



Eliot Spitzer
Governor

NEW YORK STATE
OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE
40 NORTH PEARL STREET
ALBANY, NY 12243-0001

David A. Hansell
Commissioner

Local Commissioners Memorandum

Section 1

Transmittal:	07-LCM-14
To:	Local District Commissioners
Issuing Division/Office:	Center for Employment and Economic Supports
Date:	October 22, 2007
Subject:	Food Stamp Bonus Award Allocation
Contact Person(s):	<p>Program: Tina Sorell (518) 473-3407 Tina.Sorell@otda.state.ny.us</p> <p>Fiscal: Region 1-4, Carolyn Oleyourryk (518) 474-7549 Carolyn.Oleyourryk@otda.state.ny.us Region 5 – Michael Borenstein (631) 854-9704 Michael.Borenstein@otda.state.ny.us Region 6 – Marian Borenstein (212) 961-8250 Marian.Borenstein@otda.state.ny.us</p>
Attachments:	Attachment A: Allocation Attachment B: Plan for Use of USDA-FSP Non-Recurring Bonus Allocation
Attachment Available On Line:	On – yes

Section 2

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Local Commissioners Memorandum (LCM) is to advise local districts that the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (USDA-FNS) recently awarded a \$9.8 million performance bonus to New York State for payment accuracy improvements in the Food Stamp Program (FSP). A plan to allocate \$7 million of the award to local districts has been approved. The formula developed provides each district with a minimum allocation of \$25,000, with proportionately greater allotments going to districts with greater food stamp caseloads. Funds allocated for districts that choose not to apply for the funding will be re-allocated.

In order to receive its allocation, each local district will be required to file a plan for use of the funds with the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA). This LCM includes guidance on appropriate, recommended uses of the funds, and directions on how to file a “Plan for Use” application. Attachment A presents a county-by-county list of the allocations, and Attachment B contains the “Plan for Use” application.

II. Background

In recent years, New York State has received several bonus awards from the federal government for our management of the Food Stamp Program. Since much of the credit for the achievements that resulted in these bonuses goes to the local districts, it is fitting that local social services districts receive an opportunity to share in the bonus funding. Because we want to maintain our high FSP payment accuracy rate and also want to expand access to the FSP among potentially eligible working families and other underserved populations, we are asking that these funds be reinvested in the FSP to further these goals. OTDA is currently developing and implementing several statewide initiatives, including: Telephone Recertification, an electronic food stamp application capability, and the implementation of Governor Spitzer’s Working Families Food Stamp Initiative (WFFSI). These efforts will be rolled out statewide over the course of the 2008 calendar year. Districts are strongly encouraged to use these funds to support such efforts as the Working Families Food Stamp Initiative and to work with community partners to implement the facilitated on-line food stamp application.

Local districts will have access to these funds beginning in January 2008, subject to approval of a plan submitted to OTDA. District plans must be received by OTDA no later than November 15, 2007.

III. Description of Allowable Expenditures

Proposals supported by these funds may include, but are not limited to:

- Purchases of hardware/software, subject to State-specified minimum requirements, which support modernization efforts by allowing for easier access to the FSP at initial application and recertification and that furthers innovative program integrity efforts at the local level. This may include the purchase of equipment to be used by community partners participating in the implementation of the facilitated on-line food stamp application.
- Training of food stamp staff and community partners on eligibility issues and related FSP issues.
- Short term (12-month) contracts with local community providers for informational outreach, facilitated enrollment and other activities are also encouraged. This may include establishing a basic technological capability to allow local community partner involvement in the FS Outreach effort, subject to State-specified minimum requirements.

- Partnerships with employers and unions to identify low-income workers potentially eligible for the Food Stamp Program under the Working Families Food Stamp Initiative.
- Hiring of staff to augment efforts to expand FSP enrollment and enhance program integrity efforts.
- Local Media/Outreach expenditures.
- Physical office access, equipment, supplies and technology enhancements related to FSP enrollment efforts. Physical plant renovations would need to follow depreciation rules.

IV. Funding/Allocations

The formula developed provides each district with a minimum allocation of \$25,000, with proportionately greater allotments going to districts with greater food stamp caseloads. In order to be eligible for allocations, districts must submit a “Plan for Use,” based on criteria listed in **Section 2, III** of this LCM. Forms for submitting proposed allocation use are provided in **Attachment B**.

V. Allocation Submission Process

Local districts must submit their completed *Plan for Use of USDA-FSP Non-Recurring Bonus Allocation* form by November 15, 2007. OTDA staff will review submissions to determine that plans fall within these guidelines. Pending approval of each district’s plan, districts will be individually notified prior to December 31, 2007. Access to allocations will begin January 1, 2008, with an expenditure deadline of December 31, 2008. The January 1, 2008 start date may affect the local fiscal year for some upstate districts and require county legislative approval.

Completed “Plan for Use” forms should be e-mailed to Tina Sorell at Tina.Sorell@otda.state.ny.us or mailed to the following address:

Ms. Tina Sorell
 NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance
 Center for Employment and Economic Supports
 Food Stamp Bureau
 40 North Pearl Street, 11th floor
 Albany, New York 12243-0001

VI. Claiming Instructions

Local districts with approved plans may claim reimbursement against their Food Stamp Bonus allocation beginning January 1, 2008, with final expenditures to be made by December 31, 2008. As these activities are considered to be administrative, local districts should code the costs as F-17 functional expenditures. They will be reported on the Schedule D-17, Distribution of Allocated Cost to Other Reimbursement Programs (LDSS-3274) in a column labeled as FS Bonus 2008. These costs will carry forward to a LDSS-3922, Reimbursement Claim for Special Projects, also labeled as FS Bonus 2008. The costs should be reported in the administrative expenditure column on the appropriate lines and claimed for 100% federal share.

Expenditures in excess of the allocation should be claimed on the Schedule D-7, Distribution of Food Stamp Expenditures to Activities (LDSS-2347E) at normal reimbursement rates.

The LDSS-3922 should be completed and submitted to the following address on a monthly basis:

Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance
Bureau of Financial Services
40 North Pearl Street, 14th Floor
Albany, New York 12243

Final LDSS-3922 claims must be received by February 27, 2009.

Instructions for completing the Schedule D-7 are found in the Fiscal Reference Manual (FRM), Volume 3 (Volume 4 for New York City), Chapter 14. Instructions for the Schedule D-17 are in Chapter 18 of those volumes. Instructions for the LDSS-3922 are found in Volume 2, Chapter 3 of the FRM.

Issued By:

Name: Russell Sykes
Title: Deputy Commissioner
Division/Office: Center for Employment and Economic Support