



The Research Packet For
THE SNAP TASK FORCE
Meeting of October 15, 2020



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SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP) TASK FORCE

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I. United States Department of Agriculture



USDA: Trump Administration Extends Free meals for Kids for Entire School Year

<https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2020/10/09/trump-administration-extends-free-meals-kids-entire-school-year>

Flexibilities now available through June 30, 2021

(Mt. Wolf, PA, October 9, 2020) – U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced today that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is extending flexibilities to allow free meals to continue to be available to all children throughout the entire 2020-2021 school year. This unprecedented move is part of USDA’s unwavering commitment to ensuring all children across America have access to nutritious food as the nation recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic.

These waiver extensions are great news for America’s students and the school nutrition professionals working so hard to support them throughout this pandemic," said School Nutrition Association President Reggie Ross, SNS. **“Families struggling to make ends meet can be assured that their students will have access to healthy school meals, whether they are learning at home or in school. School meal programs can remain focused on safely meeting nutritional needs of children in their communities without having to worry about burdensome regulations.** The School Nutrition Association appreciates USDA’s ongoing efforts to address the many challenges our members have faced while working on the frontlines to feed hungry children.

USDA is extending waivers through June 30, 2021, that:

- Allow SFSP and SSO meals to be served in all areas and at no cost;
- Permit meals to be served outside of the typically required group settings and meal times;
- Waive meal pattern requirements, as necessary; and
- Allow parents and guardians to pick-up meals for their children.

USDA Extends WIC COVID-19 Flexibilities for Duration of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

<https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2020/09/21/usda-extends-wic-covid-19-flexibilities-duration-covid-19-public>

Washington, D.C., September 21, 2020 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the extension of more than a dozen flexibilities ensuring participants in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) continue receiving the food and health support they need during the COVID-19 pandemic. USDA's proactive extension of these waivers throughout the national public health emergency will ensure nutritionally at-risk mothers, babies, and children receive the critical nutrition benefits and services they count on in a safe manner while allowing the program to operate based on local conditions throughout the pandemic.

Without today's action, these essential flexibilities would have expired at the end of this month.

WIC provides supplemental foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding promotion and support, and health care referrals to low-income pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, infants and children under five who are determined by health professionals to be at nutritional risk.

The WIC waivers being extended allow for:

- Participants to be approved for WIC without being physically present in a local office;
- Remote issuance of benefits to any participant;
- Flexibility in food package requirements, including dairy, grains, vegetables, and infant foods; and
- Additional options for pick-up of food packages.



II. New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

General Information System (GIS) Message : COVID-19 , SNAP Interview Requirement and Certification Period Extension Waiver Renewals

<https://otda.ny.gov/policy/gis/2020/20DC096.pdf>

The purpose of this GIS is to advise social services districts (districts) about the availability of these waivers and to provide guidance about their application. **These adjustments will be in effect from October 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.** OTDA will evaluate the need for future extensions to certification periods.
SNAP Interviews at Initial Application and Recertification

Districts will not be required to interview households applying for SNAP 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-uponreceipt 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 SNAP 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. (We remind districts that 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 December 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.

Please note, that districts are not prohibited from doing interviews, just not required. When processing an application for ongoing SNAP benefits, if all mandatory verification has been submitted prior to the issuance of ongoing benefits, no interview is required.

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: COVID-19 Emergency Relief-Treatment of Supplemental Lost Wages Payments for Temporary Assistance (TA) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) AND THE Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

<https://otda.ny.gov/policy/gis/2020/20DC092.pdf>

September 24, 2020 . Purpose of this GIS message is to provide guidance to social services districts (districts) on how to treat the new Supplemental Lost Wages (SLW) payments for Temporary Assistance (TA), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). **These payments are funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)** under the authority of section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Act (42 USC 5174) and Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations. SLW payments must not be counted as income or as a resource in determining eligibility for TA, SNAP, or HEAP. These payments will be issued by the New York State Department of Labor and will provide an additional \$300 in federally funded dollars each week to the Unemployment Insurance Benefit (UIB) of each eligible worker.

These payments are funded and treated differently than the previously authorized Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) payments described in 20 TA/DC035.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) For SNAP, the SLW payments are excluded (not to be counted) as income and are also disregarded as a resource when determining eligibility and calculating benefits for SNAP. As set forth above for TA, SLW payments, if received retroactively, are already excluded as income for SNAP and therefore are not subject to the lump sum provisions.

