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 | ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE |
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TRANSMITTAL: 94 ADM-3

TO: Commissioners of
 Social Services

DIVISION: Economic
 Security

DATE: February 22, 1994

SUBJECT: Food Stamps Restaurant Meal Program for the Elderly, Disabled
 (SSI Recipients) and the Homeless.

SUGGESTED
 DISTRIBUTION: Food Stamp Directors
 Income Maintenance Directors
 Staff Development Coordinators

CONTACT
 PERSON: Cindy Cotrona at 518-473-3170, extension 4-4230

ATTACHMENTS: Attachment I - Sample Letter - available on-line

FILING REFERENCES

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	Dept. Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.
84 ADM-3		387.1	7CFR	FSSB	
87 INF-26		387.16(g)	271.2(g)	VIII-G-ALL	
		387.16(p)	7CFR 272.9 7CFR 274.10 (a)(4)(iii)		

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to inform social services districts of a change in the Food Stamp Restaurant Program. Homeless food stamp households are now able to use their food stamp benefits to purchase meals at a concessional (discount) price from restaurants having a contract with New York State and authorized by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to accept food stamps.

II. BACKGROUND

In February 1983, the Department implemented the provision of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 allowing food stamp recipients who are:

- o elderly (60 years of age or older); or
- o A recipient of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits; or
- o A spouse of a person 60 years of age or older or a spouse of an SSI recipient

to use their food stamps to purchase meals in approved restaurants.

With the passage of the Mickey Leland Memorial Hunger Relief Act (P.L. 101-624) in 1990, the definition of a homeless meal provider was expanded to allow homeless food stamp households, who are "Restaurant Qualified", to use their food stamp benefits to purchase meals at a concessional (discount) price from restaurants which have a contract with New York State and are authorized by the USDA to accept food stamps from eligible homeless participants of the Food Stamp Program.

III. PROGRAM IMPLICATIONS

This expands the category of food stamp recipients who are program eligible to use food stamps in approved restaurants.

IV. REQUIRED ACTION

Social services districts have the following responsibilities regarding this program:

- A. Notify eligible persons of the availability of the Restaurant Program at the time of certification or recertification. Attachment 1 is an example of a notification that can be given.
- B. Provide each program eligible individual (that is, those 60 years of age or older and their spouses, SSI recipients and their spouses, and homeless household members) who wish to participate in the program with an identification card (ID).

Use the DSS-104 (Rev 1/80) "Identification Card for Federal Food Coupons" and stamp or imprint the words "Restaurant Qualified". Indicate the certification period in the rectangular space across from the signature box. The certification period is to be determined as follows:

1. For the elderly and their spouse, the word "permanent" must be indicated for the certification period.
2. For the SSI recipient and their spouse, the word "permanent" must be indicated for the certification period.
3. For homeless households, mark the Food Stamp case certification period in this area.

Social services districts may provide the elderly and disabled (SSI recipients) with a permanent ID card upon request. The homeless, however, must receive a new card at each recertification, if homeless status continues. The "issued to" box is to be completed by the social services district, and the recipient must sign in the signature area. The "Restaurant Qualified" stamp may be obtained by calling Cindy Cotrona at 1-800-342-3715 extension 4-4230. A supply of the ID card (DSS-104) was sent to all districts. Additional supplies may be obtained from Forms and Publications, NYSDSS 40 North Pearl St., Albany, NY 12243.

NOTE: If a household consists of both restaurant and non-restaurant qualified individuals, only "Restaurant Qualified" individuals may purchase meals with food stamps and must be issued an ID card.

- C. Provide a list of USDA authorized restaurants (See the Food Stamp Source Book Section VIII (G)) to participant households in the program at certification. The list must also be provided at recertification, if there have been changes to the original list. A current list of participating restaurants should be posted in the waiting room of the food stamp office, and provided to other appropriate agencies.

NOTE: The Department provides districts with a list of all USDA authorized restaurants in the Food Stamp Source Book. This list is updated by letter to the local district as new restaurants join the program.

- D. Provide information about the restaurant program to all recipients upon request.
- E. Refer any restaurant inquiries about the Food Stamp Restaurant Program to the New York State Food Stamp Bureau (518-474-9225). In order to participate, restaurants must enter into a contract (Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)) with the State which includes:

1. information on the Restaurant,
2. the discount that will be given (minimum 5%),
3. the hours and days when food stamps will be accepted, and
4. a discrimination prohibition clause.

An application form must be submitted, along with a copy of the restaurant's health certificate and menu.

After the MOU process is completed, the State will refer the approved agreement to the USDA. The USDA will process the restaurant in the same way as a retail or wholesale grocery store or supermarket.

V. Systems Implications

None

VI. Effective Date

This Administrative Directive is effective February 28, 1994 retroactive to July 14, 1993.

Oscar R. Best, Jr.
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Economic Security

ATTACHMENT I
SAMPLE LETTER

Dear Food Stamp Household:

The New York State Department of Social Services has a program which allows certain people who receive food stamps to use the food stamps to purchase meals at approved restaurants. In order to use food stamps in a restaurant, you must be:

- o 60 years of age or older or the spouse of a person 60 years of age or older;
- o a recipient of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits or the spouse of an SSI recipient; or
- o homeless.

Eligible food stamp recipients may obtain a specifically stamped identification card (ID). This card must be shown when food stamps are used to purchase meals in a restaurant.

Restaurants participating in this program will be serving meals to food stamp recipients at a discount-price. A list of participating restaurants may be obtained from your local department of social services or by calling the New York State Department of Social Services toll-free hotline number (1-800-342-3009).