



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

**ROY COOPER** • Governor

**KODY H. KINSLEY** • Secretary

**YVONNE COPELAND** • Director, Division of Child and Family Well  
Being

**Date:** October 16, 2024

**Dear County Directors of Social Services**

**Attention:** Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Income Maintenance Caseworkers, Managers and Supervisors

**Subject:** Hurricane Helene – Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP)

**Priority:** Information and Action Required

**I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has approved a Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) program for the following North Carolina counties: **Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Clay, Cleveland, Gaston, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes, Yancey counties, and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) households residing in the 28719 zip code.**

Individuals and households who are not currently receiving FNS benefits and live in one of the disaster counties listed above for Phase 1 can apply for D-SNAP benefits. The households must have been impacted by Hurricane Helene and meet the eligibility criteria to be eligible for D-SNAP benefits. This letter provides instructions and procedures counties must follow while implementing and executing D-SNAP. All employees assisting with taking D-SNAP applications should review this DCDL carefully before the D-SNAP application process begins on October 18, 2024.

**II. IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS**

**A. D-SNAP Application Period and Procedures:**

The Phase 1 D-SNAP program will be activated for seven (7) consecutive days to apply for D-SNAP benefits. The benefit period covered by this waiver is September 25, 2024, through October 24, 2024. D-SNAP applications will be accepted starting October 18, 2024 at 8:00AM, through October 24, 2024 at 4:00PM.

1. Households will have the option to either apply for D-SNAP:

**NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING**

LOCATION 5601 Six Forks Rd, Building 2, Raleigh, NC 27609

MAILING ADDRESS: 2416 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2420

www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-707-5800 • FAX: 919-870-4819

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

- a. **In-person** at one of the 25 locations for counties approved to operate D-SNAP in Phase 1, or one of the two (2) locations for Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians households residing in zip code 28719 (on the Qualla Boundary or at Jackson County DSS). Full list of D-SNAP locations is available at [www.ncdhhs.gov/dsnap](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dsnap).
- b. **Virtually and via telephone:**
  - i. Applicants may submit a D-SNAP pre-registration via the ePASS Pre-Registration Tool at [www.epass.nc.gov](http://www.epass.nc.gov). The D-SNAP Pre-Registration will be available October 15, 2024 at 8:00AM through October 24, 2024 at 4:00PM. Once the pre-registration is completed, applicants will be issued a confirmation number and will need to call the D-SNAP virtual call center at 1-844-453-1117 to complete the interview before October 24, 2024 at 4:00PM.
  - ii. Alternatively, applicants can complete the D-SNAP application and interview over the phone without completing the pre-registration.
  - iii. The D-SNAP virtual call center hours of operation will be 8:00am-4:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am-12:00pm on Saturday and Sunday.
  - iv. North Carolina Department of Health and Human Service (NCDHHS) has encouraged residents to apply for D-SNAP by calling the D-SNAP virtual call center on their assigned day by last name (see below for assignments by first letter of last name). However, applicants will not be turned away if they call any time during the D-SNAP application period.
    - 1. Oct. 18 – A-G
    - 2. Oct. 19 – H-M
    - 3. Oct. 20 – N-S
    - 4. Oct. 21 – T-Z
    - 5. Oct. 22 – Open to all
    - 6. Oct. 23 – Open to all
    - 7. Oct. 24 – Open to all
- c. D-SNAP applications will not be accepted via email.

## **B. D-SNAP Call Center Operations**

- 1. D-SNAP Call Center Staffing
  - a. The D-SNAP virtual call center will be staffed by county merit staff from non-disaster counties.
  - b. County merit staff will take D-SNAP applications and perform all interviews in the D-SNAP virtual call center.
  - c. Staff for the D-SNAP virtual call center will receive training from NCDHHS on D-SNAP policy and how to use the D-SNAP virtual call center platform from Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup> through Thursday, October 17<sup>th</sup>.
  - d. State staff will also provide staffing support for the D-SNAP virtual call center to answer ancillary questions, such as where people can apply for D-SNAP in person, where people can pick up their D-SNAP card, how to pin their D-SNAP card, receiving complaints, etc.
- 2. D-SNAP Call Center Process

