



STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF MENTAL RETARDATION AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

41 FRONT AVENUE
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12224-0001
(518) 473-1997 • TDD (518) 474-3694
www.omr.state.ny.us

November 5, 2008

Executive Director CR/IRA Agencies:

As you know, the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) has recently undertaken a series of statewide initiatives to maximize the various benefits and entitlements available to developmentally disabled individuals receiving services through the OMRDD service delivery system. On July 2, 2008 Governor Paterson issued the attached press release announcing significant increases in monthly benefit amounts available through the food stamp program. Effective October 1st the maximum new monthly benefit for an individual residing in a certified group home was increased to \$176. Previously, benefits were capped at \$44 per month.

We believe that food stamp eligibility has not been sufficiently developed because of the relatively low benefits that were available through the program prior to the recent increase. Maximizing eligibility for this benefit has taken on increased significance in light of rising food prices and the current fiscal crisis facing New York State. Food stamp benefits are 100% federally funded through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

OMRDD will be working through the Provider Association Benefit Development Workgroup to organize a project in which food stamp applications must be filed during the upcoming months for individuals residing in voluntary-operated certified residential programs. Residential providers will be expected to file applications through their local Department of Social Services for all individuals not currently in receipt of benefits. To facilitate this project, OMRDD Revenue Support Field Offices (RSFO) will be providing regional training. Attached is a list of regional training dates and times. Please assign a liaison to attend one of the training sessions. We are asking agency liaisons to contact their local RSFO to confirm their attendance at the training.

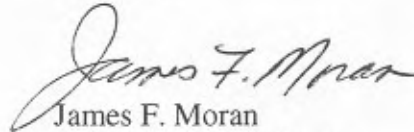
In addition, OMRDD has been in contact with the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) which will alert local social services districts to this initiative.

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If you have any questions, please contact Sheila Carollo by telephone at (518) 402-4339 or by e-mail to Sheila.Carollo@omr.state.ny.us.

Thank you in advance for your anticipated cooperation.

Sincerely,



James F. Moran
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Fiscal and Administrative Solutions

Attachments

cc: Commissioner Ritter
M. Chmura
S. Smits
K. Broderick
M. O'Horo
G. O'Loughlin
E. Carver
J. Anderton
S. Carollo
Provider Associations
Benefit Development Workgroup
DDSO Directors
RSFO Managers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
July 2, 2008

IN LIGHT OF SOARING FOOD PRICES, GOVERNOR PATERSON ANNOUNCES MORE THAN \$150 MILLION IN ANNUAL FUNDING FOR FOOD STAMP PROGRAM

**Average Monthly Increase of \$118 in Food Stamp Benefits
Additional Food Stamps Benefit 115,000 of the Neediest Households across New York State**

Governor David A. Paterson today announced that beginning October 1, 2008, thanks to the State's intervention, Federal Food Stamp benefits to low income families (primarily those living in public and Section 8 housing) will increase by more than \$150 million annually.

The New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), which administers the Food Stamp program in New York, is implementing changes that will mean an average increase of \$118 in monthly food stamp benefits to nearly 115,000 low-income households statewide. Nearly 90,000 households in New York City will see an average monthly hike of \$131, while 25,000 households throughout the rest of the state will see an average monthly increase of \$72.

"Rising food and commodities prices are affecting all New Yorkers," said Governor Paterson. "Increasing food stamp benefits for some of our State's most vulnerable residents will truly make a difference in their lives and help them to better meet their families' nutritional needs. Nearly 115,000 households will receive an average increase of \$118 per month which will go a long way towards ensuring that they have the resources they need to continue to feed their families."

OTDA Commissioner David A. Hansell said: "Through this initiative we are helping to ensure that many hard working families receive the maximum food stamp benefit to which they are entitled. This is in keeping with Governor Paterson's commitment to helping increase the economic security for our low-income families. These changes will make a tangible difference in the lives of so many families across the State."

Senator Carl Kruger, Chair of the State Senate Social Services, Children and Families Committee, said: "I applaud Governor Paterson for implementing a measure that will provide immediate and desperately-needed relief to residents struggling under an increasing financial burden to feed themselves and their families."

