

**DSS ADMINISTRATIVE LETTER ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES
EFS_FNS_AL-5-2019**

Hurricane Dorian 2019 Automated Mass Replacement Waiver

September 19, 2019

Food and Nutrition Services

TO: County Directors of Social Services

ATTENTION: Food and Nutrition Services Managers and Supervisors

DATE: September 19, 2019

SUBJECT: Automated Mass Replacement benefits for Additional Counties

EFFECTIVE: September 20, 2019

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

North Carolina submitted an amended waiver to issue automated mass replacements for three additional counties, **Craven, Jones and Pamlico**. The original waiver was approved September 13, 2019 to issue automated mass replacements to Brunswick, Camden, Carteret, Currituck, Dare, Hyde, Tyrrell and Washington counties for residents that suffered food losses resulting from Hurricane Dorian September 5, 2019.

North Carolina requested a waiver to provide mass replacement of benefits, without requiring households to report loss of food or provide verification of the loss. Counties where 50% of the entire population experienced power outages of four or more hours are eligible for this waiver. The waiver will allow for more timely and efficient replacement of benefits via an automated process.

Estimating the portion of the food purchased with monthly benefits that had not yet been consumed at the time of the disaster, and was therefore subject to loss, is relevant to making this determination. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) derives a benefit replacement estimate by assuming a reasonable usage of benefits and consumption of food over the course of the month and estimates how much food may have been lost by the average household. This estimate considers whether loss is limited to perishables due to a power outage, or perishables and non-perishables due to structural or flood damage.

North Carolina provided USDA with available documentation of power outages and flooding for three additional effected counties. The State proposed to automatically replace 30% of all August 2019 FNS benefits for the above counties and USDA approved the replacement of 30%. This waiver allows for an automated mass replacement of 30% of the August 2019 benefits.

II. POLICY PROCEDURES

NCFAST will automatically issue the replacements for **Craven, Jones and Pamlico** via a batch process on September 19, 2019. These benefits will be available to households on Friday, September 20, 2019. If a household already requested and was approved for a manual August 2019 replacement, they will not be included in the mass replacement batch.

If a household submits a manual affidavit claiming a loss greater than the 30% issued in the mass replacement batch, the household is only entitled to receive the difference between the requested amount and the amount previously replaced. Accept the client's statement unless questionable. **Replacement benefits cannot exceed the maximum monthly allotment for the household.**

III. IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS

Affidavits received, but not keyed, prior to September 19, 2019:

Determine if the requested manual replacement amount is more than 30% of the household's August 2019 benefit.

- If it is not, document the affidavit that the client is in one of the above mentioned three counties and received the 30% mass replacement benefits and is not eligible for additional replacement benefits.
- If the amount on the affidavit is more than 30% issue the difference between the requested amount and the 30% already issued through the mass replacement. **Replacement benefits cannot exceed the maximum monthly allotment for the household.**

Submit any questions regarding this information to the Operational Support Team (OST) at DSS.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov. Include "Disaster FNS" in the subject line of the email.

Sincerely,



David Locklear, Deputy Director
Economic and Family Services