- a. D-SNAP applicants will call the D-SNAP virtual call center, 1-844-453-1117. D-SNAP applicants can call between 8:00am and 4:00pm on weekdays and between 9:00am to 12:00pm on Saturday and Sunday.
- b. The callers will select one of the two options:
  - i. Option 1 for D-SNAP applicants, or
  - ii. Option 2 re-routes callers back to the regular EBT call center. The regular EBT call center can transfer calls back to the D-SNAP call center if needed.
- c. D-SNAP applicants will be sent to a call queue monitored by county merit staff.
- d. When a county merit staff worker is available to take a call, applicants will be connected to a county merit staff worker to complete their D-SNAP application and interview.
- e. If known to the NC FAST system, an applicant's D-SNAP pre-registration information will be accessed, reviewed, and updated by the county merit staff worker during the interview.
- f. If an applicant is new to the system, the county merit staff worker will complete a new D-SNAP application in NCFAST. The county merit staff worker will process the D-SNAP application during the interview and advise the applicant of the eligibility decision.
- g. North Carolina is authorized to accept telephonic signature for D-SNAP applications. Call center staff should state the following to the applicant to obtain telephonic signature: "Based on the information that you provided, you confirm that the information that you provided for your DSNAP application is true and correct and give consent to sign the application over the phone." The call center staff will then check the box that says "Confirmed that the claimant gave their express consent to sign the application over the phone" to indicate they received telephonic signature from the applicant.
- h. The household will be informed of eligibility for the D-SNAP program and will be given the option to pick up their D-SNAP EBT card at any of the D-SNAP on-site locations or sent via overnight mail to the mail address given on the application.
  - i. Applicants will be informed that they must present a form of identification (ID) to pick up their D-SNAP EBT card.
  - ii. If an applicant cannot access their ID due to storm-related damage, on-site county staff will use the same identity verification method employed during the phone application process or provide collateral contact (see Part E, Verifications).
  - iii. If the applicant indicates they are unable to pick up their card or fails to pick up their card by 12pm the next day after being approved for D-SNAP, the state office will overnight the D-SNAP EBT card to the household via overnight mail to the specified mailing address given on application.
  - iv. If an applicant calls to apply for D-SNAP on the last day of the D-SNAP operating period (i.e., October 24, 2024) and requests to pick up their card, the call center staff will ask them if the applicant can pick up their card that day at one of the D-SNAP sites by 4:00pm. If the applicant cannot pick up the card or does not pick up the card by

4:00pm, the state office will overnight the card to their mailing address given on the application.

- v. If the household is eligible, D-SNAP benefits will be available to the household within three (3) calendar days from the D-SNAP interview being completed.
- i. If an applicant requests a supervisory review through the D-SNAP virtual call center, the county merit staff worker that determined eligibility on the application will transfer the applicant to the EBT call center. The EBT call center will document the request and refer the applicant to a designated on-call supervisor who will conduct a supervisory review, specifically for applications denied via D-SNAP virtual call center where the applicant requests a supervisory review.
- j. Call Center staff have access to over 200 language interpreters when they take call-in D-SNAP applications. If needed, the county merit staff worker will create a conference call with the tele-language service and bring in the interpreter to serve the client.

### **C. D-SNAP On-site Operations**

1. Each county will have one on-site location for a total of 25 locations. Additionally, there will be two (2) locations where Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians households residing in zip code 28719 can apply for D-SNAP (on the Qualla Boundary and at Jackson County DSS).
2. Requirements for On-Site D-SNAP Locations
  - a. Designate a location in their county where they will operate D-SNAP. All counties must follow the same hours of operation, which are 8:00am-4:00pm weekdays and 9:00am-2:00pm on Saturday and Sunday.
  - b. Designate an area for D-SNAP applicants that is separate from regular FNS operations during normal business hours. Households must still be able to apply for regular FNS benefits if they choose to apply.
  - c. Designated areas or lines and accommodations for older adults and persons with disabilities.
  - d. Federal rules require counties to provide bathroom facilities and water at their D-SNAP site.
  - e. Ensure signs concerning program requirements, information for anti-fraud measures and penalty warnings for providing false information are visible. See Part C, #4 (Signage) below for required signage.
3. Staffing
  - a. Only county merit staff can perform D-SNAP interviews, determine D-SNAP eligibility, key applications, and distribute D-SNAP EBT cards at in-person D-SNAP sites. Merit-based staff consists of county staff with the capability of interviewing and determining eligibility. Counties should leverage any merit staff who have access to process cases in NC FAST (e.g., eligibility staff for FNS, Medicaid, TANF, Energy, and other social services) to conduct D-SNAP applications, interviews, and processing.

- b. Eligibility staff from other DSS agencies can assist disaster counties by taking applications and/or keying applications in NC FAST on their behalf. This can be done without having to create a second NCID. Please refer to the DSNAP Neighbor Helping Neighbor job aid in FAST Help A to Z list.
- c. If an eligible household who applies for D-SNAP via the virtual call center and requests to pick up their D-SNAP EBT card from one of the D-SNAP on-site locations, the same card distribution procedures as for on-site applications will apply.
- d. Non-merit staff (e.g., employed contracted staff) can assist in crowd control, D-SNAP application assistance, distributing water or refreshments, answering general questions, serving as navigators/runners, or managing security or parking. Counties should leverage non-merit staff and/or other county employees who do not have access to NCFAST for these types of functions. Note that security can be agency staff who maintain order, does not have to be hired security.
- e. Each county DSS director or his/her designee should identify a contact person and backup contact for policy, NC FAST and EBT card issues.
- f. There must be separation of duties between workers who perform the following functions: 1) staff who take applications and complete interviews, 2) staff who hand out/issue EBT cards, and 3) staff who key the SUI and PAN in NC FAST.
- g. NCDHHS will assign one state staff member for onsite support within each disaster county to provide technical assistance and support with policy related questions and logistics concerns. NCDHHS will also establish a D-SNAP Command Center to include seasoned policy staff, NC FAST, Performance Management and Reporting staff to support the counties administering the D-SNAP program in real-time. If counties need real-time help, their assigned state staff person will reach out to the D-SNAP Command Center for assistance.
- h. D-SNAP applications for Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) households will primarily be supported by the Jackson County DSS staff at two locations (Jackson County DSS or on the Qualla Boundary).

