

GENERAL INFORMATION SYSTEM**DIVISION: Temporary Assistance****July 4, 2006**

Page: 1

TO: Commissioners, Food Stamp and TA Directors**FROM:** Russell Sykes, Deputy Commissioner, Division of Employment & Transitional Supports**SUBJECT:** Emergency Benefit Issuance to Flooding Victims, July 4, 2006**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Immediately**CONTACT PERSON:** Food Stamp Bureau at 1-800-343-8859, ext. 3-1469

This GIS is intended for those districts that have been designated as federal disaster areas due to the recent flooding.

These districts are again advised that the WMS/BICS Production system is up today (7/4/06) until 9 P.M. Emergency FS Pre-registration benefits may be authorized through the BICS Accounts function. Benefits authorized in this manner until 6 P.M. tonight will be available to clients with benefit cards soon after 6 P.M. tonight, 7/4 (the normal non-Holiday 5pm cut-off has been extended until 6pm). Benefits authorized after 6 P.M. today or through WMS without using the BICS Prereg process will not be available until after WMS post-processing tomorrow night, 7/5.

In order to expedite service to households affected by the flooding who are applying for only Food Stamps, districts and staff at Disaster Assistance Service Centers are reminded that the shorter Food Stamp Benefits Application/Recertification form (LDSS-4826) should be used in place of the much longer LDSS-2921 Combined Application form.

Also, OTDA has prepared a waiver package requesting that the United States Department of Agriculture grant New York State the authority to operate a Disaster Food Stamp Benefit Program. Upon approval, we will be able to use an abbreviated application, reduced documentation standards and higher income and resource limits to assess the eligibility of affected households. This will enable us to provide standard Food Stamp Benefit amounts to victims of the disaster who typically would not be eligible to receive benefits.