General Information System (GIS) Message: COVID-19 Telephone Signature Waiver Option Extension through December 31, 2020

<https://otda.ny.gov/policy/gis/2020/20DC090.pdf>

In response to the outbreak of COVID-19 and in accordance with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Services (FNS), the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) released GIS 20 TA/DC049, GIS 20 TA/DC055, GIS 20 TA/DC066 and GIS 20 TA/DC075

advising social services districts (districts) of the ability to accept telephonic signatures on applications filed over the telephone or submitted without a signature for individuals and families who are applying for or receiving assistance through Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)- only, Temporary Assistance (TA), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Medicaid (MA) on a TA case.

The purpose of this GIS is to inform districts that FNS has extended its approval of a temporary adjustment to the requirements for recording telephonic signatures for SNAP applications filed over the telephone or submitted without a signature to December 31, 2020. During the time that this SNAP adjustment is in effect, TA, or MA on a TA case applications may also be accepted over the telephone.

Monthly Caseload Statistics – July 2020

<https://otda.ny.gov/resources/caseload/2020/2020-07-stats.pdf>



Table 1
TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE CASES
July 2020

Region	Cases				
	Temporary Assistance by Program			Supplemental Security Income	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
	Total	Family Assistance-FP	Safety Net Assistance		
New York State	281,941	80,371	201,570	660,208	1,591,841
New York City	207,275	50,843	156,432	391,609	973,546
Rest of State	74,666	29,528	45,138	268,599	618,295

III. Reports, News and Notable Items

DSS-HRA –DHS COVID-19 Updates

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/immigrants/help/legal-services/public-charge.page>

September 23, 2020 –It is Important to know

Public Charge

On Friday, September 11, 2020 the Second Circuit Court of appeals stayed the federal injunction issued on July 29, 2020 that temporarily blocked the Public Charge rule from taking effect in New York Connecticut and Vermont. On Tuesday, September 22, 2020, following the Court's decision, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced that it will apply the new Public Charge rule to all applications and petitions postmarked (or submitted electronically) on or after February 24, 2020.

Quick Facts:

- The Public Charge rule does not change eligibility requirements for public benefits.
- Many immigrants do not face a Public Charge test in their immigration applications.
- There is no Public Charge test for green card holders applying for citizenship.
- USCIS has stated that it will not consider testing, treatment, nor preventative care related to COVID-19 for Public Charge purposes.

What You Can Do:

- Empower New Yorkers to continue to seek care without fear. Use MOIA's [social media toolkit](#) to share multilingual graphics and videos on social media.
- Share [MOIA's Immigrant Resource Guide](#) with COVID-19 resources. Translations of this resource guide include downloadable PDF files and translated COVID-19 graphics (25+ languages) about city services available to all New Yorkers, regardless of immigration status or ability to pay.
- Encourage immigrant New Yorkers with questions about public charge and immigration to call New York City's ActionNYC hotline at 1-800-354-0365, Monday to Friday between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m., to connect with City-funded, free and safe immigration legal help.

Free Immigration Services Resources in NYC:



<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/immigrants/help/legal-services/actionnyc.page>

Immigration Resources flyer:

<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/immigrants/downloads/pdf/public-charge-outreach-flyer-english.pdf>

<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/immigrants/downloads/pdf/public-charge-outreach-flyer-spanish.pdf>

New Americans Hotline: 1-800-566-7636



<https://www.newamericans.ny.gov/Hotline/hotline.html#:~:text=New%20Americans%20Hotline%3A%201%2D800,of%20citizenship%20or%20documented%20status.>

The New Americans hotline is a toll-free, multi-lingual hotline. The hotline provides live assistance in more than 200 languages. Anyone can call the hotline for information and referrals, regardless of citizenship or documented status. Calls to the hotline are confidential and anonymous.

The hotline operates from 9AM to 8PM (ET), Monday through Friday (excluding Federal holidays) and is managed by Catholic Charities Community Services.



Immigration Advocates Network: Provides Legal Services Directory

<https://www.immigrationadvocates.org/nonprofit/legaldirectory/search?state=NY>

Pennsylvania –Capital –Star –Pandemic threatens food insecurity for many college students

<https://www.penncapital-star.com/commentary/pandemic-threatens-food-security-for-many-college-students-opinion/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=82ee7c1b-599e-48fa-9c2f-9bf7829e4c1f>

In this opinion piece by Stanford University postdoctoral research fellow Matthew Landry, and Purdue University associate professor of nutrition science Heather Eicher-Miller, **there has been a rise in food insecurity among college students during COVID-19.**

The signs of this growing [food insecurity](#) began to emerge when the COVID-19 epidemic was beginning to take its toll. [One spring 2020 report](#) found that 38 percent of students at four-year universities were food-insecure in the previous 30 days. That was up 5 percentage points from [33 percent in the fall of 2019](#).

