

LOUISIANA GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

JOINT INFORMATION CENTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Department of Social Services News Update

Department of Social Services Prepares for Disaster Food Stamps

BATON ROUGE -Following Hurricane Gustav, the Department of Social Services is preparing for the issuance of Disaster Food Stamp benefits. This is a federally authorized program that must be approved by the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services before it can be implemented for eligible Louisiana residents.

DSS is working with the USDA/FNS to activate the Disaster Food Stamp Program (DFSP) and to set specific program eligibility criteria and benefits. The guidelines outlined below serve as the criteria to make the request for Louisiana parishes:

CRITERIA FOR PARISH BEING INCLUDED IN DFSP DECLARATION (Must meet 2 of 3)	DATA SOURCE	CRITERIA FOR PARISH BEING ADDED TO DFSP DECLARATION
1. Power Outage - 48 hours after disaster (event) 50% of homes in the parish are without power.	Public Service Commission (PSC)	10 calendar days after landfall or disaster event at least 25% of parish residents without power as verified by Public Service Commission.
2. Wind velocity greater than 96 mph	National Weather Service	
3. Flooding - 25% of the residential structures in a parish affected by flooding. Flooding is defined as water entering the residential structure.	Emergency Operations Center Staff	

In addition to the above criteria, a resident of the declared parishes must also meet financial eligibility requirements. This program is intended to provide food for eligible people who find themselves suddenly, and often critically, in need following a disaster. Distribution of mass commodities is arranged to fill the immediate need prior to the issuance of Disaster Food Stamp! s. The National Guard is currently providing food, ice and water in the hardest hit areas of Lafourche, Iberia, St. Mary and Terrebonne Parishes. Additional locations are being arranged. Specific details on the timeline, the locations and issuance of Disaster Food Stamp benefits will be announced as soon as they are available.