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204 FIELD OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES

Field Offices will be responsible for directly processing applications, interviewing applicants, and providing correct benefits to eligible households. On a normal, ongoing basis, local office managers will be responsible for maintaining a current list of potential disaster relief agencies and their phone numbers. These include, but are not limited to, local government or private welfare agencies, other welfare-related agencies, civic and church groups, American National Red Cross, Salvation Army, Civil Defense, and Housing and Urban Development. Lists of disaster relief agencies will be subject to Central Office review on a yearly basis.

Upon a disaster or instructions from Central Office, the local office manager will:

- A. Promptly report to Central Office:
 - 1. The geographical area affected by the disaster, with justification;
 - 2. Recommendations to Central Office as to whether outstations are needed to handle applications, as well as a courier to transport materials, information, and applications;
 - 3. Who will be taking disaster applications and act as couriers, if any.

AND

- B. Contact appropriate disaster relief agencies to supply them with our location and disaster application information;

AND

- C. Maintain an accurate list of households applying and approved for disaster benefits.

205 APPLICATION PROCESS

A. FILING AN APPLICATION

Requests for Disaster Food Stamp applications may be made verbally, in writing, in person or through another individual. An application must be given/mailed to the household the same day the request is received. Any responsible adult household member knowledgeable of the household's circumstances may apply and be interviewed. All households applying must submit an application form including, at a minimum, the applicant's name, address and signature. Clients must be advised of this right.

THE DATE OF APPLICATION is the date an application is received and date stamped in the Food Stamp Office.

If a household contacts the wrong certification office, applications received in the wrong office will be processed and transferred to the appropriate office.

B. AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

When it is impossible for a household member to apply, a responsible adult, 18 years or older, may be designated in writing as authorized representative and may sign the application and act on behalf of the household.

There is no limit on the number of households an authorized representative may represent.

Verify the identification of an authorized representative. Sources of verification include but are not limited: driver's license, insurance card, etc.

A household member should prepare or review the application even though the authorized representative is interviewed. The household will be held liable for any overissuances resulting from erroneous information.

EXCEPTIONS TO AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES

1. RETAILERS OR EMPLOYEES OF DWSS

Retailers authorized to accept food coupons or employees of **Division of Welfare and Supportive Services** may not be authorized representatives.

2. INDIVIDUALS DISQUALIFIED FOR INTENTIONAL PROGRAM VIOLATION

Individuals disqualified for Intentional Program Violation may not be authorized representatives during the period of disqualification, unless the disqualified person is the only adult living with the household, and no one else is available to act as an authorized representative.

C. INTERVIEW PROCESS

Interviews are mandatory for all applicants. Applicants may bring anyone they choose to the interview. During all interviews, the applicant must be informed of rights and obligations, and other basic program procedures.

The interviewer shall advise the household of the disposition of its application, its rights and responsibilities, when its certification period for emergency assistance ends, the civil and criminal provisions and penalties for violations of the Food Stamp Act, the fact that the household may be subject to a post-disaster review and of the ongoing Food Stamp Program. If the household also wishes to file an application for the ongoing program, the interviewer shall advise the household of the address and the telephone number of the appropriate office. The **case manager** shall inform each household of the proper use of Food Stamps.

D. CLIENT COOPERATION

All clients are required to furnish information and/or documentation necessary to establish eligibility for Food Stamps, and be interviewed. If a household refuses to cooperate with the Food Stamp Office in supplying information or being interviewed, the case will be denied or terminated at the time of refusal.

206 TIME FRAMES FOR PROCESSING AND CERTIFICATION

Applications will be processed the same day as they are received, unless restrictions such as curfews make this impossible. In these situations, applications must be processed the following day.

Eligible households will be certified for one issuance cycle at a time.

207 ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for Disaster Food Stamp benefits, a household must meet all of the following criteria.

A. ADVERSE EFFECTS RESULTING FROM DISASTER

The household must have experienced at least one of the following adverse effects to be eligible for Disaster Food Stamp assistance.

1. Expenses for damage repair to its home or other property essential to the household's employment or self-employment.
2. Expenses for temporary shelter costs if the household's home is uninhabitable or unreachable.
3. Expenses for moving out of an area evacuated due to disaster.
4. Expenses related to protecting a home or business from the effects of a disaster.

209 BENEFIT CALCULATION

Eligible households shall receive emergency allotments equal to the value of food actually lost in a disaster, but not greater than the applicable maximum monthly allotment for the household size.

210 DUPLICATION OF ASSISTANCE

Disaster assistance is available to households participating in the regular Food Stamp Program on the same basis as it is to those who are not.

If a regular participant applies for disaster assistance, the office shall obtain a written statement from the household, documenting whether it received the normal allotment. Food Stamps already issued and received, or to be received, are subtracted from the disaster assistance, unless the food received under the regular program was destroyed in the disaster. If the household must replace food destroyed in the disaster, the regular benefits will not be subtracted from disaster benefits.

When a disaster assistance recipient wants to obtain regular Food Stamps, a regular Food Stamp application must be submitted. Normal Food Stamp rules apply to the regular Food Stamp application. If eligible, the household is certified effective the day after the disaster assistance end date.

211 ID CARDS

Households certified for assistance must be issued ID cards at the local level, with "DISASTER ALLOWANCE" noted in red. If the household is subsequently certified for regular Food Stamps, a normal ID card must be issued.

212 CONFERENCES/HEARINGS

Aggrieved households must be able to receive a supervisory review the same day the office learns of the complaint or disagreement. Normal Food Stamp Program hearing procedures apply to households requesting a hearing.