

**DSS ADMINISTRATIVE LETTER ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES  
EFS\_FNS\_AL-4-2019**

**Hurricane Dorian 2019 Automated Mass Replacement Waiver**

**September 15, 2019**

**Food and Nutrition Services**

**TO:** County Directors of Social Services  
**ATTENTION:** Food and Nutrition Services Managers and Supervisors  
**DATE:** September 15, 2019  
**SUBJECT:** Hurricane Dorian Automated Mass Replacements Waiver  
**EFFECTIVE:** September 16,2019

**I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

On September 5, 2019, Hurricane Dorian brought severe flooding and power outages to several eastern counties in North Carolina. To assist current Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) recipients adversely effected by this disaster, 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. The following counties were approved in the waiver:

**Brunswick, Camden, Carteret, Currituck, Dare, Hyde, Tyrrell and Washington**

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 the eight affected counties. The State proposed to automatically replace 50% of all August 2019 FNS benefits for the above counties, however, 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 via a batch process on September 15, 2019, these benefits will be available to households on Monday, September 16, 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 15, 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 eight 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](mailto: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