



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

David A. Paterson
Governor

Informational Letter

Section 1

Transmittal:	10-INF-07
To:	Local District Commissioners
Issuing Division/Office:	Center for Employment and Economic Supports
Date:	April 21, 2010
Subject:	LDSS-4943 (11/09): "Food Stamp Benefits Categorical Eligibility Desk-Aid"
Suggested Distribution:	Temporary Assistance Directors Food Stamp Directors FEDS Coordinators Fraud Directors Staff Development Coordinators
Contact Person(s):	Forms Questions: Kelly Whitney @ 1-800-343-8859, ext. 3-7991 FS Policy Questions 518-473-1469
Attachments:	Attachment 1-LDSS-4943 (11/09) Food Stamp Benefits Categorical Eligibility Desk-Aid
Attachment Available On – Line:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LDSS-4943 (11/09) Food Stamp Benefits Categorical Eligibility Desk-Aid

Filing References

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	Dept. Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.
01 ADM-02 07 ADM-09 09 ADM-06 08INF-03		387.9		FSSB Sec. 5	ABEL Transmittal 08-3, and 07-3

Section 2

I. Purpose

The purpose of this release is to introduce the LDSS-4943 (11/09): “*Food Stamp Benefits Categorical Eligibility Desk-Aid*”. This desk-aid was developed to assist workers in correctly determining the categorical eligibility of food stamp (FS) households and the use of the appropriate categorical eligibility (CE) indicator in the ABEL budget. The main difference in this version is the update of federal poverty levels for 2009. There is no change to the current policy.

II. Background

In the past, only households whose members all received Temporary Assistance (TA) and/or SSI cash benefits were categorically eligible for the Food Stamp Program (FSP) in New York State.

Effective January 1, 2008, FS categorical eligibility was expanded to include many other FS households, except those disqualified due to an Intentional Program Violation (IPV) or sanction, through provision of a TANF/MOE-funded service. This service is provided in the form of the “*Helping Hands*” brochure. Receipt of this brochure by a household that meets the 130% of poverty (200% of poverty for households with an aged or disabled member) income threshold confers categorical eligibility.

Effective March 1, 2009, FS categorical eligibility was expanded further to include households with out-of-pocket dependent care expenses that either apply for or receive food stamp benefits if the household’s gross income is 200% of poverty or less, unless the household has members who are sanctioned or disqualified from participation in the FSP.

III. Program Implications

The significance of extending categorical eligibility is that by being FS categorically eligible, the household is not subject to the 130% Gross or 100% FS Net Income tests, or a resource test. However, the CE affected household must still have their FS Net Income compared to the Thrifty Food Plan to determine if they are eligible for a benefit amount greater than \$1 to attain acceptance to the program if their household size is greater than 2. Details of this comparison are available in GIS08 TA/WMS003. Therefore, proper categorical eligibility determinations and the correct use of the CE indicator in ABEL are important in keeping the State’s error rate low.

IV. Forms Ordering Information

- The revised version of the LDSS-4943 (11/09): “*Food Stamp Benefits Categorical Eligibility Desk-Aid*” is **not** State printed but is available to local districts in PDF format or as a master camera ready copy. The procedures for ordering PDFs or master camera ready copies are listed below.
- The above referenced document has also been posted on the OTDA Intranet website at http://otda.state.nyenet/ldss_eforms/default.htm and is available for downloading by local districts for reproduction locally.

- Upon the release of this INF all previous versions of the LDSS-4943: “*Food Stamp Benefits Categorical Eligibility Desk-Aid*” **must immediately be destroyed** and replaced with the revised 11/09 version.
- Any future written requests for master camera ready copies of the 11/09 version of the document, should be submitted on OTDA-876: “*Request for Forms or Publications*”, and should be sent to:

Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance
BMS Document Services and Operational Support
PO Box 1990
Albany, NY 12201

- Questions concerning ordering forms should be directed to BMS Document Services at 1-800-343-8859, ext. 4-9522.
- Master camera ready copies of the documents may also be ordered through Outlook. To order a master camera ready copy you must obtain an OTDA-876 electronically by going to the OTDA Intranet Website at <http://otda.state.nyenet/> then to Division of Operations and Program Support page, then to PSQI E-forms page (this page contains the electronic OTDA-876).
- For those who do not have Outlook but who have Internet access for sending and receiving e-mail, the Internet e-mail address is: gg7359@dfa.state.ny.us . For a complete list of available forms, please refer to the OTDA Intranet site: http://otda.state.nyenet/ldss_eforms/default.htm .

Issued By

Name: Russell Sykes

Title: Deputy Commissioner

Division/Office: Center for Employment and Economic Supports