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## General Information Memorandum

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ISD-GI 13-42

**TO:** ISD Employees  
**FROM:**  Marilyn Martinez, Acting Director, Income Support Division  
**DATE:** September 13, 2013  
**RE:** Clarifying any Policy Barriers Facing Homeless Youth for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) has issued new guidance regarding barriers facing Homeless youth. The Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) policy 7 CFR 271.2 states that a homeless individual is defined as follows:

1. An individual who lacks a fixed and regular nighttime residence; or
2. An individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is –
  - A. A supervised publically or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary accommodations (such as a welfare hotel or congregate shelter) designed to provide temporary living accommodations;
  - B. An institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized;
  - C. A temporary accommodation for not more than 90 days in the residence of another individual; or
  - D. A public or private place not designated for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

FNS has identified some common misconceptions related to eligibility requirements that may inhibit homeless youth who apply for SNAP, these are addressed below.

There is a common misconception that an official *photographic identification* is needed to apply for SNAP. CFR policy at 7 CFR 273.2(f)(1)(vii) allows the following acceptable types of documentary evidence:

A driver's license, a work or school ID, ID for health benefits or for another assistance or social services program, a voter registration card, wage stubs, or a birth certificate.

Any documents which reasonably establish the applicant's identity must be accepted,

and no requirement for a specific type of document, such as a birth certificate, may be imposed.

ISD is not limited to accepting a driver's license or other form of photo I.D.; a work or school identification card, or even a collateral contact such as a shelter worker or employer may suffice as stated in regulation at 8.100.130.13 A and 8.139.400.8 B (1) NMAC.

Another misconception is that applicants must have a *permanent address* in order to apply for SNAP. CFR policy at 7 CFR 273.2(f)(1)(vi) states that homeless households are specifically exempted from the requirements to verify residency. SNAP regulations provide that verification of residency "should be accomplished to the extent possible" and provides flexibility regarding what documents may be used to verify residency.

ISD is to provide flexibility for homeless households who may not have a fixed or regular nighttime residence or may be seeking some form of temporary accommodation. Depending on the household's circumstances, homeless persons may choose to use the address of an authorized representative, a shelter, or the SNAP local office as a place to receive mail from SNAP per regulations at 8.139.420.10 NMAC.

There is a misconception that there is an *age requirement*. While this is the standard in most cases, youth who are not living with their parents are not required to apply as part of their parent's household. CFR regulations at 273.1(b) provide policy which may apply to cases in which a homeless youth is temporarily seeking accommodation in the residence of another individual. This policy provides that a child under "parental control" must apply as part of the same household as the adult, defining parental control as follows:

A child (other than a foster child) under 18 years of age who lives with and is under the parental control of a household member other than his or her parent. A child must be considered to be under parental control for purposes of this provision if he or she is financially or otherwise dependent on a member of the household, unless State law defines such a person as an adult per regulation at 8.139.400.9 E (2) & (3).

While some homeless youth may fall under parental control of a non-parent household member, other homeless youth may not. Therefore anyone who, under SNAP policy, is considered an individual living alone should be afforded the opportunity to apply as a one person household.

If you have any questions, regarding this GI, please contact Kristen Ortiz at 505-827-7233 or by e-mail at [KristenR.Ortiz@state.nm.us](mailto:KristenR.Ortiz@state.nm.us).