



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Hurricane Sandy Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefit Replacement

VELMANETTE MONTGOMERY November 5, 2012

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If you lost food purchased with SNAP benefits due to Hurricane Sandy, there is help available. Current SNAP households that have lost food purchased with their benefits as a result of the storm are entitled to replacement benefits.

Q - What do I need to do?

A - If you are a current SNAP recipient and live in Nassau, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Suffolk, Sullivan or Westchester counties, or one of 77 zip codes in New York City that experienced extended power loss, including all of Staten Island, partial replacement SNAP benefits will automatically be deposited in your Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) account beginning next week. A complete list of zip codes in New York City that are included can be found at: otda.ny.gov/news/SNAP-replacements.pdf. Additional zip codes in New York City may be added as more power loss information becomes available.

Q - How much are these replacement SNAP benefits worth?

A - The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has agreed to provide current SNAP recipients in these areas with 50% percent of their **October monthly benefit amount**.

Q - What if I don't live in one of the areas receiving the automatic benefit replacement?

You can still request replacement SNAP benefits from your local department of social services by following these steps:

- You must report the loss of food purchased with SNAP benefits to your local social services office by Wednesday, November 28, 2012, either verbally or in writing.
- You must then return a signed and completed form, found at otda.ny.gov/programs/applications/2291.pdf, by close of business on Monday, December 10, 2012. The form is also available at local social services offices.
- You must then return and sign a completed "Request for Replacement of Food Purchased with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Benefits" form by close of business Monday, December 10, 2012. There are two versions of this form – you may use either version if you live in a county outside of New York City. If you live in New York City, you are asked to use the LDSS-2291A form.

<http://otda.ny.gov/programs/applications/2291A.pdf>;

<http://otda.ny.gov/programs/applications/2291A-SP.pdf>;

<http://otda.ny.gov/programs/applications/2291.pdf> (Versions of this form in other languages may be found at this link: <http://otda.ny.gov/programs/applications/>).

- You may also follow these steps if you live in Nassau, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Suffolk, Sullivan or Westchester counties, or one of 77 zip codes in New York City, and need more than you are automatically provided

Q – How do I find my local social services office?

To find your local department of social services, visit otda.ny.gov/workingfamilies/dss.asp, or call 1-800-342-3009.

Q - Will receiving the replacement SNAP benefits affect my November monthly SNAP benefit amount?

No, you will still receive the same monthly benefit amount you normally receive in November, and you will receive your benefits on the same day of the month that you normally receive your benefits.

Q – Can I use my SNAP benefits to purchase hot foods and prepared foods?

A – Current SNAP recipients in these seven counties and in all of New York City are now able to use their benefits to purchase hot foods and prepared foods.

Q – Where can I use my SNAP benefits to purchase hot or prepared food?

A - The food must be purchased at authorized retailers, like grocery stores, that already accept your SNAP benefit card (your Electronic Benefit Transfer – EBT – card).

Q – For how long may I use my SNAP benefits to purchase hot or prepared food?

A - From now until November 30, 2012.

Q – What if my store doesn't know that I can use my SNAP benefits to purchase hot or prepared food?

A – New York State and the U.S. Department of Agriculture are working on informing retailers of this new policy. If you encounter a retailer who isn't aware of the new policy, please ask them to call 1-800-342-3009 for more information.

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