



Governor's Office of Homeland Security
and Emergency Preparedness

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Department of Social Services News

Department of Social Services Issues Early Food Stamp Benefits

Baton Rouge -The Department of Social Services announced today that the USDA Food and Nutrition Service has issued a waiver allowing the early issuance of September benefits to all households who receive food stamps. These benefits will be loaded onto Electronic Benefit Cards (EBT) by Monday, September 1st, 2008.

This early issuance will enable Food Stamp recipients who are evacuating their homes to purchase the food needed prior to their normal issuance date. It will also ensure that immediately following the storm residents will have the Food Stamp benefits needed to replace food lost due to the impact of Hurricane Gustav.

In order to answer any questions telephone lines at 1-888-LAHELPU are being manned to respond to inquiries from Food Stamp recipients and the general public concerning food assistance.

The DSS Office of Family Support, area Food Banks, and the USDA Food and Nutrition Service are prepared to cooperate in meeting the immediate food assistance needs of residents in areas impacted by the storm through household distribution of commodities if retail grocers are not able to operate immediately following the storm.

The DSS Office of Family Support is prepared to request permission from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service to operate a Disaster Food Stamp Program as soon as possible to serve areas where retail grocers are operational following the storm. Disaster food stamps would provide immediate help for qualified residents who become victims of Hurricane Gustav.

For the latest on Hurricane Gustav, you can visit emergency.louisiana.gov or call the state's emergency hotline at 1-866-288-2484 to listen to a recorded message with the most up-to-date information.

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