Assemblyman Keith L.T. Wright, Chair of the Assembly Committee on Social Services, said: "No matter what we do it's not enough to solve issues of hunger and poverty in New York, but I commend Governor Paterson for taking the initiative in providing greater assistance for residents in need. The increased food stamps benefits administered through OTDA will help thousands of families across New York put food on their tables this year. This is particularly helpful during a time of rising home heating costs, which often stress a household budget."

Senator Liz Krueger, who was a Food Stamp advocate prior to becoming a State Senator, said: "Due to overly complex Food Stamp budget rules, some of the poorest New Yorkers living in certain types of housing have not been eligible for very much in Federal Food Stamps. This simple change in policy by the State will dramatically increase these household's ability to purchase more nutritious foods they need. Increasing Food Stamp benefits is a win-win for New York. The State and localities pay no share of the benefits, all the dollars are spent in the local economy through food sales, and hungry families are helped immediately."

New York City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn said: "As the cost of food is increasing, New Yorkers are being forced to stretch their dollar and their food stamps even further. I commend Governor Paterson and Commissioner Hansell for working together to find a way to increase the food stamp benefit for New Yorkers. This increase in benefits will impact approximately 90,000 New York City residents, and will go a long way in helping those most in need continue to put food on their table."

The plan, which will take effect October 1, 2008, calls for the State to expand eligibility for energy assistance by offering a modest benefit to households that had not before been eligible. Under federal rules, this triggers a greater monthly food stamp allocation, because those receiving energy assistance are given a greater allowance for their energy costs through food stamp budgeting rules.

FOOD STAMP MAXIMIZATION REGIONAL TRAINING DATES

*****Please call the Revenue Support Field Office in your area to confirm your attendance for this training. Due to space limitations, we request that you limit one liaison per agency for this training*****

Revenue Support Field Office	Date/Time/Location of Training
BROOME	<p>December 4, 2008 9:30am-11:30am Held at Broome DDSO 249 Glenwood Road Binghamton, NY 13905 Classroom #4 and Remote Video Conference Sites</p>
CAPITAL DISTRICT	<p>December 1, 2008 1:00pm-2:00pm Held at Capital District DDSO (OD Heck) 500 Balltown Road Schenectady, NY 12304 Building #3, Training Room #1</p>
CENTRAL/SUNMOUNT	<p>December 4, 2008 1:00pm-2:00pm Held at Central NY DDSO 800 South Wilbur Avenue Syracuse, NY 13201 3rd Floor Conference Room</p>
FINGER LAKES	<p>December 3, 2008 10:00am-12:00pm Held at Finger Lakes DDSO 703 East Maple Avenue Vienna Offices; Building 58 Newark, NY 14513 Vienna 149 Conference Room</p>
HUDSON VALLEY	<p>December 3, 2008 10:00am-11:00am Held at Hudson Valley DDSO 5 Wilbur Road Thiells, NY 10984 Training Room #11</p>

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Revenue Support Field Office	Date/Time/Location of Training
LONG ISLAND	<p>December 4, 2008 9:00am-10:00am Held at Long Island DDSO 415-A Oser Avenue Hauppauge, NY 11788 Room 215 Multi Purpose Room</p>
NEW YORK CITY	<p>December 8, 2008 10:00am-11:00am Held at Metro DDSO 75 Morton Street New York, NY 10014 1st Floor Activity Room</p>
CENTRAL/SUNMOUNT	<p>December 9, 2008 10:00am-11:00am Held at Sunmount DDSO, 2445 State Route 30 Tupper Lake, NY 12986 Building #5, Staff Conference Room</p>
TACONIC	<p>December 1, 2008 2:00pm-3:00pm Held at Taconic DDSO 38 Firemen's Way Poughkeepsie, NY 12603 Large Conference Room</p>
WESTERN NY	<p>December 8, 2008 10:30am-11:30am Held at Western NY DDSO 1200 East & West Roads West Seneca, NY 14224 Room CCR 1-147</p>

