

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Statutory Authority: 31 Delaware Code, Section 512 (31 Del.C. §512)

REGISTER NOTICE

Food Supplement Program Expanded Issuance of Food Benefits

In compliance with the State's Administrative Procedures Act (APA - Title 29, Chapter 101 of the Delaware Code) and under the authority of Title 31 of the Delaware Code, Chapter 5, Section 512, Delaware Health and Social Services (DHSS) / Division of Social Services provides public notice regarding the Food Supplement Program, specifically, Expanded Issuance of Food Benefits.

This is an administrative change rather than a policy change therefore it is not subject to the requirements of the Administrative Procedures Act.

SUMMARY OF NOTICE

DSS is providing notice to the public regarding the Food Supplement Program, specifically, Expanded Issuance of Food Benefits.

Statutory Authority

Title 7, Part 274, Issuance and Use of Benefits

Background

Delaware's Food Supplement Program, formerly known as food stamps, is operated under the provisions of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended, and is administered by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) under the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The Food Supplement Program enables low-income families to buy a variety of food that is the basis for better nutrition. Benefits are issued electronically to the family's Delaware Food First card each month. This is an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card. The Food Supplement Program recipient uses this card at local retail stores to access his/her food benefit.

The Delaware Division of Social Services (DSS) is responsible for the administration of the Food Supplement Program (FSP), including, but not limited to certification of applicant households and issuance, control, and accountability of FSP benefits.

Summary of Action

States have the authority to stagger food benefit issuance over the entire month as long as no participant goes longer than forty days between issuance days.

In the best interest of serving Food Supplement Program (FSP) clients, Delaware Health and Social Services/Division of Social Services (DHSS/DSS) is changing its current food benefit issuance schedule, effective March 2, 2013. The current issuance cycle begins on the 5th calendar day of each month and goes through the 11th day. Beginning in March 2013, the benefit issuance period will expand from seven (7) calendar days to sixteen (16) calendar days. The revised issuance schedule begins on the 2nd calendar day and goes through the 17th of each month. DHSS/DSS will phase in the expansion over a two week period beginning March 2, 2013.

This change is being made to improve services so that FSP clients will have better access to healthy and nutritious food choices by allowing the participating retailer community to adequately restock their shelves. Food Supplement Program (FSP) households will still receive benefits based on the first letter of the head of household's last name.

In preparation for this change, current food benefit recipients impacted by this change were sent letters explaining the expanded schedule change by a mass mailing from the DSS in January 2013.

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