



March 24, 2020

VIA EMAIL

Mr. Dwight Crudup  
Regional Director  
United States Department of Agriculture  
Food and Nutrition Service  
1100 Commerce Street, Room 522  
Dallas, Texas 75242

Dear Mr. Crudup:

On March 13, 2020 President Trump declared a national emergency due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Additionally, Texas' Governor, Greg Abbott, also issued a statewide declaration of disaster on March 13, 2020 due to impacts of COVID-19.

Federal and state guidance have directed agencies to take additional steps to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 for purposes of protecting the health and welfare of all individuals. This pandemic requires social distancing including schools, businesses and workplaces being shut down. As you are aware this has also created an additional need for services for those experiencing a reduction or loss in wages. Not unique to Texas is the increased demand on the local SNAP retailer's food supply.

Texas is asking FNS to approve Texas' request to implement a statewide Restaurant Meal Program in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This program will aid Texas in helping to ensure the preservation of the local food supply by allowing participating restaurants to accept SNAP benefits as payment.

Texas also seeks to streamline the application process including, approval and agreement execution. We would also request FNS to expedite the necessary federal approvals and issuance of the required FNS certification number for restaurants to begin accepting SNAP payments.

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Attached is our proposed Memorandum of Understanding and Notice to potential Texas restauranteurs. By way of this correspondence, Texas is requesting to waive and or expand the intent of the requirements under CFR 274.7(g)(2) to allow any eligible SNAP recipient the ability to purchase meals with program benefits at communal dining facilities during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Texas is also requesting to waive and or expand the intent of CFR 274.7(g)(4)(ii) to allow any eligible SNAP recipient the ability to purchase meals from restaurants authorized by FNS for such purpose during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Your prompt attention to and approval of these requests is appreciated. If you have questions or require additional information, Hilary Davis, Texas Works Policy Manager for Program Policy, Access and Eligibility Services serves as the lead staff on this matter and may be reached by telephone at (512) 206-5556 or by email at [Hilary.Davis@hpsc.state.tx.us](mailto:Hilary.Davis@hpsc.state.tx.us).

Sincerely,



Wayne Salter  
Deputy Executive Commissioner  
Access and Eligibility Services