#### 4. Signage

- a. Counties must post several signs in English and Spanish throughout the D-SNAP site. These signs should be posted where they are easily readable by the applicants.
- b. The required posters are the:
  - i. Anti-fraud.
  - ii. Benefit timeframe.
  - iii. Change EBT PIN.
  - iv. Identification options.
  - v. Current eligibility notice.
  - vi. Limited English Proficiency.
  - vii. Both blue and green “And Justice for all” posters. If you need an “And Justice for all” posters you can request that the individual delivering your EBT cards bring additional posters.

**D. D-SNAP Eligibility Criteria:**

1. Households must not be currently receiving Food and Nutrition Services.
2. Households must have been residents in one of the counties approved for Phase 1 of D-SNAP at the time of the disaster. For the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, households must reside in zip code 28719 to be eligible to apply for D-SNAP.
3. Households must have experienced a food loss due to the disaster and at least one of the following adverse effects:
  - a. Damage or destruction to the household's home or self-employment business;
  - b. Disaster-related expenses not expected to be reimbursed during the disaster period of September 25, 2024 through October 24, 2024;
  - c. Lost or inaccessible income, or
  - d. Reduction or termination of income or delay in receipt of income during the disaster period of September 25, 2024 through October 24, 2024.
4. Food loss alone will not be a qualifying factor for D-SNAP eligibility.
5. The total net (take-home) income received during the benefit period September 25, 2024 through October 24, 2024, plus accessible liquid resources, minus eligible disaster-related expenses shall not exceed the disaster gross income limit.
6. The above factors will be used to determine eligibility. All other eligibility factors that are normally assessed for regular FNS eligibility are waived for D-SNAP and must not be addressed. The following regular FNS requirements do not apply to D-SNAP: citizenship, students, able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs), fleeing felons, probation or parole violators, drug felons, individuals with substance abuse, required household members, disqualifications, and Intentional Program Violations (IPV).
7. Countable income is income received or expected to be received during the benefit period of September 25, 2024 through October 24, 2024.
8. The 2025 Disaster Gross Income Limit will be used to determine eligibility for D-SNAP. In order to expedite the in-person application process, North Carolina will allow applicants to complete their own D-SNAP applications and allow greeters and crowd management staff to provide eligibility information and application assistance while individuals wait in line at D-SNAP sites. Once the individual is with the eligibility worker, the worker will verify identity as defined below (see Section 5, Verifications) and quickly review paper application for completeness.
9. Applicants can complete their own D-SNAP applications by downloading and completing the application in [English](#) or [Spanish](#) and bringing it to the D-SNAP location.
10. Liquid resources such as savings and checking accounts will be excluded as countable income and accessible resources, unless those savings and checking accounts are inaccessible to the household (e.g., if the household has money in a checking or savings account but the bank remains closed due to the storm). Countable income is income received or expected to be received during the benefit period of September 25, 2024 through October 24, 2024. Available cash on hand will be counted as accessible resources. Due to the impact of the storm (which includes loss of employment, delays in income, and damages uncovered by insurance), households' resources are needed to begin the recovery for their families. Lump sum disaster related insurance payments received by disaster victims will be excluded and not considered income.

- a. Actual disaster expenses will be used for deductions in determining eligibility.

**Examples:** Disaster related expenses include, but are not limited to, evacuation expenses, home/business repairs, temporary shelter, expenses for cleanup, funeral expenses due to the disaster, expenses incurred for pre-disaster preparation, evacuation cost. This is not an exhaustive list of allowable expenses.

**E. Verifications:**

- 1. Proof of identity for the head of household or authorized representative will be done for each D-SNAP application, both in-person and via the D-SNAP virtual call center. Identity verification will not be limited to any single form of verification.
  - a. For applicants who call the D-SNAP virtual call center, identity verification will be completed via the electronic Online Verification System (OVS) Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) process. Two (2) identifying questions must be asked from the OVS that only the applicant would know, such as:
    - i. Identify a previous address where a vehicle was previously registered,
    - ii. Make and model of previous vehicle, or
    - iii. Previous employer.
  - b. Counties will use the following hierarchy for verifying identity in-person:
    - i. A government issued photo ID (such as drivers licenses, U.S passport, military ID cards)
    - ii. Other IDs (employee ID, school ID, agency records)
    - iii. Identity verified through electronic Online Verification System (OVS) Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) verification process, or
    - iv. signed affidavit from a collateral contact attesting to the identity of the head of the household.

