

Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Program

What You Need to Know After Hurricane Florence

Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards can be used at any authorized retailer, even if you are out-of-state. To provide assistance to those in the FNS program affected by Hurricane Florence, benefits due to be received Sept. 21 were made available on Sept. 20.

Lost or damaged EBT cards can be replaced by calling the EBT Call Center at 1-888-622-7328.

You can use your FNS Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card to purchase hot food.

- North Carolinians in the FNS program can purchase hot food, including food prepared for immediate consumption, from authorized (EBT) retailers using their EBT card until Oct. 31.
- This will ensure families who are not able to prepare food at home due to displacement or power outages still have access to warm meals.
- Customers should inquire first with the store to see if they can process hot food purchases. This is for authorized EBT retailers, not restaurants.

You have until Oct. 15 to report a food loss and request replacement benefits.

- Families who have a loss of food purchased with their September FNS benefits will have longer than the normal 10 days to report the loss to receive replacement benefits.
- Families have until Oct. 15 to request a replacement.
- This will provide additional time for families who cannot report a food loss to their local Department of Social Services (DSS) office due to displacement, transportation issues, or other storm-related hardships.

If your FNS benefits were due to be recertified in September or October, your certification period has been automatically extended for an additional six months in certain counties.

- **Recertifications that are due in September and October 2018 will be extended for six months in the following 18 counties: Bladen, Beaufort, Brunswick, Carteret, Columbus, Craven, Cumberland, Duplin, Harnett, Lenoir, Jones, New Hanover, Onslow, Pamlico, Pender, Robeson, Sampson, and Wayne.**
- This will ensure that families in impacted areas who have been displaced or their ability to complete the recertification process has been affected by Hurricane Florence can continue to receive their benefits without disruption.

Child Nutrition Programs

- **All students in the 18 counties listed above are eligible to receive free school meals through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs through October 26, 2018.**
- USDA has granted the flexibility for the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina to operate summer meal programs. Due to the damage to roadways, communities, and other infrastructure, the Food Bank may allow children to take meals home, through September 30, 2018.



For more information, and with any questions, please call the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina at 1-800-358-8189