REVENUE SUPPORT FIELD OFFICES

RSFO/Address/Phone/Fax	Service Area	RSFO Manager														
<p>BROOME RSFO 229-231 State Street – 3rd Floor Binghamton, NY 13901</p> <p>Phone: (607) 771-7210 Fax: (607) 771-1098</p>	<p>Broome DDSO Valley Ridge DDSO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">For the counties of:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Broome</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Otsego</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chenango</td> <td>Tioga</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Delaware</td> <td>Tompkins</td> </tr> </table>	Broome	Otsego	Chenango	Tioga	Delaware	Tompkins	<p>Keith Haywood</p>								
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<p>CAPITAL DISTRICT RSFO O. D. Heck DC – Bldg. #12 Balltown & Consaul Roads Schenectady, NY 12304</p> <p>Phone: (518) 370-2010 Fax: (518) 370-2297</p>	<p>Capital District DDSO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">For the counties of:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Albany</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Schenectady</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fulton</td> <td>Schoharie</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Montgomery</td> <td>Warren</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rensselaer</td> <td>Washington</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Saratoga</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Albany	Schenectady	Fulton	Schoharie	Montgomery	Warren	Rensselaer	Washington	Saratoga		<p>Scott Boyce</p>				
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<p>CENTRAL/SUNMOUNT RSFO 101 West Liberty Street P.O. Box 388 Rome, NY 13440</p> <p>Phone: (315) 339-3440 Fax: (315) 336 0407</p>	<p>Sunmount DDSO Central New York DDSO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">For the counties of:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Cayuga</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Jefferson</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cortland</td> <td>Lewis</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Clinton</td> <td>Madison</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Essex</td> <td>Oneida</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Franklin</td> <td>Onondaga</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hamilton</td> <td>Oswego</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Herkimer</td> <td>St. Lawrence</td> </tr> </table>	Cayuga	Jefferson	Cortland	Lewis	Clinton	Madison	Essex	Oneida	Franklin	Onondaga	Hamilton	Oswego	Herkimer	St. Lawrence	<p>Daryk Macrina</p>
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<p>FINGER LAKES RSFO 509 Vienna Street Newark, NY 14513</p> <p>Phone: (315) 331-7141 Fax: (315) 331-0182</p>	<p>Finger Lakes DDSO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">For the counties of:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Chemung</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Seneca</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Livingston</td> <td>Steuben</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Monroe</td> <td>Wayne</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ontario</td> <td>Wyoming</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Schuyler</td> <td>Yates</td> </tr> </table>	Chemung	Seneca	Livingston	Steuben	Monroe	Wayne	Ontario	Wyoming	Schuyler	Yates	<p>Bob Wells</p>				
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REVENUE SUPPORT FIELD OFFICES

RSFO/Address/Phone/Fax	Service Area	RSFO Manager
HUDSON VALLEY RSFO 3 Wilbur Road Room 45 P.O. Box 470 Thiells, NY 10984-0470 Phone: (845) 947-6250 Fax: (845) 947-6161	Hudson Valley DDSO For the counties of: Orange Sullivan Rockland Westchester	Linda De La Cruz
LONG ISLAND RSFO 415 Oser Avenue Hauppauge, NY 11788 Phone: (631) 434-6109 Fax: (631) 434-6511	Long Island DDSO For the counties of: Nassau Suffolk	Elena DeStefano
NEW YORK CITY RSFO 75 Morton Street, 5th Floor New York, NY 10014-5798 Phone: (212) 229-3343 Fax: (212) 229 3095	Metro New York DDSO B. Fineson DDSO Brooklyn DDSO Staten Island DDSO Institute Basic Research For the counties of: Bronx Queens Kings Richmond Manhattan	Milton Erdfarb Mitchell Kevy
TACONIC RSFO 36 Firemen's Way Poughkeepsie, NY 12603-6519 Phone: (845) 473-8210 Fax: (845) 473-8204	Taconic DDSO For the counties of: Columbia Putnam Dutchess Ulster Greene	Jeffrey Gross
WESTERN NEW YORK RSFO West Seneca DC Building #70 – 2nd Floor 1200 East and West Road West Seneca, NY 14224 Phone: (716) 675-8666 Fax: (716) 675-8919	Western New York DDSO For the counties of: Allegany Genesee Cattaraugus Niagara Chautauqua Orleans Erie	Peter Williams