Note that signed affidavit from a collateral contact attesting to the identity of the head of the household is the last resort when no other sources of identity are available. If collateral contact is used to identify the head of household, per federal rules, county staff cannot require a government issued photo ID for the collateral contact, as this would present an access barrier.

- c. Client statement should be accepted for the following: total net (take home) income, disaster-related expenses, resources, and Social Security Numbers, if available.
  - i. Verification of residency and loss of income or inaccessibility of resources should be verified when possible.
  - ii. Verification of household composition should only be attempted if questionable.
  - iii. If verification is not available, do not pend the application, accept client's statement.
- d. Pend applications only when the household is required to:

- i. Provide verification of identity.
  - ii. Applicant is unable to provide a statement of information necessary to complete the application.
  - iii. Applicant's statement is questionable. In such case, it is recommended that the county's program integrity staff speak with the applicant.
  - iv. Written request from the head of household is needed for an authorized representative to make an application on their behalf.
  - v. Proof of authorized representative's identity is needed to apply on the household's behalf (It is not necessary to complete the Authorization Form (DSS-1688) that is used in the regular FNS program).
- e. If needed, use the DSS-8650, FNS Notice of Information Needed, to request verification, allow five calendar days for the client to provide verification.
  - f. Process the D-SNAP application as soon as possible, but no later than two calendar days of receipt of the verification. Deny the application on the sixth (6th) day if information is not provided. The denied application can be reopened if needed.
  - g. Other verifications should be verified when possible.
  - h. OVS matches are not required for in-person applications (though recommended if information is questionable) However, OVS-DMV is required to verify identity for households who apply virtually through the call center and the caseworker must run OVS-DMV at application.

**F. D-SNAP Application Requirements:**

1. The only application accepted for D-SNAP benefits is the DSS-1432 (Rev.10-2024), Application for Disaster Food and Nutrition Services. (See Attachments for D-SNAP application in English and Spanish.)
2. D-SNAP rules only apply to disaster applications taken during the seven (7) day time period, October 18th to October 24th.
3. Ensure D-SNAP applications are tracked daily due to USDA reporting requirements.
4. Process and enter in NC FAST all approved and withdrawn applications within **three days** from the date of interview.
5. Process and enter all denied applications as soon as possible but no later than **one** day. Timely processing and entering of denied applications helps counties identify households that are denied and return to complete another application.
6. Counties must designate a supervisor on-site to speak with applicants who have been denied and request a review of their application. If an applicant requests a supervisory review, the worker that determined eligibility on the application will then contact the on-site supervisor. The Supervisor will review the application for accuracy and provide an outcome to the household.
7. Counties operating D-SNAP are required to use a language service and can leverage this to ensure access to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) households for DSNAP.

**G. Employee Applications:**



1. Any county DSS employee who wishes to apply for D-SNAP must apply for D-SNAP in-person rather than through the D-SNAP virtual call center. County DSS employees can apply for D-SNAP in-person at any of the D-SNAP locations, including where they work, as long as they apply, are interviewed, and are certified by a supervisor designated by the county social services director.
2. County social services employees must be informed in advance that 100% of employee D-SNAP applications are subject to audit. A supervisor must be available at all times to complete applications in person.
3. A post-disaster review will be conducted for any application that involves current NCDHHS or county DSS employees who are involved in the administration of the D-SNAP Program.

#### H. D-SNAP Pre-Registration Submissions:

1. D-SNAP applicants will be able to complete a D-SNAP pre-registration online at [www.epass.nc.gov](http://www.epass.nc.gov).
2. D-SNAP pre-registration opens on October 15, 2024 at 8:00AM and closes on October 24, 2024 at 4:00PM.
3. D-SNAP pre-registration allows potential applicants to submit information on all household members, answer questions about income and expenses, and submit verification of identity.
4. The information submitted in the D-SNAP pre-registration is **NOT** considered an application. The information submitted in the pre-registration cannot be considered an application until the applicant completes the interview. The applicant can complete the interview by calling the D-SNAP virtual call center or in-person at one of the D-SNAP locations.
5. The potential applicant will receive the following message in both English and Spanish upon submission of the preregistration tool.
  - a. Additional information and an interview are needed to complete your application. Call 1-844-453-1117 to speak with a Disaster SNAP eligibility worker to finish your application by phone. Or, if you prefer, you can go to one of the Disaster SNAP site locations listed on the D-SNAP webpage: [Hurricane Helene Disaster DSNAP](#) .
6. Upon receipt of the pre-registration, the household should call the D-SNAP virtual call center to complete the interview process. The household can request a call back if a caseworker is not available to take their call.
7. After completing the pre-registration, households may choose to go on-site to a county D-SNAP location to complete the interview. Counties must not turn away people who come to the D-SNAP location to complete their interview.
8. If an individual calls the county DSS office and indicates they have completed a pre-registration, the county should go ahead and complete the D-SNAP interview and process the application while they are on the phone with the individual, rather than transferring or directing them to call the D-SNAP virtual call center.
  - a. If the county completes the application via the county DSS office phone, the county is responsible for card pick up or delivery for that household. The applicant can pick up the card but the county must ensure that the applicant receives card within three (3) days of interview.

