

MULTNOMAH COUNTY CHARTER, Vol. 2, Bk. 2  
-Food Stamp Program



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FOOD STAMP  
PROGRAM

A  
PRELIMINARY REPORT  
ON THE  
FOOD STAMP PROGRAM  
IN  
MULTNOMAH COUNTY

## PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM IN MULTNOMAH COUNTY

These findings are based upon a review of the 1964-65 fiscal year budget request and an interview with the Assistant to the Board of County Commissioners during a meeting of the Sub-Committee on Welfare.

A review of the Food Stamp Division reveals an activity employing five full time personnel with a total budget appropriation in the year 1964-65 of \$43,265.

The Food Stamp Program is the outgrowth of a pre-existing surplus food distribution program. In September, 1961 the surplus food program was begun to distribute certain surplus commodities to both welfare recipients and other low income families. Some 13 or 14 surplus commodities were distributed to approximately 30,000 people per month in Multnomah County. The commodities consisted of flour, oatmeal, lard, butter, meat, powdered eggs, powdered milk, cheese, cornmeal, etc. All were not really surplus foods. Some items, not necessarily surplus, were added by the Department of Agriculture of the federal government on the supposition that distribution of the items would have a direct effect on the surplus items themselves. For example, grain is a surplus item - canned meat was not. By increasing the consumption of meat, more grain would be needed to feed the animals that ultimately would become canned meat. Multnomah County participated in surplus food distribution until November, 1962. At this time Multnomah County became one of 25 pilot programs of food stamp distribution. Multnomah County continues to be the only food stamp program in Oregon.

The Food Stamp Program of the Department of Agriculture is programmed to supplement diets of low income families by increasing their buying power to assist in using up surplus foods in the United States. Participants in the Food Stamp Program buy food stamps at discounted rates. These stamps are exchangeable in food stores for food items. The stamps are purchased at discount for low income families. Welfare recipients get some of their aid in stamps. The stamps are exactly the size of dollar bills, and are not bulky or hard to handle.

While the program does not get the same participation that direct distribution of surplus foods did, the stamp program is directly assisting approximately 10,000 people per month. The stamp program in less than two years time has brought more than one and one-half million dollars of new money to the county.

Appended hereto are the statutes pertaining to the Food Stamp Program in Multnomah County.



## FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAMS

**411.806 Definitions for ORS 411.806 to 411.845.** As used in ORS 411.806 to 411.845, unless the context or a specially applicable statutory definition requires otherwise:

(1) "Administrative costs" means, but is not limited to, costs in connection with:

(a) Shipment, storage, packaging and distribution of food commodities under a food distribution program;

(b) Receiving, safekeeping and distributing food stamps or coupons to recipients under a food stamp plan; and

(c) The compensation of personnel while employed in carrying out ORS 411.806 to 411.845.

(d) Reimbursement of the Federal Government for any loss described in ORS 411.830.

(2) "Food distribution program" means a program under which the Federal Government makes food commodities available to this state or its agencies, or to tribal councils of Indian tribes in this state, for direct distribution to individuals and households certified to be in economic need of and eligible to receive such commodities.

(3) "Food stamp plan" means a plan under which the Federal Government makes food stamps or coupons available to this state or its agencies, or to tribal councils of Indian tribes in this state, for distribution to individuals and households certified to be in economic need of and eligible to receive such food stamps or coupons for the purchase of food commodities from retail food outlets.

(4) "Household" means two or more related or nonrelated individuals who do not reside in an institution.

(5) "Issuing agency" means the state commission or a county, county public welfare commission, a tribal council of an Indian tribe or a commercial banking institution or branch thereof, which is authorized by the state commission, with the approval of the Federal Government, to issue food stamps or coupons to recipients under a food stamp plan.

