FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 16, 2020

Missouri resumes Food Stamp/SNAP recertification requirement July 1

JEFFERSON CITY, MO — The Department of Social Services' temporary waiver of the recertification requirement for Food Stamp/ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants ends this month. Starting July 1, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) resumes the requirement for Missourians to complete a periodic recertification process to verify the household still qualifies for Food Stamp/SNAP benefits. FSD has begun sending letters to households due for recertification in the month of July and the completed application form must be returned on time to ensure Food Stamp/SNAP benefits will not be interrupted, if the household is still eligible. Over 16,000 SNAP households are due for recertification in the month of July. All Food Stamp participants will receive and must complete their recertification form every year, or every two years, if the individual is aged, blind, or disabled. As of April 30, 2020, 360,937 Missouri households or 752,315 individuals receive Food Stamp/SNAP benefits.

"DSS was able to take advantage of this waiver to help Missourians during COVID-19 when the federal government declared a state of emergency," said Jennifer Tidball, Acting Director, Department of Social Services. "Missouri has now moved into Phase 2 of the Show Me Strong Recovery Plan and I want to make sure Food Stamp/SNAP participants are aware the state is beginning to resume normal program operations. Missourians receiving a Food Stamp/SNAP benefit are responsible for completing and submitting the Family Support Division form sent to them to recertify the household is still eligible to receive Food Stamp/SNAP benefits. If a household does not provide the completed form by the due date, their benefit can end."

DSS also reminds low-income Missouri families to apply for the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT), a one-time food assistance benefit. The P-EBT benefit helps families of students with an income of up to 185 percent of the federal poverty level who qualify for free or reduced-price meals with the cost of the meals they provided for their children while they learned at home during the months of March, April, and May. The maximum benefit per child is $302. DSS and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with local school districts have issued this one-time food benefit to more than 148,000 households. Only about 60 percent of households that could be eligible have applied for the P-EBT benefit. The deadline for application has now been extended to July 7. Families may download the **application online (https://www.emergencymealsurvey.com/MO)** or call 855-FSD-INFO to get an application by mail.

Missourians who have questions can use the **DSS Virtual Assistant (https://info.mo.gov/dss/chatbot/)** to get immediate answers to basic questions that are not specific to an individual's case 24 hours a day or can call 855-FSD-INFO or 855-373-4636 Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

The **Missouri Services Navigator (https://mo.servicesnavigator.org/s4s/WhereILive/Council?pageId=1&lockla=true)** has information on over 2,800 programs and services available in the state. Missourians in need of information on LIHEAP, Food Stamp, Medicaid, Child Care Subsidy, or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefit programs can visit **dss.mo.gov (https://dss.mo.gov/)**. Missourians can also apply for those services 24/7 online by visiting **MyDSS.mo.gov (https://mydss.mo.gov/)**, or sending completed applications and verification documents by email to **FSD.Documents@dss.mo.gov (mailto:FSD.Documents@dss.mo.gov)**, or by fax to 573-526-9400.

The Department of Social Services is committed to the "**Show Me Strong" Recovery Plan (https://showmestrong.mo.gov/)** and serving the needs of Missouri citizens during COVID-19 pandemic. Information regarding the department's response to the pandemic is available online **https://dss.mo.gov/covid-19 (https://dss.mo.gov/covid-19)**.

The mission of the Department of Social Services is to empower Missourians to live safe, healthy, and productive lives. Visit **dss.mo.gov (https://dss.mo.gov/)** to learn more about the Department of Social Services and follow us on **Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/MOSocialServices/)** and **Twitter (https://twitter.com/DSS_Missouri)**.

###

Media Contact

Rebecca Woelfel

Rebecca.Woelfel@dss.mo.gov (mailto:rebecca.woelfel@dss.mo.gov)