9. Households must submit pre-registration forms online via ePASS by 4:00PM on October 24, 2024. Any pre-registration form submitted online after 4:00PM. on October 24, 2024 will not be a valid submission and cannot be processed for D-SNAP benefits.
10. Potential applicants that submitted a D-SNAP preregistration form and do not call the D-SNAP virtual call center by 4:00PM on October 24, 2024 lose their right to apply for D-SNAP. Potential applicants that arrive at a D-SNAP on-site location or call the D-SNAP virtual call center after the D-SNAP application period ends on October 24, 2024 cannot apply for D-SNAP.

## **I. EBT Card Process**

1. County agencies should maintain a log to track paper applications for their county as received. Throughout the day, paper applications will be taken in batches with an application log to caseworkers to the NC FAST data entry area.
  - a. The NC FAST data entry supervisor will check the log to ensure all the paper applications are attached and sign the log indicating receipt of the paper applications.
  - b. The applications will then be entered into NC FAST and will be marked as complete on the log.
  - c. County staff will enter denied applications into NC FAST daily to safeguard to prevent fraud.
  - d. Rules are also built into the NC FAST system to alert county staff if an applicant has an active FNS case or is on another D-SNAP case to prevent dual issuance.
2. Card Inventory
  - a. Cards will be assigned to the appropriate county and state staff will transport the cards to the D-SNAP sites as assigned.
  - b. The DSS agencies are required to conduct daily inventory of EBT cards and provide an EBT card count to the state office. This will help determine if additional EBT cards are needed.
3. EBT Card Procedures for Call-In Applications
  - a. The household will be informed of eligibility for the D-SNAP program and given the option to pick up their D-SNAP EBT card at any of the D-SNAP locations or the two (2) locations for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians households residing in zip code 28719.
  - b. Households may send an authorized representative to pick up the EBT card. The household needs to provide a note stating they give permission to the authorized representative to pick up the EBT card. The note along with the household and authorized representative's identification is all that is needed.
  - c. If the applicant indicates they are unable to pick up their card or fails to pick up their card by noon the day after they complete their application, the state agency will send the D-SNAP EBT card to the household via overnight mail to the specified mailing address given at application. If the household is eligible, D-SNAP benefits will be issued within three (3) calendar days from the D-SNAP application date.

#### 4. General EBT Card Procedures

- a. Signature on the EBT card manifest will not be needed.
- b. Staff issuing the EBT card should instruct the household to call the toll-free number 1-888-622-7328 to change their PIN to a “difficult” PIN once the D-SNAP application is keyed and benefits are available.
- c. Counties should display posters about how to change PIN in the area where they are issuing EBT cards. See Attachments for posters.
- d. D-SNAP benefits will be available the next day after the application is keyed and approved in NC FAST.
- e. Any remaining D-SNAP benefits on an EBT account will only be expunged if there is no activity (i.e., purchases or returns) on the account for 9 months, just as is the case for regular ongoing FNS benefits.

#### J. Preventing Dual Participation

1. Dual participation in FNS and D-SNAP is not allowed.
2. An individual can only be included in one application. Each individual household member must be searched in NC FAST to determine if the individual is a current FNS participant (i.e., has an existing individual ID number and if the household has an existing FNS PDC) or has already received D-SNAP benefits during the current disaster.
  - a. An individual who has already received D-SNAP or regular FNS benefits will be determined ineligible and noted in NC FAST. Ineligible applicants will be verbally notified during the interview if they are eligible or ineligible. Applicants will be verbally notified that they will receive a notice in the mail.
  - b. Ineligible or disqualified household members of FNS cases that were active at the time of the disaster, including individuals that were active in another state, are eligible for separate disaster benefits as these individuals will not be included in the regular September FNS benefits.
  - c. If an individual is discovered to be included on more than one application or is included in an active FNS household, take the following actions:
    - i. If an individual is a household member in an active FNS case in the month of the disaster, they will show as ineligible on the D-SNAP application. This will exclude the ineligible and disqualified member who are eligible to apply for separate disaster benefits.
    - ii. If an individual has already been approved on a D-SNAP application, they will show as ineligible on the second D-SNAP case as having concurrent benefits.
    - iii. If an individual is discovered on more than one application prior to approval of either application, resolve the discrepancy before approving either application.

#### K. Completing the D-SNAP Application

1. Use the DSS-1432 Rev. (10/24) to determine eligibility. See Attachments for the D-SNAP application.
2. Provide paper applications or the link to [NCDHHS - ePASS](#) to applicants while they wait and encourage them to complete before they are interviewed.

