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Title 7 —Agriculture

Subtitle B —Regulations of the Department of Agriculture

Chapter II —Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture

Subchapter B —General Regulations and Policies—Food Distribution

Part 254 Administration of the Food Distribution Program for Indian Households in Oklahoma

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PART 254—ADMINISTRATION OF THE FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM FOR INDIAN HOUSEHOLDS IN OKLAHOMA

Authority: Pub. L. 97-98, sec. 1338; Pub. L. 95-113.

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§ 254.1 General purpose.

This part sets the requirement under which USDA Foods (available under part 250 of this chapter) may be distributed to households residing in FNS service areas in Oklahoma. This part also sets the conditions for administration of the Food Distribution Program by eligible Oklahoma tribes determined capable by the Department.

[49 FR 32756, Aug. 16, 1984, as amended at 89 FR 87258, Oct. 31, 2024]

§ 254.2 Definitions.

- (a) **Exercises governmental jurisdiction** means the exercise of authorities granted to ITOs under the Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act of 1936 or by BIA regulations (25 CFR part 81 et. seq.).
- (b) **FNS service area** means the areas over which FNS has approved the food distribution program in Oklahoma.
- (c) **Food Distribution Program** means a food distribution program for households on Indian reservations administered pursuant to section 4(b) of the Food Stamp Act and 1304(a) of Pub. L. 97-98.
- (d) **Indian tribal household** means a household in which at least one household member is recognized as a tribal member by any Indian tribe, as defined in § 253.2 of this chapter.

- (e) **Indian tribal organization (ITO)** means
 - (1) any Indian tribe, band, or group organized under the Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act of 1936, and which has a tribal organization approved by the Bureau of Indian Affairs;
 - (2) a tribal organization established and approved under Federal regulations issued by the Bureau of Indian Affairs; or
 - (3) an intertribal council authorized by eligible tribes to act in behalf of the tribes to operate the program.
- (f) **Overissuance** means the dollar value of USDA Foods issued to a household that exceeds the dollar value of USDA Foods it was eligible to receive.
- (g) **State agency** means the ITO of an Indian tribe, determined by the Department to be capable of effectively administering a Food Distribution Program, or an agency of State government, which enters into an agreement with FNS for the distribution of USDA Foods on an Indian reservation.

[49 FR 32756, Aug. 16, 1984, as amended at 59 FR 1449, Jan. 11, 1994; 64 FR 73385, Dec. 30, 1999; 89 FR 87258, Oct. 31, 2024]

§ 254.3 Administration by an ITO.

- (a) **Applicability of part 253.** All of the provisions of part 253 are herein incorporated and apply to part 254, except as specifically modified by part 254.
- (b) Section 253.4 Administration, does not apply and is replaced by § 254.3.
- (c) **Federal administration.** Within the Department of Agriculture, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), shall be responsible for the Food Distribution Program. FNS shall have the power to determine the amount of any claim and to settle and adjust any claim against an ITO.
- (d) **ITO administration.** The ITO, acting as State agency, shall be responsible for the Food Distribution Program within the approved FNS service areas if FNS determines the ITO capable of effective and efficient administration.
- (e) **Qualification as an ITO.** The ITO of a tribe in Oklahoma must document to the satisfaction of FNS that the ITO meets the definition of an ITO in § 254.2, is organized under the provisions of the Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act of 1936 or has a tribal organization established and approved under BIA regulations.

(The information collection requirements contained in paragraph (e) were approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 0584-0316)

§ 254.4 Application by an ITO.

- (a) **Application to FNS Regional Office.** An ITO which desires to participate in the Food Distribution Program shall file an application with the FNS Regional Office. The application shall also provide other information requested by FNS, including but not limited to, the tribe's qualification as a reservation as described in § 254.2, paragraph (f). Properly addressed applications shall be acknowledged by the FNS Regional Office in writing within five working days of receipt. FNS shall promptly advise ITOs of the need for additional information if an incomplete application is received.
- (b) **Tribal capability.**

- (1) In determining whether the ITO is potentially capable of effectively and efficiently administering a Food Distribution Program in an FNS Service area, allowing for fulfillment of that potential through training and technical assistance, FNS shall consult with other sources such as the BIA, and shall consider the ITO experience, if any, in operating other government programs, as well as its management and fiscal capabilities. Other factors for evaluation include, but are not limited to, the ITO's ability to:
 - (i) Order and properly store USDA Foods,
 - (ii) Certify eligible households,
 - (iii) Arrange for physical issuance of USDA Foods,
 - (iv) Keep appropriate records and submit required reports,
 - (v) Budget and account for administrative funds,
 - (vi) Determine the food preferences of households, and
 - (vii) Conduct on-site reviews of certification and distribution procedures and practices.
 - (2) FNS shall make a determination of potential ITO capability within 60 days of receipt of a completed application for the Food Distribution Program. FNS may, however, extend the period for determination of ITO capability if FNS finds that a given ITO's eligibility under § 254.3 is difficult to establish.
 - (3) FNS shall, if requested by an ITO which has been determined by FNS to be potentially capable of administering a Food Distribution Program, provide the ITO's designees with appropriate training and technical assistance to prepare the ITO to take over program administration. In determining what training and technical assistance are necessary, FNS shall consult with the ITO and other sources, such as the BIA.
- (c) **Most capable tribe.** In cases where two or more applicant tribe(s) have overlapping boundaries, FNS shall select the tribe most capable of administering a FDP within that service area.

(The information collection requirements contained in paragraph (a) were approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 0584-0316)

[49 FR 32756, Aug. 16, 1984, as amended at 89 FR 87258, Oct. 31, 2024]

§ 254.5 Household eligibility.

- (a) **Certification procedures.** All applicant households shall be certified in accordance with the eligibility and certification provisions in §§ 253.6 and 253.7.
- (b) **Eligible households.** Only Indian tribal households, as defined in § 254.2, may be eligible for the Food Distribution Program in FNS service areas.

(The information collection requirements contained in paragraph (a) were approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 0584-0316)

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