



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION
Economic Services Administration
Post Office Box 45440 Olympia WA 98504-5440

May 4, 2021

Dear Community Partners and Stakeholders,

I want to make you aware that on April 21, 2021, Food and Nutrition Service issued guidance stating that households receiving zero food benefits due to income are not considered participating SNAP households for purposes of Emergency Allotments, or EA.

To clarify, these households meet the gross income test for food assistance, and are therefore program eligible, but with net income resulting in zero benefits. While these households may not get any food assistance benefits on an EBT card, it may still be beneficial for those households to apply for food assistance as this allows them to access other services, such as telephone and internet assistance, WIC, and energy assistance.

Therefore, after one year of issuing EA to any household receiving less than the maximum food allotment, effective May 1 we are no longer able to issue supplemental EA to households receiving zero benefits as these households are no longer eligible based on the new guidance. This change will affect approximately 9,700 households receiving Basic Food assistance.

The new guidance will not result in overpayments for households receiving zero benefits, as emergency supplements are not subject to recoupment.

People who have questions may contact the Customer Service Contact Center at 877-501-2233.

Thank you for your partnership and support.

Respectfully,

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