3. The interviewer must review the D-SNAP application with the applicant to ensure all required information is included.
4. Only the interviewer or other designated staff should complete the shaded portions of the D-SNAP application form.
5. Complete all information on the front page of the D-SNAP application including county name, application date and case/PDC number, Name of Head of household, permanent address, phone number and authorized representative information. The disaster authorization period has been pre-populated to show September 25, 2024 through October 24, 2024.
6. It is recommended to start the D-SNAP application with Part G, Penalty Warning on page 2. The caseworker must review the penalty warning carefully with each applicant, preferably prior to completing the D-SNAP application process.

**Note:** Penalty Warnings and Fraud posters must be clearly displayed at the entrances and various locations throughout the application sites.

7. Part A, Household Situation, provides information to assist the county in determining D-SNAP eligibility. Question #1 asks if the head of household is currently receiving FNS benefits.
  - a. If no (the head of household is not currently receiving FNS benefits), proceed with the D-SNAP application.
  - b. If yes (the head of household is currently receiving FNS benefits), the household is not eligible for Disaster SNAP benefits even if they live in the disaster area. Deny the application.
8. Question #5 and #6 regarding whether the applicant or any household member is a county or NCDHHS state employee involved in the administration of D-SNAP is critical for the post disaster review process. This includes temporary staff or other county agency staff used to take and process D-SNAP applications.
9. Part B, Household Members, includes information for members of the household. The applicant must include all household members who lived together and purchased, prepared, and ate food together prior to the disaster. Members of the household includes household members who may be temporarily living apart. If the applicant's household is temporarily staying with another household because of the disaster, do not include the other household members on the application.
10. To avoid duplication, the application should include the following information:
  - a. Name – Complete the full name of each household member.
  - b. Social Security Number – Applicant should provide a SSN for every household member, if available.
  - c. Birth Date – Applicant should provide birth dates for all household members.
  - d. Race – Complete for each household member.
  - e. Sex – Complete for each household member.
11. Part C, Income – includes information regarding sources, types, and total net (take-home) amount of income received during the benefit period September 25, 2024 through October 24, 2024, by each household member. Use actual income, do not round.

**Note:** FEMA payments are excluded as income as they are considered a reimbursement and should not be counted in Part C.

12. Deduct business-related expenses from self-employment income. D-SNAP applications must include all sources of income as well as total net income amounts.
13. Part D, Resources - only accessible liquid assets such as checking and savings accounts and cash available during the benefit period will be counted as resources. Do not count any liquid assets as a resource that were not accessible during the benefit period. Exclude any resource that was counted as income during this period.

**Example:** The client states they have \$500 in the bank. \$300 of it was counted as income because they just got paid. Exclude the \$300 from resources and count only \$200 for resources.

14. Part E, Expenses - include disaster-related expenses. The household should provide accurate amounts for all disaster-related expenses. Do not allow expenses covered by the excluded FEMA payment.
  - a. For disaster-related expenses, include expenses that the household paid between September 25, 2024 through October 24, 2024. Do not include expenses that were paid or reimbursed by someone outside the household during the disaster period, such as costs covered or reimbursed by insurance or landlords. Regularly occurring expenses cannot be included as disaster-related expenses.

**Example:** A household claims a \$50,000 loss because their home was destroyed. The household has not replaced their home at the time of the application. The \$50,000 loss cannot be considered as a deductible amount because the expense to replace their home has not been paid by September 26, 2024. It is only acceptable to allow a deductible amount as an expense if the expense was paid by September 26, 2024.

15. The household should provide the most accurate amounts possible for the following disaster-related expenses:
  - a. Food destroyed in the disaster - List total dollar amount of food lost or destroyed in the disaster that the household has replaced or will replace.
  - b. Dependent care and related mileage due to disaster – List amount paid or amount that will be paid by the household. This does not include regular dependent care expenses. The cost must be as a result of the disaster.
  - c. Funeral/medical expenses due to disaster - List actual expenses that are a result of the disaster and the amount paid or that will be paid by the household.
  - d. Moving and storage costs - List amount paid or amount that will be paid by the household.
  - e. Temporary shelter costs - List amount paid or amount that will be paid by the household. This can include lodging costs.
  - f. Cost to protect property during disaster - List amount paid or amount that will be paid by the household. This can include, but is not limited to plywood, tape, batteries, and generators.

- g. Cost to repair or replace items for home or self-employment property - List amount paid or amount that will be paid by the household.
  - h. Other disaster-related expenses - The household must identify and describe other disaster-related expenses paid or amount that will be paid by the household.
  - i. Total expenses – add the total expenses.
16. Part F, Eligibility Computation –
- a. Add the total income for the household from Part C and enter in #1.
  - b. Add the total accessible resources for the household from Part D and enter in #2.
  - c. Add #1 and #2 and enter total in #3.
  - d. Add the total expenses from Part E and enter in #4.
  - e. Subtract #4 from #3 and enter total in #5.
  - f. Enter the Maximum Gross Income Limit from the Disaster Table.

