have any questions.

Andrea

Andrea Gold-O'Connor
Director
SNAP, Retailer and Issuance Policy
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<https://www.fns.usda.gov/disaster/pandemic/covid-19>

Request to Provide Emergency Allotments (Supplements) to SNAP Households

The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

- 1. Type of Request:** Initial
- 2. Primary Citation:** Families First Coronavirus Response Act
- 3. State [specify]:** Vermont
- 4. Proposed Alternative Procedures:**

The State proposes to provide an emergency allotment to address temporary food needs to households to bring all households up to the maximum benefit due to pandemic related economic conditions for up to 2 months. Contingent upon the availability of funding and ongoing need, USDA may approve additional months of emergency issuance with an extension request from the State.

These households are eligible for temporary emergency allotments because:

- There is a public health emergency declared by the Secretary of Health and Human Services and there is a State-wide emergency or disaster declaration (copy attached); and
- Due to Covid-19 [check all that apply]:
 - ✓ Residents of the State are confirmed to have contracted Covid-19
Some or all areas of the State are containment or quarantine zones
 - ✓ Businesses have closed or significantly reduced their hours
 - ✓ The State's residents have experienced economic impacts due to job suspensions or losses
 - ✓ The State's residents have been directed to practice social distancing

Issuing Emergency Allotments to Current SNAP Households:

Supplemental emergency allotments would be issued in the following manner:

In March, 2020

✓ On a single date [specify]: On April 17 and May 15

Over a series of days as follows: _____

Staggered as follows: _____

Other [please explain]: _____

In subsequent months, emergency allotments should be provided in accordance with the State's regular issuance schedule. If a State wants to use a different schedule, explain:

In an effort to ensure that supplemental benefits are provided to all eligible households and can be clearly tracked and reported separately, the state of Vermont will issue the supplemental benefits for March on April 17th and the supplemental benefit for April will be issued on May 15th

The State may provide the emergency allotment(s) without contacting the household. While individual notification is not required, States should notify clients consistent with SNAP requirements for mass changes, including notice that emergency allotments will be issued for up to 2 months. Should this schedule change and additional months are approved during the public health emergency, the State will provide a subsequent mass change notice at that time.

Other Requirements: [If applicable, STATE SHOULD ADDRESS ANY OTHER STATE-SPECIFIC NEEDS THEY MAY HAVE.]

All emergency allotments will be delivered on the household's EBT card or via direct deposit under the conditions of the cash-out waiver.

The State's SNAP agency also agrees to complete the FNS-292 on a timely basis in accordance with requirements as well as all other normally recurring SNAP reporting included the FNS 46 and 388 reports, on a timely basis in accordance with requirements.

In addition, The State agency will submit weekly reports to FNS with the following information for the entire State:

- The value of EA issued.
- The average issuance amount per household.
- The number of households issued EA

Justification for Request: Coronavirus COVID-19, as provided by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.

5. Affected Caseload:

One month estimates for existing SNAP households under these procedures:

- Number of households receiving emergency allotments benefits: 20,529
- Amount of emergency allotment benefits issued for one month: \$ 3,336,405
- Number of months requested (2 month limit) 2

USDA reserves the right to withdraw or otherwise modify this approval subject to availability of funding

6. Anticipated Implementation Date: April 15, 2020

7. Signature and Title of Requesting State Agency Official:

Nicole Tausignant

Signature

Nicole Tausignant, Sr Policy and Operations Director

Print Name and Title

8. Date of Request: 3/26/20