MDHS launches Online Food Purchase Program statewide for SNAP recipients

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(Jackson, Miss.) –Mississippians in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) households are now able to make online food purchases using their benefits. The Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS) received approval from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to allow online purchasing of food by SNAP households. After testing with the two nationally approved vendors, Amazon and Walmart, MDHS has launched the program statewide for Amazon today. Walmart will be live statewide on Thursday, August 27.

This program will allow Mississippi to use their SNAP benefits for online purchasing only with authorized SNAP online retailers. Currently, the only two approved retailers for Mississippi are Walmart and Amazon. Any local retailers who wish to apply for approval for receiving online purchases should review the FNS website https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer-requirements-provide-online-purchasing to determine what information is needed to apply.

“This is a major step forward in eliminating the dilemma caused by food insecurity and food deserts in Mississippi,” MDHS Executive Director Robert G. “Bob” Anderson said. “We appreciate FNS providing oversight of such a necessary program, which will give Mississippians healthy eating options who otherwise might not have them.”

Since the purpose of SNAP is only to purchase food, SNAP funds cannot be used for shipping or delivery of online purchases. An alternate means of payment must be used for shipping and delivery charges.

Mississippi’s SNAP participation is more than 420,000 individuals, more than 195,000 households, and totals approximately $800 million annually in federal benefits. From March through July, MDHS distributed nearly $385 million in SNAP disbursements throughout Mississippi.

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