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## Food and Nutrition Service

### Description of Program and Relief

This section of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (the “FFCRA”) makes appropriations to the Department of Agriculture to fund food and nutrition assistance programs to be administered by state and federal agencies, and provides authorization to the Secretary of Agriculture to take certain steps to provide nutrition assistance during a public health emergency.

During fiscal year 2020, if a school is closed for five consecutive days during the COVID-19 public health emergency, each household with at least one child eligible to receive free or reduced price school meals under federal law is eligible to receive financial assistance equal to at least the value of meals over the course of five school days for each eligible child. Benefits will be provided to families of eligible children through state agency plans approved by the Secretary. The Secretary is separately empowered to purchase commodities for emergency distribution in any area of the United States during a public health emergency. Further, a State agency may also provide Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (“WIC”) assistance under this section of the FFCRA through the EBT card system.

Funds appropriated include:

- \$500,000,000 in additional funding is appropriated for the WIC. The Department of Agriculture’s Food and Nutrition Service funds WIC at a federal level through grants awarded to State agencies, and State agencies administer WIC services locally through county health departments, schools, hospitals, and Indian Health Service facilities.
- \$400,000,000 in additional funding is appropriated for the “Commodity Assistance Program” as authorized by The Emergency Food Assistance Program (“TEFAP”). Up to \$100,000,000 of the \$400,000,000 may be used for costs associated with distribution of commodities (i.e., storage). TEFAP authorizes the Department of Agriculture to purchase a variety of nutritious, high-quality foods and makes these foods available to State agencies. State agencies, in turn, distribute the food to local agencies such as food banks, which then distribute the food to local organizations or directly to eligible low-income persons or households. TEFAP also provides State agencies with administrative funds for local agencies to store and distribute the food.
- \$100,000,000 is appropriated for the Secretary of Agriculture to provide grants to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and American Samoa for nutrition assistance in response to a COVID-19 public health emergency.

**Government or Lead Agency**

Department of the Treasury, through the Department of Agriculture

**Dates Available**

Appropriations under this Title remain available through September 30, 2021.

**Eligibility Requirements/Restrictions**

WIC State agencies must submit an annual state plan to the Department of Agriculture by August 15. State agencies should contact their regional office for more information regarding state plan requirements. Persons eligible for WIC include pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, infants, and children up to age 5 who meet income eligibility and State residency requirements, in addition to being certified as “nutrition risk” by a health professional or trained health official.

Organizations interested in distributing TEFAP foods should contact their State Distributing Agency to learn how to become a TEFAP local agency. Persons may receive TEFAP foods from a local TEFAP organization by getting food from a local food pantry or eating at a soup kitchen or similar organization. Otherwise, persons may take TEFAP food home directly if they meet state-specific income eligibility requirements.

**List of Additional Information**

<https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/wic/wic-fact-sheet.pdf>

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/state-agency>

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/applicant-recipient>

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tefap/tefap-fact-sheet>

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tefap/state-local-agency>

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tefap/applicant-recipient>