
FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION

BENEFIT ADJUSTMENTS

FNS 905 REPLACEMENT OF AUTHORIZED ISSUANCE

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CHANGE 19-2021

OCTOBER 8, 2021

905.01

**REQUIREMENT FOR REPLACING DESTROYED FOOD
PURCHASED WITH FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES (FNS)**

A FNS unit is entitled to a replacement of benefits when food purchased with FNS is destroyed in a household misfortune (such as, but not limited to, a power outage or mechanical failure) or disaster (such as, but not limited to, a fire or flood).

The FNS unit may be eligible to receive a replacement of the actual value of the loss, **not to exceed** one month's allotment for the FNS unit if the following conditions are met:

- A. The loss must be reported (verbally or in writing) within ten calendar days of the incident.
- B. The FNS unit must complete a DSS-1678 Replacement Affidavit within ten calendar days of the report.
 - 1. The DSS-1678 must include the household's actual amount of food loss that was purchased with FNS.
 - 2. Do not issue a replacement if the agency does not receive the DSS-1678 within ten calendar days from the date the report is filed.
 - 3. If the tenth day falls on a weekend or holiday, and the DSS-1678 is received the day after the weekend or holiday, consider the statement to be received timely.
- C. Replace benefits within ten calendar days of the report or within two days of receiving the DSS-1678, whichever is later.
- D. Deny or delay replacement issuances when there is documentary evidence that indicates the FNS unit's request for replacement appears to be fraudulent.
- E. There are no limits on the number of times a replacement may be issued to a FNS unit.
- F. Food Safety Guidelines:
 - 1. Food in a full freezer is safe for about two days without power. A half-full freezer is safe for one day.
 - 2. Food that still contains ice crystals can be refrozen safely.
 - 3. Some refrigerated food should be discarded if kept above 40 degrees for more than two hours. These foods include raw or cooked meat, poultry, or

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seafood; milk/cream, yogurt, soft cheese; cooked pasta, pasta salads; custard, chiffon, or cheese pies; fresh eggs, egg substitutes; meat or cheese-topped pizza, luncheon meats; casseroles, stew, or soups; mayonnaise, tartar sauce and creamy dressing; refrigerated cookie dough; and cream-filled pies.

905.02 STOLEN BENEFITS

Benefits or food purchased with FNS that are stolen may not be replaced. The worker should explain to the FNS unit that:

1. Benefits cannot be replaced due to theft or loss of EBT card.
2. Accessing FNS benefits requires the individual to have **both** the EBT card and the Personal Identification Number (PIN).
3. EBT card precautions:
 - a. It is the FNS units responsibility to safeguard the PIN.
 - b. The FNS unit is responsible for changing the PIN, if the security of the number is compromised.
 - c. The PIN should not be shared with others, written on the EBT card, or stored in a location that it can be easily obtained by others.
 - d. If stolen, even under duress, the EBT card should be reported lost or stolen and the PIN changed immediately to prevent fraudulent use of the FNS benefits.
4. Advise the FNS unit that the benefits cannot be replaced due to failure to follow reasonable security of the EBT card and PIN and they should file a police report to report the theft.

If the FNS unit believes they are the victims of identity theft, they should contact their local police department regarding procedures for filing a report. The FNS unit may also file a consumer complaint online with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at <https://www.ftc.gov>. FTC is the federal agency responsible for protecting consumers from identity theft scams.

905.03 DOCUMENTATION AND VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

- A. Document each request for replacement in the case file.
 1. Documentation should include the date, the reason, verification, and if the replacement was provided or the reason the replacement was denied.

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2. Form DSS-1678 Replacement Affidavit must be completed, signed, and retained in the North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology (NC FAST) record.
- B. Verify the FNS unit misfortune or disaster through one of the following:
1. A collateral contact;
 2. Documentary evidence from a community agency including, but not limited to, the fire department or the Red Cross;
 3. A home visit prior to replacing food destroyed that was purchased with FNS.
- C. Do not require a specific verification source; however, the source must be knowledgeable of the FNS unit's circumstances.

EXAMPLE: A FNS unit experiences a power outage on July 5. The FNS unit verbally reports the outage on July 7. The FNS unit states that all food stored in their refrigerator was lost due to the outage. The caseworker requests the FNS unit to provide a written statement of the loss using a DSS-8650 Food and Nutrition Services Notice of Information Needed. The FNS unit provides a written statement of the loss on July 10. The agency verifies the power outage with a neighbor and replaces the amount of food loss (up to the full amount of the original allotment) by July 17.

EXAMPLE: A FNS unit reports and provides a written statement on March 23 that it has lost all food stored in their home because of a flood which occurred on March 21. There has been widespread news coverage of the flood. The agency replaces the amount of food loss (up to the full amount of the original allotment) by April 3 and documents the news media as the source of verification in the case file.

EXAMPLE: A FNS unit reports to the agency on April 4 that their refrigerator had a mechanical failure on April 1. The FNS unit does not have a collateral contact or documentary evidence of the mechanical failure. The caseworker conducts a home visit on April 5 and verifies that the household's refrigerator has broken. The agency replaces the amount of food loss (up to the full amount of the original allotment) by April 14.

905.04

DISASTER ALLOTMENTS

If the United States Department of Agriculture issues a disaster declaration and the FNS unit is eligible for disaster FNS, the FNS unit cannot receive both the disaster allotment and a replacement allotment for destroyed food. The request for replacement allotment should be denied and only the disaster allotment is issued.