



January 11, 2021

Ms. Bonnie Brathwaite  
SNAP Regional Division Director  
USDA/FNS Northeast Regional Office #10  
Causeway Street, Room 501  
Boston, MA 02222

Dear Director Brathwaite:

### **USDA/FNS Emergency Allotment Request**

As part of the Virgin Islands Department of Human Services (VIDHS) Pandemic Contingency Plan, I am requesting approval of the attached request to provide emergency allotments to bring all households up to the maximum SNAP benefits for the month of January 2021.

On December 14, 2020, Governor Albert Bryan, Jr. issued a State of Emergency and Public Health declaration which heightened the level of precaution and preventative measures for the V.I. as a result of the Coronavirus Pandemic. The Governor restricted central government services to essential agencies, restricted private businesses, and urged all residents to remain at home and adhere to the CDC guidance for "social distancing."

1. As an essential agency, VIDHS is committed to providing our clients with the optimal level of service needed, while at the same time ensuring their safety and the safety of our employees. SNAP Certification offices remain accessible to the public via telephone and internet services.
2. Customers are encouraged to download the application and change forms located on the DHS website.
3. Customers are encouraged to email, mail, fax documents or deposit them in a secure drop box located at each local office. The agency will expand telephone coverage to ensure responsive customer service.
4. Frequent public service announcements will be conducted to inform the community of all program and procedural changes as well as appearances on radio broadcasts, which will be available on our DHS Facebook page and DHS website, when at all possible. On behalf of my VIDHS SNAP staff, I would like

to express our appreciation for the continued support and cooperation received from you and your staff at the Northeast Regional Office (NERO).

Sincerely,



Kimberley Causey- Gomez  
Commissioner

cc: Charmaine Modeste-Antoine, CFO  
Michal Rhymer-Browne, Assistant Commissioner  
Natalie Bailey, SNAP Administrator  
Pauline Dawes, SNAP Assistant Administrator  
Emmanueline Archer, SNAP Territorial Director

Attachments:

- (1) Gov. Bryan's Executive Order and Proclamation Modifying Conditions of the Safer-at-Home Phase in Response to Covid-19 State of Emergency.
- (2) USDA FNS Month-to-Month Contingent Approval to Continue Issuing Nutrition Assistance Program SNAP EA Benefits Under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act of 2020.
- (3) P-SNAP (Emergency Allotment) Updated Schedule

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Month-To-Month Contingent Approval to Continue Issuing Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Emergency Allotments (EA) Benefits under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act of 2020

Section 2302(a)(1) of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act of 2020, allows States to request COVID-19 EA “for households participating in the supplemental nutrition assistance program... to address temporary food needs.” The State must support its request with sufficient data, as determined through FNS guidance. A household’s EA cannot increase the current monthly household SNAP benefit allotment beyond “the applicable maximum monthly allotment for the household size.” Accordingly, SNAP households that already receive the maximum monthly allotment for their household size are not eligible for EA.

**States that have already received FNS approval for EA issuance in March and April, or April and May, are approved to continue issuing EA benefits each month.** This approval to extend these EAs will remain in place until such a time as the Secretary for Health and Human Services rescinds the public health emergency declaration that was issued on January 27, 2020, under section 319 of the Public Health Service Act or the State-issued emergency or disaster declaration expires.

This approval is **contingent** upon the State submitting the information below to the FNS Region no sooner than the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month for the subsequent month and awaiting FNS acknowledgement before sending the Emergency Allotment issuance file(s) to their Electronic Benefits Transfer processor.

**Prior to each month of EA issuance, the State shall provide the following information to its FNS Regional SNAP contact(s), who will acknowledge receipt:**

State/Territory: Virgin Islands

1. January EA Issuance date(s): January 24, 2021

(Provide exact dates of planned EA issuance for the month or annotate above if the State will be providing EA benefits in accordance with the State’s regular issuance schedule.)

2. January estimate of the number of households and estimated EA amount:  
Number of households receiving emergency allotment benefits: 7,303  
Amount of emergency allotment benefits issued for one month: \$ 1,360,438.00

3. **Confirmation** that one or more of the following conditions exists 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
- And**
- The State's emergency or disaster declaration remains active.

All FNS requirements shall remain the same as listed in the initial State approval.