(6) "Recipient" means an individual or household determined and certified, pursuant to ORS 411.811 or 411.825, to be eligible to receive food commodities under a food distribution program, or to receive food stamps or coupons under a food stamp plan. [1963 c.599 §3 (enacted in lieu of ORS 411.805)]

411.810 [1961 c.526 §2; repealed by 1963 c.599 §4 (ORS 411.811 enacted in lieu of ORS 411.810)]

**411.811 Participation in food distribution programs.** (1) Except as to food distribution programs in which a tribal council of an Indian tribe makes direct distribution

of food commodities to recipients, a food distribution program shall be put into effect or discontinued within a county only at the election of the governing body of such county. However, a food distribution program may be discontinued in any county if by federal law, rule or regulation such discontinuance is required or this state is permitted or required to conduct a food stamp plan in such county in lieu of a food distribution program.

(2) With respect to food distribution programs, the Department of Finance and Administration shall:

(a) Execute agreements necessary to maintain the eligibility of this state to receive food commodities, and to carry into effect ORS 411.806 to 411.845 relating to such programs, including agreements with counties and other agencies of this state, with the Federal Government and its agencies, and with tribal councils of Indian tribes;

(b) Order, ship and store food commodities pending their delivery to counties or tribal councils of Indian tribes for direct distribution to recipients;

(c) Determine and require that the storage, distribution and handling of food commodities are made in accordance with state and federal laws, rules, regulations and requirements;

(d) Determine the quantities of food commodities which recipients shall be entitled to receive with respect to any period and geographical area; and

(e) Except as otherwise provided by ORS 411.816, promulgate and enforce rules and regulations necessary to maintain the eligibility of this state to receive food commodities and to carry into effect ORS 411.806 to 411.845 relating to such programs.

(3) The state commission, through the county departments, shall determine and certify to the eligibility of all individuals and households to receive food commodities under food distribution programs.

(4) Except as to any program in which the tribal council of an Indian tribe issues food commodities to recipients, the governing body of a county in which a food distribution program is in effect shall cause to be received, stored, packaged if necessary, and distributed to recipients, any food commodity made available under such program. [1963 c.599 §5 (enacted in lieu of ORS 411.810)]

411.815 [1961 c.526 §3; repealed by 1963 c.599 §6 (ORS 411.816 enacted in lieu of ORS 411.815)]



**411.816 Eligibility and benefit level.** The state commission shall promulgate rules and regulations conforming to federal laws, rules and regulations required to be observed in maintaining the eligibility of this state to receive from the Federal Government, and to issue or distribute to recipients, food stamps or coupons under a food stamp plan or food commodities under a food distribution program. Such rules and regulations which relate to food distribution programs shall be subject to approval of the Director of the Department of Finance and Administration. Rules and regulations promulgated by the state commission pursuant to this section shall relate to and include, but shall not be limited to:

(1) The classifications of and requirements of eligibility for individuals and households to receive food commodities or food stamps or coupons under such plans or programs. The limitations upon the income and resources of individuals and households established as requirements of eligibility under this section shall be directly related to the applicable requirements of eligibility established under state law for recipients of old-age assistance or of aid as defined in ORS 418.035. However, with respect to individuals or households not receiving public assistance, limitations upon the amount or value of the liquid assets of any individual or household may be established, as requirements of eligibility under this section, at not more than double the amount or value of liquid assets allowable under state law to recipients of old-age assistance and of aid as defined in ORS 418.035;

(2) The periods during which individuals and households shall be certified or recertified to be eligible to receive food stamps or coupons under such plans;

(3) The numbers and values of food stamps or coupons to be issued or allotted to recipients, with respect to any period, under a food stamp plan, and the amount such recipients shall be required to pay for such food stamps or coupons;

(4) Periodic redetermination and review of the eligibility of recipients to receive food commodities, or the numbers and values of food stamps or coupons issued or allotted to recipients and amounts required to be paid therefor, under such plans or programs;

(5) Cancellation of certifications issued for, and adjustment of the numbers of individuals in any household eligible to receive

food commodities or the numbers, values and amounts to be paid by recipients for food stamps or coupons issued or allotted to recipients under such plans or programs for any period in accordance with changes of circumstances in individual cases; and

(6) Procedures to review, on the basis of substantial hardship, requests for such adjustments.

