



United States Department of Agriculture

Food and
Nutrition
Service

Park Office
Center

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January 10, 2019

SUBJECT: Blanket Waiver to Allow Early Issuance of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits

TO: Bonnie Brathwaite, SNAP Director, NERO
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Due to the current lapse in fiscal year 2019 appropriations, SNAP is providing a blanket waiver to States to allow for early issuance of February SNAP benefits.

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is waiving 7 CFR 274.2(d) to the extent that it requires that ongoing households receive their benefits on or about the same date each month. States will be allowed to issue February benefits early in order to minimize the potential impact of the lapse in appropriations on SNAP clients.

States normally make benefits available in accordance with their [issuance schedules](#) each month. **With this waiver, States may instead issue all February benefits on or before January 20, 2019.**

States must:

- Inform FNS of their intent to utilize this waiver;
- Provide FNS with the issuance file transmission date(s); and
- Provide FNS with the issuance availability date(s) on or before January 20, 2019, so that the stakeholders can be informed.

States should then ensure that SNAP households understand that this issuance is their February issuance and not an additional benefit. Further, for purposes of payment of the monthly cost per case month fee to the State's EBT Processor, the January early issuance event should be treated as the February issuance event. The cost per case month fee should, however, be recorded as a State Administrative Expense in the month that it is incurred (i.e., January).

Please let me know if you have questions regarding this waiver or its implementation; (703)305-2434 or andrea.gold@usda.gov.

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