GENERAL INFORMATION SYSTEM
Center for Employment & Economic Supports

TO: Subscribers

SUGGESTED DISTRIBUTION: Commissioners, TA Directors, SNAP Directors

FROM: Phyllis D. Morris, Deputy Commissioner
Center for Employment and Economic Supports

SUBJECT: New Haitian Family Reunification Parole (HFRP) for SNAP Benefits

EFFECTIVE DATE: TBA

CONTACT PERSON: SNAP Bureau (518) 473-1469

In a Regional Letter dated January 28, 2015, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) informed its regions and the states that on December 18, 2014, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced the implementation of the Haitian Family Reunification Parole (HFRP) Program to expedite family reunification for eligible Haitian family members of U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents (LPR) (79 F.R. 75581). Under the HFRP Program, DHS' U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will offer certain Haitian beneficiaries of family-based immigrant petitions an opportunity to apply for a discretionary grant of parole for up to approximately two years to enter the U.S. This would allow the beneficiaries to wait for their immigrant visas (Green cards) with their families in the U.S. rather than in Haiti. USCIS will begin accepting applications for the HFRP Program on August or September 2015.

Pursuant to guidance issued by DHS, those Haitians approved for the HFRP Program will enter the U.S. as Cuban/Haitian entrants under §501(e) of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980 (REAA). When their immigrant visas become available, they would then be eligible to apply to adjust to LPR status. At the point of adjustment to LPR status, many of these individuals must have a sponsor execute a USCIS I-864 affidavit of support.

The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended, and the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, as amended, limit eligibility for SNAP benefits to U.S. citizens and certain non-citizens who meet specific immigration status requirements. Because beneficiaries approved for the HFRP Program will be paroled into the U.S. as Cuban/Haitian entrants under §501(e) of the REAA, those individuals will be eligible for SNAP benefits without the five-year waiting period. For those cases in which an I-864 form has been executed when the individual adjusts to LPR status, sponsor deeming will apply in accordance with existing SNAP policy.