

Barbara Butterfield

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Sent: Friday, September 23, 2011 1:52 PM
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Subject: FW: Message from Acting Director Olsen Regarding Disaster Food Stamp Benefits

FYI - September 23, 2011
Please share this information.
Thank you.

Subject: Message from Acting Director Olsen Regarding Disaster Food Stamp Benefits

Please take note of the following announcement:

GOVERNOR CUOMO ANNOUNCES DISASTER FOOD STAMP BENEFITS FOR VICTIMS OF RECENT STORMS

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo has announced that disaster food stamp benefits are available to households in 15 counties hard-hit by Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee.

The Disaster Food Stamp Benefits Program for residents in counties affected by Hurricane Irene is available starting today. Counties covered by the program include Albany, Delaware, Dutchess, Essex, Greene, Montgomery, Orange, Schenectady, Schoharie, Ulster, and Westchester. These counties will accept Disaster Food Stamp benefit applications for at least seven days beginning Thursday, Sept 22nd.

The Disaster Food Stamp Benefits Program for residents in counties affected by Tropical Storm Lee is available starting Friday, September 23, in Broome, Delaware, Schenectady and Tioga counties, and on Monday, September 26, in Chenango and Otsego counties.

The federal government oversees the Food Stamp Program, which is operated in New York State by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA).

Disaster food stamp benefits can be made available when the number of people applying for food stamp benefits increases rapidly and significantly as a result of an emergency or disaster. Under the Disaster Food Stamp Benefits Program, standard eligibility criteria are relaxed so that those who may not normally qualify for food stamps can receive help to purchase food. Verification rules are also eased, reducing administrative burdens as both local agencies and applicants may not have access to records normally used for verification in the aftermath of a disaster.

To qualify for disaster food stamp benefits, applicants:

- * Must have lived in one of the designated counties at the time of the disaster. Applicants may be eligible if they are temporarily living outside of the disaster area but within the State at the time of the disaster.
- * Must plan on purchasing food during the month of September.
- * Must have experienced at least one of the following:

- o Loss of food or food stamp benefits.
- o Damage to, or the destruction of, the household's home or self-employment business.
- o Disaster-related expenses not expected to be reimbursed during the month of September (e.g. home or business repairs, temporary shelter expenses, etc.).
- o Loss or inaccessibility of income including reduction or termination of income, or a delay in receipt of income for half a month.
- o Inaccessible liquid resources (e.g. banks are closed due to the disaster).

To find out where to apply for disaster food stamp benefits, call 1-800-342-3009, or contact your local department of social services. A list of county social services districts can be found at:
<http://otda.ny.gov/workingfamilies/dss.asp>.

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