

FOOD STAMP Policy MEMO # 3 '10-11

TO: Community Based Organizations

FROM: Dawn Secor, Food Stamp Specialist

DATE: January 26, 2011

RE: Accessing the Food Stamp Program Application

OTDA has released 10-INF-22 emphasizing the policies regarding distributing and/or accepting applications for the Food Stamp Program (FSP). This INF also discusses the current distribution and acceptance policies for Temporary Assistance (TA) and Home Energy Assistance (HEAP) applications as well.

The INF reminds LDSS/HRA centers that when distributing or accepting an application for the FSP they must follow federal and state regulations that require:

- A. All people must be allowed to receive an application and/or apply for food stamp benefits at any time during the regular business hours of the local office.**
- B. Local districts must NOT establish any of the following:**
 - Periodic daily quotas on application submissions;
 - Limits on application pickup or submission times during normal office business hours;
 - Limits on daily submissions based on the number of available interview slots; or
 - Zip code or alphabetic restrictions that limits when a person may request or submit an application during a local district's business hours.
- C. A household's right to apply and be interviewed for the FSP must not be denied or limited due to:**
 - National Origin;
 - Citizenship status of any member of the household; or
 - For any other reason.

D. All people applying for the FSP, including those submitting applications by mail, shall:

- Have an interview scheduled **on a specific day and at a specific time** if they were not interviewed on the same day they applied.
- Receive expedited benefits no later than five days following the date of the application.
 - This means that the LDSS/HRA center must schedule the interview in a timeframe that is consistent with the five-day rule.

E. The date on which a household submits a signed, completed application to the LDSS/HRA center is the “application date”.

- This date is important because it:
 - begins the 30 day (calendar days not work days) time clock for processing the application, and
 - has benefit implications for households.

Link to 10-INF-22: <http://otda.ny.gov/main/policy/directives/2010/INF/10-INF-22.pdf>

If you have any questions about this memo, or any other food stamp related question, please contact me at (518) 436-8757, ext. 12, or by e-mailing Dawn.Secor@nutritionconsortium.org