This memorandum conveys USDA policy for the emergency feeding of children (including adults participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program) in all Child Nutrition programs in the areas recently devastated by Hurricane Andrew. Under normal circumstances, households must apply for free and reduced price meals for their children. However, in cases where an application cannot be obtained from a household, determining officials may implement the policies that are already in place to provide children with free or reduced price meals. First, officials may complete an application on the child’s behalf when a household known to be needy does not apply for benefits for its children. Second, USDA recently instituted a policy (SP 92-192 and SP 92-204; CACFP 294 and CACFP 307; and SFSP 160 and SFSP 172) to deal with homeless children. This policy appropriately may be used in this crisis situation. Under this policy, when there are large numbers of homeless children, making it impractical to complete an application for each child, officials may keep a list to document free and reduced price eligibility. The list would consist of each child’s name, the dates benefits begin and end, the child’s residence (shelter, etc.) and the official’s signature. Determining officials are responsible for updating the list as children enroll and withdraw or household’s circumstances change. Also, many households in the disaster area have been approved for emergency food stamps. All households certified for food stamps continue to be automatically eligible for free meals.

In cases where a household from a designated disaster area moves in with another household that lives in that city, another city or another State, only the household size and income from that household in crisis need be included in the eligibility determination. The household size and income from the host family need not be included on the application or otherwise considered in the eligibility determination.

Determining officials should review eligibility determinations made under these crisis procedures every 45-days to evaluate the household’s circumstances.

Ann C. Hector
ANN C. HECTOR
Regional Director
Special Nutrition Programs