



For Release  
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For More Information Contact:  
Roger Munns (515) 281-4848

# Disaster Food Assistance to Help Tornado Victims

**DES MOINES, Iowa** – Federal officials have cleared the way for the Iowa Department of Human Services to offer emergency food assistance to victims of the tornado in Butler County.

Storm related expenses—such as job disruptions, uninsured losses, cleanup, or replacement of ruined food—may enable benefits for people who would not qualify for regular food stamps, known as food assistance in Iowa.

As in the regular food stamp program, benefits depend on household size, income, and resources. A Butler County family of four whose monthly income and resources were offset by expenses related to the tornado of May 25 would be eligible for up to \$540 in assistance.

Benefits will be approved for one 30-day period.

Like all food stamp benefits, the disaster food stamps will come in the form of a debit-like swipe card. The cards will be available at the disaster relief site in Parkersburg and will be activated within a few hours of the application.

Applications will be accepted for a week beginning Monday (June 2).

The application for assistance is shorter than the regular paperwork, and relaxed rules reduce the amount of proof of income or resources that applicants must provide.

Only people affected by the tornado in Butler County may qualify for disaster food benefits.

Disaster food assistance is available only when the president declares a disaster, and then only on specific permission from the Federal Food & Nutrition Service (FNS), which is part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The president made a disaster declaration for Butler County Tuesday and the FNS approved the disaster assistance today (Thursday May 29).

People already receiving food assistance may be eligible for additional help.

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