



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Social Services

• 325 North Salisbury Street
2420 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2420
Courier # 56-20-25

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

Pheon E. Beal, Director
(919) 733-3055

August 27, 2003

**Re: Notification of September
2003 Food Stamp Notice**

Dear County Director of Social Services:

**Attention: Food Stamp Supervisors
LIEAP Supervisors**

Attached to this letter is a sample of the notice that will be sent to Food Stamp recipients regarding the increase in the Food Stamp allotments, income limits, and the excess shelter deduction. The United States Department of Agriculture issued this cost-of-living adjustment effective October 1, 2003. We have also included information pertaining to LIEAP on how to get help with paying heating bills. In addition, we have included information on new Food Stamp Policy that restores food stamp eligibility to many legal immigrants.

Laser printed notices will be provided to all active food stamp benefit recipients with active cases as of September 5, 2003 and inserts will be provided in all notices of action taken on food stamp applications September 6-30, 2003.

If you have any questions about this notice, please contact your Food Assistance and Energy Programs Representative.

Sincerely,

Wilbert R. Morris, Associate Director
Performance Management/Economic Services

WRM/ds
Attachments
FAEP 02-2003

Case ID Number:

Date:

NOTICE TO FOOD STAMP RECIPIENTS

The United States Department of Agriculture issued a cost-of-living increase in Food Stamp benefits effective October 1, 2003. The maximum gross and net income limits allowed and the excess shelter expense deduction for Food Stamp benefits have increased. This means the amount of Food Stamp benefits you receive **may** increase depending on your household's situation.

Note: Please disregard this notice if your application has been denied.

Other Changes that may affect your eligibility effective October 1, 2003

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 restores food stamp eligibility to many legal immigrants who lost eligibility under the 1996 Welfare Reform legislation. Effective October 1, 2003, any legal immigrant child under age 18, regardless of their date of entry into the United States who meets all other program requirements may begin receiving food stamps. To apply for food stamp benefits, or if you have questions about whether or not you may be eligible, please contact your local Department of Social Services or contact the CARE-LINE at 1-800-662-7030.

ESPAÑOL - El Decreto de Seguridad Agrícola y de Inversión Rural del 2002, **restaura la elegibilidad** para participar en el programa de **Estampillas para Alimentos**, a muchos inmigrantes que perdieron este beneficio debido a la legislación de 1996 de *Reforma a la Asistencia Social*. A partir del 1ro. de Octubre del 2003, los inmigrantes legales menores de 18 años, que llenen todos los otros requerimientos del programa de *Estampillas para Alimentos*, podrán recibir este beneficio sin importar la fecha de entrada a los Estados Unidos. Para hacer una solicitud para el programa de *Estampillas para Alimentos*, o si tiene preguntas acerca de si usted es elegible para participar en este programa, por favor póngase en contacto con su *Departamento de Servicios Sociales* local. O llame a CARE-LINE al 1-800-662-7030

If you have questions about these changes, contact your local food stamp office. You have the right to request a fair hearing if you do not believe your benefits were determined correctly when this change was made.

HOW TO GET A HEARING

You have the right to a fair hearing of your case if you do not agree with our decision. You can request a fair hearing by letting your local food stamp office or county department of social services know of your request. You may request the hearing in person, by telephone, or in writing. The hearing may be requested by any member of your food stamp unit or by your representative, including an attorney obtained at your own expense. Free legal advice may be available. Contact your nearest Legal Services Office.

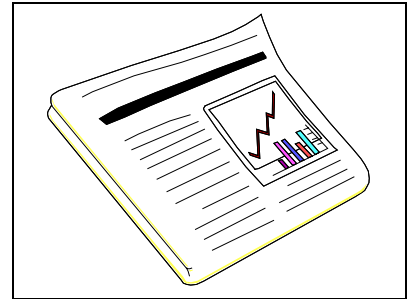
You have 90 calendar days from the date this notice was mailed to ask for a hearing. Unless you ask for a hearing by this date, you cannot have one.

SEE OTHER SIDE FOR INFORMATION ABOUT HELP WITH PAYING YOUR HEATING BILLS

NOTIFICATION OF LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIEAP)

The Division of Social Services will issue a one-time energy check in February to all households who apply and meet the requirements of the program. This check is to help with your heating costs.

Most households that receive food stamp benefits for October may be eligible for an energy check. If you do not receive an approval notice from the County Department of Social Services in October, you must apply at the **COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES** if you want to receive this benefit.



The application period for the LIEAP program is November 3 through November 14. If you are elderly or disabled, you may:

- Send someone to apply for you; or
- Call the county department of social services and ask to apply.

To get more information, call your county department of social services or CARE-LINE, Information and Referral Services at 1-800-662-7030 (TTY/Voice/Spanish), Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. except holidays.

SEE OTHER SIDE FOR IMPORTANT INFORMATION