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

## P-SNAP (Emergency Allotment) Updated Schedule

- 9/30/2020 – Added October P-SNAP schedule
- 10/30/2020 – Added November P-SNAP schedule
- 11/4/2020 – Updated the November schedule
- 12/1/2020 – Added December P-SNAP schedule
- 1/11/2021 – Added proposed January P-SNAP schedule

P-SNAP for November 2020		
1. Issue November 2020 P-SNAP to ongoing cases	November 15, 2020 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM CDT	Completed
2. Issue November 2020 P-SNAP to applications approved after November 15, 2020	December 20, 2020 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM CDT	Completed
3. List of SNAP cases with less than <u>\$10 benefits in November</u>	December 20, 2020 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM CDT	Completed
4. Issue November 2020 P-SNAP to applications approved after December 6, 2020	January 9, 2021 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM CDT	Completed
5. EA run as requested	TBD	DFA will inform PSI if additional EA run is needed
P-SNAP for December 2020		
6. Issue December 2020 P-SNAP to ongoing cases	December 20, 2020 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM CDT	Completed
7. Issue December P-SNAP to applications approved after December 20, 2020	January 9, 2021 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM CDT	Completed
8. List of SNAP cases with less than <u>\$10 benefits in December 2020</u>	January 9, 2021 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM CDT	Completed
9. Issue December 2020 P-SNAP to applications approved after January 9, 2020	February 20, 2021 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM CDT	Scheduled
10. EA run as requested	TBD	DFA will inform PSI if additional EA run is needed
P-SNAP for January 2021 (Proposed)		
11. Issue January 2021 P-SNAP to ongoing cases	January 24, 2021 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM CDT	Scheduled This will also include any remaining EA for November and December 2020.
12. Issue January P-SNAP to applications approved after January 24, 2021	February 20, 2021 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM CDT	Scheduled This will also include any remaining EA for November and December 2020.
13. List of SNAP cases with less than <u>\$10 benefits in January 2021</u>	February 20, 2021	Scheduled

	10:00 AM – 11:30 AM CDT	Cases need to be manually approved
14. Issue January 2021 P-SNAP to applications approved after February 20, 2021	March 20, 2021 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM CDT	Scheduled
15. EA run as requested	TBD	DFA will inform PSI if additional EA run is needed



**THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
GOVERNMENT HOUSE  
Charlotte Amalie, V.I. 00802  
340-774-0001**

**TWENTIETH SUPPLEMENTAL EXECUTIVE ORDER AND PROCLAMATION  
BY THE GOVERNOR  
OF THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS  
MODIFYING CONDITIONS OF THE "SAFER-AT-HOME" PHASE  
IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 STATE OF EMERGENCY**

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**WHEREAS**, On March 13, 2020, the Governor issued the Executive Order and Proclamation Declaring a State of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 – CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ("Declaration of a State of Emergency"), and the Government has been coordinating the Territory's response and enforcing protective actions to address "COVID-19", a public health emergency that currently requires the Government to act and provide for the health, safety, and welfare of residents and visitors located in the Virgin Islands; and

**WHEREAS**, On April 2, 2020, the President of the United States declared that a major disaster exists in the Territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands-based on COVID-19 and this major disaster declaration has not been lifted; and

**WHEREAS**, From March 13, 2020, through September 2020, the Governor has issued subsequent Executive Orders or Supplements with additional requirements and lifting of other restrictions of previous Executive Orders and Supplements to return to its "Stay-at-Home Phase"; and

**WHEREAS**, The "Safer-at-Home Phase" requires continuous guidance to be given to the public about what is restricted and permissible during this phase and while still within a "State of Emergency" due to the danger and threat of Covid-19; and

**WHEREAS**, The Executive Order Declaring a State of Emergency dated March 13, 2020, invoked the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Act, 23 V.I.C. § 1001 - 1016 and authorized the Governor to exercise the powers and duties set forth therein to direct and aid the response to, recovery from, and guidance for the mitigation as well as response to emergencies; and

**WHEREAS**, The Virgin Islands Department of Health (“DOH”) received confirmation that, as of December 12, 2020, as many as 1,807 persons, including 23 deceased persons, tested positive for COVID-19 in the Virgin Islands, and additional testing of individuals for COVID-19 are still being made or pending; and

**WHEREAS**, Imposing guidelines and restrictions during the Territory’s “Safer-at-Home Phase” is vital to the protection, health, safety, and welfare of residents and visitors of the Territory as well as continuing the response and mitigation process;

**NOW, THEREFORE, I**, Albert Bryan Jr, Governor of the United States Virgin Islands, under the authority granted to me by Section 11 of the Revised Organic Act of 1954 (as amended), 23 V.I.C. § 1005, and pursuant to all the afore-cited sections of the Virgin Islands Code, as well as all previous Executive Orders issued from March 13, 2020, through November 30, 2020, as amended, supplemented, renewed, and extended, do hereby ORDER:

**SECTION 1.** *The Sixteenth Supplemental Executive Order issued on September 8, 2020, as amended, supplemented, renewed, and extended, is further amended in Section 1. as follows:*

