

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) is working through several questions and answers that it has received from the public. We are providing the following as some initial guidance to help in answering questions. As more information becomes available, ODJFS will provide updates to our community partners.

**Q1. Is ODJFS taking steps to help food-insecure and homeless individuals – for example, by paying for food delivery for SNAP recipients?**

A. At the moment, federal rules prohibit online grocery shopping, although USDA is conducting a pilot in other states.

**Q2. Indiana has temporarily waived the State Plan requirement that prohibits pre-packaging/pre-bagging of TEFAP commodities. Is Ohio going to follow suit?**

A. Ohio already allows the pre-packaging of TEFAP commodities. We encourage choice model pantries to eliminate waste, but we don't specifically restrict this option. A waiver is not necessary for this in Ohio.

*Update:* Ohio also will now allow self-attestation for identity and income and verbal consent instead of a signature. The foodbanks/pantries will be required to note on the application "COVID-19 2020." At this time, ODJFS is maintaining the 200% FPL income requirement. However, as additional funds are identified the income level will continue to be evaluated.

**Q3. Could SNAP recipients be allowed to use their EBT cards for non-allowable items, such as cleaning supplies, and at currently prohibited locations such as restaurants and food delivery services?**

A. We continue to explore all options but have not received guidance from FNS on this. At the moment, federal rules prohibit online grocery shopping, and federal rules do not allow for non-food items. PRC funds could be deployed for this purpose.

**Q4. Is anything being done to provide more help to Ohioans through the Commodity Supplemental Food Program?**

A. Ohio is using an automated system to order food more quickly. Clients do not have to touch paper or sign an application form; they can verbally agree to the program's eligibility requirements. ODJFS will maintain the annual assessment and require signature only at reauthorization. Monthly pick-up confirmation can be noted by the distributing entity.

**Q5. Will the ABAWD waiver still take effect?**

A. Late on March 13, we received notification that there was an injunction on the April 1, 2020, ABAWD waiver changes. The state is working to ensure that Ohio-waived counties are identified correctly in Ohio Benefits as they were before the April 2020 changes. We started the update process that night, prior to the injunction. We immediately worked with the vendor to stop the process and change the counties back to waived.

**Q6. Are foodbanks able to provide additional food to clients in advance?**

A. Yes, it is encouraged to provide additional food packages where possible for TEFAP and 2 boxes for CSFP clients to prevent additional trips. For example, clients would take possession of an April and May box.