

NEWS RELEASE | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | July 15, 2019

Help available for SNAP (food stamp) clients in southwest North Dakota who lost food due to power outages from Friday's storm

BISMARCK, N.D. – Residents in southwest North Dakota who receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and lost food due to power outages from Friday's storm have 10 calendar days to seek replacement benefits. They must report their food loss by July 22 at 5 p.m. Central Time to their county social service office during regular business hours.

Replacement benefits are available to any SNAP household who lost food purchased with SNAP benefits due to a power outage lasting more than four hours or other disaster situation.

"We want all SNAP households in southwest North Dakota to know that help is available to replace perishable food items that were lost due to power outages from the recent storm," said Michele Gee, director of the Economic Assistance Division for the North Dakota Department of Human Services. "Households are encouraged to contact their county social service office and get the process started as soon as possible as replacement benefits are offered on a time-limited basis."

Gee said after a county social service office verifies a power outage-related food loss, replacement SNAP benefits are issued to affected clients' debit cards, called EBT cards. Clients use EBT cards at participating grocery stores, farmers markets, and other approved retailers to purchase food items.

The program will replace the amount of the loss, up to the amount a household received as a benefit in July. For example, if a household reports a food loss of \$100 and the household received benefits of \$100 in July, \$100 in replacement benefits would be issued once the loss is verified.

People with questions should contact their county social service office or call the department at 800-755-2716 or 711 (TTY). County contact information is online at www.nd.gov/dhs/locations/countysocialserv/.

In June 2019, SNAP served 47,783 qualifying low-income North Dakotans. The federally-funded program tends to serve mainly low-income children, often in single-parent families, people with disabilities, and seniors on fixed incomes.

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