**Household Size Income Limit Allotment  
October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2025**

Household Size	Income Limit	Allotment
1	\$2,171	\$292
2	\$2,620	\$536
3	\$3,068	\$768
4	\$3,529	\$975
5	\$4,015	\$1,158
6	\$4,500	\$1,390
7	\$4,948	\$1,536
8	\$5,397	\$1,756
Each Additional Member	+\$449	+\$220

- g. If the amount in #5 is equal to or less than #6 indicate the household is eligible by checking the appropriate block.

- h. If the amount in #5 is greater than #6 indicate the household is ineligible by checking the appropriate block.
17. Part H, Certification and Signature - includes a statement of understanding that the applicant must read before signing the application. The applicant's signature on the application is also certification that they understand the penalty warning information in Part G.
- a. If the applicant signed the application prior to the interview, review the statement in Part H during the interview. The application must be signed and dated to be valid.
  - b. The interviewer and the keyer must print his or her name and sign the application. The keyer must also date the approval/denial and complete the certification period information, if applicable. The keyer must also complete the denial reason section when applicable.
  - c. The individual entering the application into NC FAST must sign and date the application. If the application is entered in a county other than the household's county of residence, the interviewer must include his name, county, and phone number.

**L. EBT Card Issuance**

1. Applicants that are approved for D-SNAP will give their application to a designated EBT card worker. The EBT card worker distributing the D-SNAP EBT card must remove the sticker on the card and place it on the application, and give that card to the applicant. The sticker on the EBT card contains the SUI and PAN numbers and must be attached to the correct applicant's application when the EBT card is issued. This will assist staff with entering the SUI and PAN numbers in NC FAST correctly.

SUI #	PAN#
800 <u>0339756</u>	508161006881 <u>0453</u>

Example:

2. County staff should instruct applicants about how to change their PIN and advise applicants to select a "difficult" PIN and not easily guessed (avoid 1234 or 1111).
3. Replacement, balance inquiries, and merchant disputes for D-SNAP cards are handled through the EBT Call Center, 1-888-622-7328.

**Note:** SUI and PAN numbers keyed on incorrect cases must be resolved by the county. The county must retrieve the cards from the households involved and facilitate a switch.

**M. EBT Card Delivery and Security**

1. D-SNAP EBT cards will be delivered from the state office to the person assigned by the county to maintain and issue the cards at the D-SNAP sites.
2. All cards will be in sealed cartons with the EBT Card Manifest attached.

3. Upon delivery, designated county staff will confirm receipt of the cards by signing the Food and Nutrition Services Disaster EBT Card Delivery and Receipt (DSS-8601). A copy will be kept at the local agency and the original form will be returned to the state office.
4. During the D-SNAP process, two county merit staff workers must always be present during the issuance of EBT cards.
5. County staff must notify households about how to change their PIN. Additionally, for clients receiving EBT cards via mail and providing a phone number, the client will receive a text message that provides instruction on how to change their PIN.
6. At the end of each day, the remaining D-SNAP EBT cards will be kept in a locked and secure location.

## **N. General Automation Procedures**

Effective October 18, 2024, NC FAST will be available:

1. Do not send disaster-related tickets via the NC FAST Service Portal. Please call the Disaster Support Center at 919-813-5490. County staff can contact the Disaster Support Center to receive assistance with Disaster SNAP applications. The hours of operation for the Disaster Support Center are 8:00 am to 8:00 pm.
2. Instructions for keying are in NC [FAST HELP](#) and the Learning Gateway Disaster Course.
  - a. These instructions are to be used in conjunction with the DSS-1432 (Rev. 10/2024), Application for Disaster Food and Nutrition Services.
  - b. Conduct a thorough Person Search on each household member. Register applicant(s) if they are not already registered in NC FAST. For more information, refer to the **Registering Persons Job Aid**.
  - c. If it is determined the individual is on another FNS household for the month of application, do not include this individual in the disaster FNS household.
3. Application Approval
  - a. All disaster applications must be completed in NC FAST, even if there has been a previous FNS case for the household. Disaster applications must be denied for any household currently receiving regular FNS benefits.
  - b. NC FAST will not allow an approval for an application if the county of residence is not a county designated for D-SNAP.
4. When approving the application in NC FAST enter all required fields.
  - a. All applications will have a one-month certification period (CP) of September 25, 2024 to October 26, 2024.
  - b. Benefits will not be prorated. The system will default to the maximum allotment for the household size.
  - c. Do not enter a Work Registration Code for any individual.
  - d. The method of receipt must be verified once the application is submitted. The caseworker must update the receipt method by using app details screen.



5. After case activation, return to the PDC and add Disaster EBT card. This must be completed in order to link the PDC to the EBT card.
 

