



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Social Services

ROY COOPER • Governor
MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH • Secretary
MICHAEL BECKETTS • Assistant Secretary for Human Services

February 13, 2019

Dear County Directors of Social Services

Attention: Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Administrators, Managers and Supervisors
Program Integrity Supervisors and Investigators

Subject: Issuance of March 2019 FNS Benefits

Priority: **Action Required**

Overview

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has confirmed funding for FNS benefits and administrative cost will be available through the end of March 2019, regardless of whether the government shuts down again on February 15, 2019. Although there is funding for FNS benefits in March, many households will have a lapse in benefits between the early February issuance on January 20, 2019 and the next regular FNS issuance schedule.

On January 20, 2019, early issuance of February FNS benefits was released to ensure households received benefits during the lapse in appropriations. As a result, households would experience a lapse in benefits for up to 60 days unless there is an adjustment to the March and April 2019 issuance schedule. The NC Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS) has developed an issuance strategy to issue March and April 2019 benefits on an alternative schedule to mitigate burdens to families.

To prevent households from experiencing a lapse in benefits up to 60 days, March 2019 benefits will be issued early. Residents of Alcohol Drug Treatment Centers (ADTC's) will receive benefits on March 1, 2019, all other households will receive benefits on March 3, 2019. April 2019 benefits for residents of ADTC's will be issued April 1, 2019. Households that receive benefits on the 3rd – 11th of the month will remain on normal issuance schedules. Households that receive benefits between the 13th – 21st of the month, will receive benefits on April 12, 2019. This will allow us to resume the regular issuance cycle for May 2019. A chart is attached that illustrates the altered issuance cycles.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES • ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Communication

Since the issuance cycles for March and April are different, notification of March issuance cycles will be communicated separately to mitigate confusion to recipients and our partners. The Department will use the same forms of communication to notify households of the change in issuance schedule of March and April that were used for early issuance of February FNS benefits. These will include public notices, press releases, social media, flyers to display in local county departments of social services, community action agencies, food banks and authorized EBT retailers. In addition, the Department will coordinate efforts with the N.C. Retail Merchants Association, N.C. Department of Public Health, and the N.C. Department of Public Instruction, and other community partners.

Beginning the week of February 19, 2019, FNS households with current email addresses and phone numbers in NC FAST will be sent an email and receive robocalls informing them of the March 2019 issuance cycles. Attached are flyers in English and Spanish that should be posted in the county department of social services as well as shared with community partners within your county as well as sample social media templates.

The Department has issued a press release (attached) to media outlets across North Carolina regarding the issuance of March benefits.

Client Accounts Access

As always, households may access their account information through the free mobile application, *ebtEDGE* or calling the NC EBT Call Center at 1-888-622-7328.

Sincerely,



David Locklear

EFS-FNSEP-13-2019

Attachments (7)

- English Flyer
- English Flyer-Landscape
- Spanish Flyer
- Spanish Flyer-Landscape
- Alternative Issuance Chart
- DHHS Press Release
- Sample Social Media Templates