

Food and Nutrition  
Service

June 22, 2020

1320 Braddock Place  
Alexandria, VA  
22314

**SUBJECT:** Extension Approval of Disaster Household Distribution in Response to the National Emergency Declaration Due to COVID-19

**TO:** Bill Ludwig  
Regional Administrator  
Southwest Regional Office

This memorandum is in response to Cherokee Nation's request to extend its use of U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Foods to operate disaster household distribution beyond its initial approved end date of June 13, 2020. This request is in response to food assistance needs resulting from the COVID-19 National Emergency declared by the President of the United States on March 13, 2020. Cherokee Nation requested that USDA extend its approval to use USDA Foods from the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) for disaster household distribution and continue to use the same distribution methods to provide food assistance to approximately 5,000 individuals.

The intent of disaster household distribution is to serve as a short-term program to address immediate needs and to bridge the gap to longer-term assistance programs in the aftermath of a Federal disaster or emergency declaration. Although disaster household distribution has been used in an unprecedented way over the last three months in response to the National Emergency, FDPIR is intended to serve longer-term emergency feeding needs even during times of social distancing. In addition, Congress has provided significant additional resources to FDPIR in response to the pandemic.

**An extension is granted for Cherokee Nation to provide disaster household distribution and serve a cumulative total, not to exceed, 5,000 individuals during the revised approval period beginning May 15, 2020 through June 30, 2020.** During this period, it is expected that Cherokee Nation, will promote the availability of other Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) programs to meet impacted individuals' ongoing needs including The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), Pandemic EBT (P-EBT), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP).

In addition to these FNS programs, USDA has established the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) or "Farmers to Families" Food Box Program to help individuals in need, <https://www.ams.usda.gov/publications/content/farmers-families-food-box-program-faqs>. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has also established a food assistance program that will aid communities impacted by COVID-19, <https://www.fema.gov/news-release/2020/04/12/coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic-purchase-and-distribution-food-eligible-public>.

While working to begin transitioning to longer-term use of FDPIR rather than disaster household distribution, Cherokee Nation is authorized to use the previously approved disaster household distribution food package to continue providing food assistance to impacted households. Cherokee Nation must also follow the same Terms of Approval as stated in the approval letter dated April 15, 2020 to include, but not limited to, weekly reporting of:

- 1) the amount of FDPIR inventory used for disaster household distributions, and

2) the number of persons served under the disaster household distribution.

Consideration of any further requests to extend disaster household distribution will be dependent on the targeting of the request to those most in need and include justification as to why the availability of other programs and resources are not meeting Cherokee Nation's food assistance needs.

Please have Cherokee Nation contact the FNS Southwest Regional Office for more information should they have any questions regarding this approval.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Diane M. Kriviski". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Diane M. Kriviski  
Deputy Administrator  
Supplemental Nutrition and Safety Programs