NJ Human Services Announces $36 Million in Additional Food Assistance

Many NJ SNAP Recipients Will Receive Enhanced Benefits

April 28, 2020

(TRENTON) – Many New Jerseyans who receive food assistance through the state's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (NJ SNAP) will receive additional benefits in May to help address critical food needs related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

An additional $36 million will be provided to about 214,000 New Jersey households in May.

SNAP supplemental payments were included in the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act. In March and April, Human Services announced $70 million in total additional NJ SNAP benefits that were provided to New Jerseyans to help purchase groceries.

"During this tough time, we want to make sure that we are providing as much food assistance as possible to eligible households for as long as we can," Human Services Commissioner Carole Johnson said. "I continue to thank our Congressional delegation for their efforts to protect and help residents as we respond to this pandemic."

The supplemental benefits will be directly loaded to NJ SNAP recipients' Families First EBT cards as part of their regular monthly payment.

NJ SNAP provides food assistance to families with low incomes to help them buy groceries through a benefit card accepted in most food retail stores and farmer's markets.

NJ SNAP currently serves about 674,000 New Jerseyans in 343,000 households. Households eligible for the NJ SNAP supplemental benefit will receive the difference between their regular SNAP benefit and the maximum benefit for their family size. These supplements will be in addition to standard monthly benefits. Households' standard monthly SNAP benefit is based on household size and income. Under federal policies implementing the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, households that already receive the federal allowable maximum SNAP benefit are not eligible for supplemental payments.

"These extra benefit payments will prove critical to many New Jersey households, especially older adults and individuals with disabilities," Human Services Deputy Commissioner Elisa Neira said. "Access to additional food assistance is more important than ever, and we hope that these new resources will give many individuals and families additional peace of mind."

"During this difficult time, we encourage residents who need food assistance to visit and apply for SNAP online at www.NJHelps.org," said Assistant Commissioner Natasha Johnson, who directs the Department of Human Services' Division of Family Development and oversees the SNAP program. "We appreciate the dedicated staff at the County Boards of Social Services who are essential to getting these critical services to New Jersey families."

Human Services also received federal approval to extend NJ SNAP recertification periods to six months for cases that were expiring in March, April and May. This means families receiving SNAP will not have benefit interruptions during that time.

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Back to top

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Back
to top