**Note:** SUI and PAN numbers keyed on incorrect cases must be resolved by the county. The county must retrieve the cards from the households involved and facilitate a switch.
6. Disposition of Applications Pending in NC FAST Prior to Disaster Application
  - a. During the D-SNAP interview, ask the household if they have applied for regular FNS. Alternatively, if a pending regular FNS application is discovered when NC FAST is searched for an existing case. If there is a pending FNS application, the county must provide the applicant the option to either:
    - i. Continue with their pending FNS application and forgo the D-SNAP application, OR
    - ii. Withdraw their pending FNS application and proceed with D-SNAP application.
      1. If applicant chooses to withdraw pending FNS application, the county should indicate on the D-SNAP paper application that the applicant wishes to withdraw their regular FNS application. County staff should document in the household's FNS case in NC FAST person page that the applicant is withdrawing their pending FNS application before processing the D-SNAP application.
      2. If the person chooses to withdraw their pending FNS application in order to apply for D-SNAP, advise the applicant they can apply for regular FNS starting November.
  - b. Disaster SNAP cases cannot be converted to an ongoing case. If the applicant wishes to receive ongoing benefits, they must apply for regular FNS benefits.
 

**Note:** Any remaining D-SNAP benefits in an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) account will only be expunged if there is no activity (i.e., purchases or returns) on the account for 9 months, just as is the case for regular ongoing SNAP benefits.
  - c. NC FAST will automatically close disaster cases at the end of the disaster certification period.

## O. General Procedures

1. Households that were living in a disaster county and are now temporarily residing in a county that is not operating D-SNAP have the following options:
  - a. Households may apply for D-SNAP by calling the D-SNAP virtual call center.
  - b. Households may apply for D-SNAP in any of the counties running a D-SNAP program in Phase 1. Displaced applicants can only apply in counties approved to administer D-SNAP in Phase 1.
  - c. If the household has no intent to return to the disaster county and considers the non-disaster county their permanent residence, they can apply for regular FNS benefits or apply for D-SNAP in a county that is approved to operate D-SNAP.

- d. For all households that are not state or county employees involved in the administration of D-SNAP, a sample of cases equal to 1% will be drawn and cases will have a quality review after D-SNAP concludes.

**P. D-SNAP Communications**

1. NCDHHS has issued a [statewide press release](#) regarding D-SNAP available at the NCDHHS website.
2. NCDHHS has established a webpage, [www.ncdhhs.gov/dsnap](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dsnap) that is updated with all D-SNAP sites and hours of operation.
3. NCDHHS has issued public announcements via radio in western NC and will leverage social media to make people aware about D-SNAP.
4. Counties may additionally choose to issue their own county press release to further publicize their D-SNAP operation.
5. NCDHHS is coordinating a comprehensive communications strategy to make North Carolina residents aware about D-SNAP.
6. Counties may request assistance from NCDHHS with press releases and news conferences concerning disaster benefits, if needed.

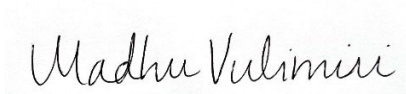
**III. EFFECTIVE DATE**

This policy is effective for all D-SNAP pre-registrations submitted from October 15, 2024 through October 24, 2024, and for all D-SNAP applications submitted from October 18, 2024 through October 24, 2024.

For counties that have questions about D-SNAP policy once D-SNAP starts from October 18, 2024 to October 24, 2024, please direct questions to your assigned on-site state staff person who be your liaison to get answers.

Please direct other time-sensitive questions regarding D-SNAP to Madhu Vulimiri ([Madhu.vulimiri@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:Madhu.vulimiri@dhhs.nc.gov)). We will work to get questions answered as quickly as possible. To ensure these questions receive priority response, please include "D-SNAP" in the subject line when submitting.

**Sincerely,**



Madhu Vulimiri  
Deputy Director  
Division of Child and Family Well-Being

MV/vb

**Attachments:**

[DSS-1432 \(English\) D-SNAP Application – Hurricane Helene](#)

[DSS-1432 \(Spanish\) D-SNAP Application – Solicitud de servicios de alimento y nutrición por desastre](#)

[DSS 8650-Notice of Information Needed to Complete Your Application](#)

[DSS 8650 \(Spanish\) - Programa-de-servicios-de-alimentos-y-nutricion-fns-aviso-de-informacion-necesaria](#)

[DSS-8567 Multilingual Language Notice](#)

D-SNAP Application Time-frame poster English and Spanish

D-SNAP Anti-Fraud poster English and Spanish

D-SNAP Change EBT PIN poster English and Spanish

D-SNAP Current Eligibility poster English and Spanish

D-SNAP Identification poster English and Spanish

D-SNAP Line poster English and Spanish

D-SNAP EBT Handout English and Spanish

“And Justice For All” poster and WIC poster (blue & green posters) – hard copy provided by the State Office

**EFS-FNSEP-26-2024**