

DISASTER FOOD ASSISTANCE FACT SHEET

GENERAL: The Disaster Food Assistance Program is designed to help people who might not ordinarily qualify for food assistance, but have lost income or have losses due to damage from a disaster. Food assistance benefits are used like cash to buy food. There are special food assistance rules for people affected by a disaster.

- Income, resources and expenses will be considered for the period of April 27, 2011 through May 26, 2011 for the purpose of this program.

FILING AN APPLICATION: If you want to apply, you must file an application. Be sure to tell the truth on your application. If you get food assistance benefits that you should not receive, you will be asked to pay back the amount. If you give wrong information on purpose, you may be ineligible for a period of time, fined, or put in prison. After the disaster is over, reviews will be made to see if households got food assistance benefits by giving wrong information.

INTERVIEW: You will be asked to complete a food assistance application. A worker will go over the application with you. If you do not understand a question, you should ask the food assistance worker to explain it to you during the interview.

PROOF: During the interview, you will be asked to show proof of your identity. Examples of proof of your identity are a driver's license, wage stub, a birth certificate, a voter registration card, a work ID card or other documents or a statement by someone who knows you.

ELIGIBILITY RULES: You cannot get disaster food assistance unless your home was in the disaster area, your household will be buying food and preparing meals, and you can answer YES to at least one of the following questions.

- Has your home or self-employment property been damaged or destroyed by the disaster?
- Does your household have disaster-related expenses that you paid or expect to pay out of pocket which will not be reimbursed to you during April 27, 2011 through May 26, 2011?
- Has your income been delayed, reduced, or stopped because of the disaster?
- Does your household have any cash or money in a bank account, which you cannot get to because of the disaster?
- Did your household incur a food loss due to power outage?

Eligibility is based on take home pay, other household income and how much money you can get now (for example, cash on hand or from a bank account) and how much you expect to receive. Out of pocket disaster related expenses are considered when determining your eligibility for disaster assistance. These expenses include but are not limited to expenses to repair damage to your home or property necessary for work, temporary shelter expenses, expenses for moving out of an evacuated area; expenses related to protecting a home or business from the disaster and expenses due to a disaster-related injury or death. The limits for household income and cash resources, minus disaster expenses, for a month are:

<u>HOUSEHOLD SIZE</u>	<u>INCOME and RESOURCES</u>
1	\$1503
2	\$1815
3	\$2126
4	\$2449
5	\$2787
6	\$3124
7	\$3436
8	\$3748
Each additional person + \$312	

RECEIVING FOOD ASSISTANCE

A decision will be made on your eligibility on the date you apply for benefits. **If eligible, your household will receive benefits only for the month of May 2011.** These benefits will be available for you to use within 3 days from when you apply. Also if your household is eligible, you will receive an EBT card along with a personal identification number (PIN). Please call 1-800-997-8888 if you have questions about your EBT card. Calling this number will also inform you of your account balance. Your account balance can also be checked on the internet, **www.ebtEDGE.com**.

The amount of benefits a household gets if eligible depends on the number of people in the home.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	FOOD ASSISTANCE FOR A MONTH
1	\$ 200
2	\$ 367
3	\$ 526
4	\$ 668
5	\$ 793
6	\$ 952
7	\$1052
8	\$1202

Each additional person +\$150

USING FOOD ASSISTANCE BENEFITS:

You may use food assistance benefits in any store that accepts them. During the month of May, you may use your food assistance benefits to buy hot foods. Most grocery stores take food assistance benefits. You can only use food assistance benefits to buy food or to buy seeds or plants for your garden to grow food for your household's use. You cannot buy alcoholic drinks, tobacco, vitamins, toilet paper, paper towels, soap or soap products with your food assistance benefits. It is a very serious crime to sell your food assistance benefits for cash or drugs.

INTEGRITY REVIEW

Your disaster food assistance case may be selected for review to determine if your household received the correct amount of

benefits. If your case is selected for review, you may have to provide proof that the information that you gave on the disaster food assistance application was correct. If the information is not correct, you may be required to repay the benefits that your household received to which you were not entitled.

FAIR HEARINGS

A household not satisfied with agency action affecting its participation in the Food Assistance Program has the right to request a fair hearing within 90 days of the action being appealed. The request may be made orally or in writing to the County Department of Human Resources, Food Assistance Office or to the Department of Human Resources, Food Assistance Division, S. Gordon Persons Building, 50 Ripley Street, Montgomery, Alabama 36130-4000, telephone (334) 242-1700. A household member or a representative, such as a legal counsel, a relative, a friend or other spokesperson may present the household's case. Free legal counsel may be available through Legal Services Alabama. The toll free number for Legal Services is 1-866-456-4995.

NONDISCRIMINATION: If you think you have not been treated fairly because of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs, or disability, you should write to the USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington D.C. 20250-9410.

**Information provided by
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service**

Disaster Income Limits and Allotments

Income Limits (Columns)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	
Household Size	Food Loss Alone	Disaster Expense (Includes Food Loss)	No Disaster Expense or Food Loss *	Allotment
1	\$1703	\$2186	\$1503	\$200
2	2182	2847	1815	367
3	2652	3272	2126	526
4	3117	3859	2449	668
5	3580	4254	2787	793
6	4076	4753	3124	952
7	4488	5116	3436	1052
8	4950	5479	3748	1202
Each additional member	+462	+363	+312	+150

*

Note: Household checked yes to at least one questions in Part A, but did not check one of the statements in Part E, use Column # 3.

If the client checked the first blank in Part E, use column (1)

If the client checked the second blank in Part E, use column (2)

Worker is advised to note on application at Part A or Part E the column, income limit, that will be used.