Historically, estimates of food insecurity among college students have ranged from 10 percent to 75 percent, according to 50 studies from U.S. academic institutions carried out from 2009 to [before the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

Why it matters: This is not just a matter of growling stomachs. This is a straight-up education and health issue. When students don't really know if they'll be able to get enough to eat, it can lead to a series of problems that make it harder to stay in school.

For instance, it can affect [academic performance](#) and [sleep quality](#). It can also lead to [poor mental and physical health](#) outcomes for college students.

Food insecurity can also result in disrupted eating patterns if there is [not enough food or the variety](#) or [quality of what someone eats](#) is low.

Campus food pantries- Previous strategies by [colleges and universities](#) to fight hunger in their student bodies have varied widely. They include campus food pantries, emergency cash assistance and nutrition education through noncredit classes or workshops.

These strategies were put to the test during the spring 2020 semester, when nearly [three in five students](#) said they had trouble meeting their own basic needs during the **pandemic**.

Decreased reliance on parental financial support is [especially common](#) for first-generation students and students of color, who now make up [45% of enrolled college students](#).

Under normal circumstances, many college students might rely on part-time jobs to pay for their food.

Two-thirds of the students who were employed before the pandemic said that job insecurity was a problem for them, according to the Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice [#RealCollege survey](#). As the number of [jobless young Americans](#) remains elevated, unemployment and underemployment remain a problem.

Jobless students face a potential double threat of less money for food and unemployment benefits cutting off their access to SNAP because the program [requires most students to work](#) at least part time.

IV. Other Items

[HRA Mediations Liaison Update](#)

As result of the COVID-19 Emergency, the HRA Mediation Model Liaison contact were reassign. Effective Immediately the below HRA liaison have been assign to assist in mediation cases

All mediations cases to Arlene Henry, Amina Serrar and Sharon Russell with a **copy to Courtney Herbert**. **Please remove Yama Phillips**.

Arlene Henry: henrya@hra.nyc.gov
Amina Serrara: serrara@hra.nyc.gov
Sharon Russell: russellsh@hra.nyc.gov
Courtney Herbert: herbertc@hra.nyc.gov

Foodbank Mediation Model Training:

Date: October 22, 2020

Time: 10:30 am - 1:30 pm

Location: Cisco Webex

Link to register:

<https://foodbanknyc.webex.com/foodbanknyc/onstage/g.php?MTID=ecd3546dd9dcb3169913a35387870312d>

HRA Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) Cards

EBT replacement cards can be requested by calling the State OTDA at 888.328-6399. For anyone having difficulty accessing a replacement card by phone, cards can also be requested by setting up an online EBT account at <https://www.connectebt.com/>. Clients can use this account to request a replacement card, check card balance, review transaction history, change a PIN, and more.

HRA Info Line: 718-557- 1399

Pandemic EBT

Families in the P-EBT benefits (last school year), who have not yet received their P-EBT benefits for eligible children who were enrolled in school during March – June 2020, should contact State OTDA's hotline or complete an online form for assistance which can be found [here](#)

OTDA completed payments of P-EBT benefits in September. If clients have issues or concerns or have not received benefits, they should reach out as soon as possible even if they have not received a letter from OTDA.

The recent Federal appropriations Continuing Resolution authorizes Pandemic EBT benefits for the 2020-2021 school year for students on the days that they are not in school, either because their schools were closed or during the times that they were learning remotely on a modified “hybrid” learning model. The Pandemic EBT program will continue to be administered by the State. Further information can be found below in the “Additional Information” section, and we will continue to provide updates as more detailed information becomes available.



<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=6rhs9AB5EE2M64Dowcge5xOHCi6o8CplhK5UIB98liVUQINLVkpSRFJQUIkwR1ICTIE4T09SVzc3Ry4u>

NYS OTDA P-EBT HELPLINE -1-833-452-0096

NYS OTDA Email: otda.sm.eisp.PEBT@otda.ny.gov

OTDA FAQs: <https://otda.ny.gov/SNAP-COVID-19/Frequently-Asked-Questions-Pandemic-EBT.asp#header>

FoodBank Campus Pantry

Hunter College
Medgar Evers College
HOSTOS Community College
Guttman Community College
Borough of Manhattan Community College
Lehman College
LaGuardia Community College
College of Staten Island
CUNY School of Law
John Jay College
Brooklyn College
Bronx Community College
Kingsborough Community College
York College Food pantry
Queens College
Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism

