

December 22, 2023

Dear Ryan White Program Subrecipients and Colleagues: **RE: Food Bank Program Changes**

Due to increased demand for food bank services and limited availability of resources, the following cost containment measures are needed to ensure as many clients as possible have access to food assistance:

- **EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**, wherever possible, please encourage clients to utilize community food pantry or food distribution center resources. Remember that the Ryan White Program is payer of last resort.
  - See attached list of food pantries and food distribution programs throughout our county. Although many options are listed, this is not an exhaustive or all-inclusive list. If you see the need for edits or additions, please send an email to [Carla.ValleSchwenk@miamidade.gov](mailto:Carla.ValleSchwenk@miamidade.gov) for the list to be updated. (Please do not reply to all.)
- **EFFECTIVE January 1, 2024 through February 29, 2024:**
  - Through a strong partnership with the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County (FDOH-MDC), the local Ryan White Part B Program will be assisting clients to address food insecurity in the following ways:
    - One \$50 Grocery Gift Certificate **per client per week** will be available through the local Ryan White Part B Program as noted below: coupons for groceries.
      - These gift certificates can be redeemed at any store accepting manufacturers. Click on the following link to find participating stores in our region: [gThankYou Store Locator](#)
      - See sample coupon below:



- Maximum Grocery Gift Certificate benefit is \$1,000 per client per Ryan White Part B Program grant fiscal year (i.e., April to March).

- Food for Life Network (FFLN) staff will be instructed to:
    - **For Group 1: Redirect** existing and new **Borinquen Health Care Center (BHCC) and AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) clients only** who need food assistance back to these two agencies to access the Part B-funded Grocery Gift Certificates.
      - NOTES:
        - BHCC and AHF **cannot** refer any of their clients to FFLN between January 1, 2024 and February 29, 2024. They will utilize Part B resources to serve these clients.
        - FDOH-MDC will amend BHCC and AHF's Part B-funded contracts for Emergency Financial Assistance (EFA) services to support this programming change.
    - **For Group 2: Accept referrals** to Part A-funded Food Bank services for new clients and continue serving existing clients **except for Group 1 clients noted above (i.e., BHCC and AHF clients)**.
    - **For Group 3:** Provide food assistance to clients who present with an **Out of Network Referral** for Food Bank services.
  - The cost to distribute the Part B-funded Grocery Gift Certificates, maintain a related distribution log, enter service utilization data, and prepare related reports **cannot** be recorded as a Part A or Minority AIDS Initiative (MAI) service or charged to the local Part A or MAI Programs. These are Part B activities.
  - Time spent preparing and issuing referrals to Part B for this purpose **can** be billed to Part A or MAI. This is a Medical Case Management Action Plan (POC) activity.
- **BEGINNING March 1, 2024:**
    - The Ryan White Part A Program will be reinstating the following Food Bank limits:
      - 20 occurrences (weekly bags of groceries) per client;
      - If needed and the client meets the criteria for more assistance, then an additional 16 occurrences may be provided with a signed Letter of Medical Necessity LOMN (see attached).
    - A referral form from Part A to Part B, to be issued by FFLN, will be developed and made available for use when additional food assistance is needed, subject to the availability of resources. This form would be used by 1) clients who use the original 20 occurrences, don't qualify for the additional 16 occurrences, and need additional food assistance; and 2) clients who use the combined 36 occurrences and need additional food assistance

- **BEGINNING April 1, 2024:** (coinciding with Part B's new grant fiscal year)
  - The local Ryan White Part A Program will reinstate the income limit for Food Bank Services to 250% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).
    - The Provide® Enterprise Miami data management system will be programmed to block this service for clients whose income exceeds 250% FPL.
  - The local Ryan White Part B Program will provide all new and existing clients whose income is between 251% to 400% FPL with the \$50 weekly Grocery Gift Certificates, up to \$1,000 per grant fiscal year per client, through its Emergency Financial Assistance resources. Part B's grant fiscal year runs from April to March. Note: this changes will be effective after the Part B contracts are renewed and then amended to include this new language.
    - Clients whose income is above 250% FPL will no longer qualify for Part A Food Bank assistance and will need to be referred to the Part B Program or seek other resources in the community.

If you have questions, please let us know by email to [Carla.ValleSchwenk@miamidade.gov](mailto:Carla.ValleSchwenk@miamidade.gov) and [Kira.Villamizar@flhealth.gov](mailto:Kira.Villamizar@flhealth.gov). Thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation with these necessary programmatic changes.

Sincerely,



Carla Valle-Schwenk  
Program Administrator

#### Attachments

- c: Daniel T. Wall, Assistant Director / Program Director, Miami-Dade County, OMB  
Clarisol Nilsen, Fiscal Administrator, Miami-Dade County, Ryan White Part A Program  
Kira Villamizar, Public Health Services Manager, FDOH-MDC, Ryan White Part B Program  
Ernesto Rodriguez, Government Operations Consultant II, FDOH-MDC