- A. In subsection A. paragraph 5), by striking “distancing” and inserting “distance” in its place.
- B. In subsection C. Mass Gatherings, by inserting a new paragraph 4) to read “4) *Organized Activities – Any and all organized activities, as authorized by this subsection, as amended, supplemented, renewed, and extended, must obtain approval from the Commissioner of Health in addition to any other regulatory agency with jurisdiction, prior to the gathering.*”
- C. In subsection E. paragraph 4), by striking the language in its entirety and inserting “4) *All restaurants and any other establishments with the following alcohol licenses: Storekeeper Liquor License, Tavernkeeper-Storekeeper Liquor License, Tavernkeeper Liquor License (A), Tavernkeeper Liquor License (B), Hotelkeeper Liquor License and Club Liquor License in the Territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands shall cease the sale or distribution of alcohol from 11:00 p.m. until 8:00 a.m. daily.*” in its place
- D. By striking subsection E. paragraph 7) in its entirety.
- E. In subsection G. paragraph 1), by striking the language in its entirety and inserting “1) *Cabarets shall be allowed to open under all the same terms applicable to nightclubs in subsections 2) through 11) below.*” in its place.
- F. In subsection G. paragraphs 2) through 10) by inserting “, *cabarets,*” after “bars” and before “and nightclubs”, wherever they appear; and in paragraph 6) by capitalizing “bars”.
- G. In subsection G. by inserting a new paragraph 11), to read “11) *There shall be no dancing by*



*anyone, including staff, inside or outside establishment with a bar, cabaret, or nightclub license.”*

- H. In subsection N. 1) by inserting by “*through the Center Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)*” after the words “Human Services”.
- I. Notwithstanding Section 1, Subsection G of the *Sixteenth Supplemental Executive Order issued on September 8, 2020*, as amended, supplemented, renewed, and extended and the amendments contained in Subsections F through G above, all *cabarets and nightclubs* shall close at 5:00 p.m. on December 17, 2020, and shall remain closed as long as the Territory remains in the State of Emergency, as declared on March 13, 2020, as amended, supplemented, extended, and renewed, unless earlier lifted by order of the Governor of the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- J. Notwithstanding Section 1, Subsection G of the *Sixteenth Supplemental Executive Order issued on September 8, 2020*, as amended, supplemented, renewed, and extended and the amendments contained in Subsections F through G above, all stand alone *bars* shall be closed and cease all sales or service from December 25, 2020 through January 7, 2021. Bars shall be allowed to reopen on January 8, 2021.

**SECTION 2.** *Effective December 25, 2020*, The *Sixteenth Supplemental Executive Order issued on September 8, 2020*, as amended and supplemented, is further amended in Section 3. By striking subsections A. and B. in their entirety and inserting new subsections A. and B. to read as follows:

*“A. As long as the Territory remains in the State of Emergency, as declared on March 13, 2020, as amended, supplemented, extended, and renewed, unless earlier lifted by order of the Governor of the U.S. Virgin Islands, every person who travels to or enters the Territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands, before boarding the aircraft or vessel, must present a COVID-19 negative PCR test result obtained within five (5) days of commencement of travel to the U.S. Virgin Islands or a positive Covid-19 Antibody test result received within four (4) months of travel to the U.S. Virgin Islands.*

*B. This travel restriction currently applies to passengers age 5 years and older. Every person covered under this section shall be responsible for all associated costs, including transportation, lodging, food, and medical care.”*

**SECTION 3.** Finding that there is a need for additional qualified nurses to provide medical services in the U.S. Virgin Islands during the State of Emergency declared on March 13, 2020, due to the COVID-19, the emergency adoption of this rule to provide for the extension of temporary licenses issued to nurses licensed in other states who may assist with this health emergency is warranted. The intent of this rule is to provide for the expedited issuance and extension of temporary licenses to qualified nurses who desire to provide health care to residents and visitors of the U.S. Virgin Islands suffering from and affected by the 2019 novel coronavirus known as COVID-19. As such, the following shall be effective immediately:

- A. All temporary licenses issued under the provisions of Title 27 V.I.C. Chapter 1, Subchapter IV and Subchapter V, by endorsement from the V.I. Board of Nursing Licensure, to qualified nurses licensed in any other State or Territory of the United States of America to assist with the response to COVID-19, shall be extended under this rule and shall expire at such time as the Governor of the U.S. Virgin Islands proclaims the termination of the Territory's public health emergency. Applicants for a temporary license may, but are not required to, apply for a permanent license.
- B. Permission for any such individual rendering service is subject to the approval of the Commissioner of Health for other medical and non-medical personnel and shall be in effect for a period of time not to exceed the duration of this emergency.

**SECTION 4. Effective Date**

Unless otherwise stated in the specific Sections above, this Executive Order is effective immediately and shall remain in effect so long as the Territory remains in the State of Emergency as declared on March 13, 2020, as amended, supplemented, extended, and renewed unless earlier lifted or until rescinded or superseded by another applicable Executive Order.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Government of the United States Virgin Islands to be affixed at Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, this 14<sup>th</sup> day of December, A.D., 2020.

  
Albert Bryan Jr.  
Governor



ATTEST:

  
Tregenza A. Roach  
Lt. Governor