



Food and
Nutrition
Service

Park Office
Center

3101 Park
Center Drive
Alexandria
VA 22302

OCT 19 2017

SUBJECT: Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) – Florida – 48 Counties – Modification – Partial Approval

TO: Robin Bailey
Regional Administrator
Southeast Regional Office

This is a partial approval in response to the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) letter dated October 17, 2017, regarding D-SNAP operations in response to Hurricane Irma. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) appreciates the complexity and scope of the historic response to Hurricane Irma, and commends DCF for its preparation and efforts in processing nearly 600,000 applications to date, and the State's adjustments to site capacity and crowd control based on lessons learned since the start of D-SNAP operations.

Per FNS' initial approval dated September 21, 2017, the State agency is permitted to accept D-SNAP applications in each approved county for a 7-day period. FNS approves DCF's request to extend the D-SNAP application period in Miami-Dade County by 1 additional day (for a total of 8 days). While FNS acknowledges DCF's request to extend the application period in Broward County by 3 additional days (for a total of 7 days), this modification is already permitted by FNS's initial approval.

The State agency has also requested to extend the D-SNAP application period in all counties going forward beyond the approved 7-day period. While FNS will consider such requests on a county-by-county basis, we are concerned that DCF's request to unilaterally extend the application period beyond the approved 7-day period for an undetermined amount of time in the remaining counties lacks specific data and justification. FNS appreciates DCF's desire to provide service to all potential D-SNAP applicants, but as the State is aware, extended D-SNAP application periods create potential risks to program integrity that must be mitigated.

FNS asks that DCF provide additional justification for this part of its request, including why these remaining counties could not adequately serve the affected population under the regular program, which is the preferred solution. Supporting information for each county should include, at a minimum:

- Number of applicants already served;
- Estimated number of applicants unable to be served under the initial 7-day application period;
- Any changes to application site location and hours of operation, including a schedule with the requested number of days to extend for each county;
- Press materials and public information strategies that clearly inform applicants of these changes;
- Documentation that the State has sufficient staff to process D-SNAP applications, has the flexibility to augment staffing as needed, has a crowd management strategy, and has sufficient security to safely manage the sites;

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- Demonstration of commitment and ability to provide human comforts (water, restroom facilities, etc.) for D-SNAP applicants, including reasonable accommodations for the elderly or disabled; and
- Strategies to ensure program integrity, including prevention of fraud.

We appreciate DCF's partnership and dedication to ensuring that Floridians affected by Hurricane Irma are able to meet their nutrition needs. FNS National Office and the Southeast Regional Office stand ready to provide any necessary technical assistance to DCF.

All other terms and conditions of FNS' September 21, 2017, D-SNAP approval remain unchanged.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jessica Shahin', written in a cursive style.

Jessica Shahin
Associate Administrator
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program