[1963 c.599 §7 (enacted in lieu of ORS 411.815)]

**411.820 Contribution by state and counties; administrative costs; reimbursement of counties.** (1) For payment of expenses incurred in connection with a food stamp plan or a food distribution program, the State of Oregon shall contribute 70 percent and the several counties wherein such plan or program is in effect shall each contribute 30 percent of all sums which the state commission finds have been reasonably incurred or expended in and for such counties pursuant to ORS 411.806 to 411.845. In determining the costs for which the counties shall contribute, all administrative costs exclusive of costs for certification of recipients shall be included, notwithstanding ORS 411.160.

(2) All county accounts and claims for reimbursement, credit or allowance shall be forwarded by the county court or the board of county commissioners to the State Public Welfare Commission for approval in accordance with subsection (1) of this section.

[1961 c.526 §§4, 5; 1963 c.599 §12]

**411.825 Food stamp plan.** (1) Subject to approval of the state commission, a food stamp plan may be put into effect in any county, in lieu of a food distribution program, if permitted by the Federal Government.

(2) The state commission, through the county departments, shall determine and certify to the eligibility of all individuals and households to receive food stamps or coupons under a food stamp plan.

(3) Issuing agencies under a food stamp plan shall:

(a) Receive, safeguard, inventory and issue to recipients, food stamps or coupons made available from the Federal Government under such plan;

(b) Receive, safeguard and pay to the Federal Government all moneys paid by recipients for such food stamps or coupons; and

(c) Account to the Federal Government for all such food stamps or coupons received



FOOD STAMP PROGRAM (CONTINUED)

by it, together with reconciliations of food stamps or coupons received, inventoried and issued to and paid for by recipients.  
[1963 c.599 §10]

**411.827 Appropriation of sums received from Federal Government.** All sums received by the state commission from the Federal Government to assist in meeting the costs of processing applications from, and of certifying and recertifying, individuals and households under ORS 411.806 to 411.845 are hereby appropriated to the state commission for expenditure in meeting the costs of processing applications from, and making certifications and recertifications of, individuals and households for the benefits made available pursuant to ORS 411.806 to 411.845.  
[1963 c.599 §14]

**411.830 Payment of losses from program.** (1) Any loss for which this state or its agencies or counties may be liable to reimburse the Federal Government, in accordance with federal laws, rules or regulations applicable to food stamp plans or food distribution programs, and which results from improper shipment, storage, handling, receipt or disposal of food commodities or food stamps or coupons, from improper certification of any person, or from the criminal or tortious act of any person, shall be paid from funds appropriated to the state commission for the purposes of ORS 411.806 to 411.845. The county in which such plan or program is in effect, and with respect to which such loss is incurred, shall pay to the state commission 30 percent of the amount payable to the Federal Government under this section.

(2) Subsection (1) of this section shall not relieve any person of any civil or criminal liability to this state.  
[1963 c.599 §15]

**411.835 Residence requirement.** Individuals and households are not eligible to receive food stamps or coupons under a food stamp plan or to receive food commodities under a food distribution program, unless they reside in a county in which such plan or program is in effect.  
[1963 c.599 §9]

**411.837 Compliance with state and federal laws required.** Counties, state institutions and agencies, issuing agencies, retail food outlets, wholesale food concerns, banks and all persons who participate in or admin-

ister any part of a food stamp plan shall comply with all state and federal laws, rules and regulations applicable to such plans.  
[1963 c.599 §11]

**411.840 Unlawfully using stamps or commodities.** (1) No person shall knowingly obtain or attempt to obtain, or aid or abet another person in obtaining or attempting to obtain, any food commodity under a food distribution program or any food stamp or coupon under a food stamp plan, to which he or such other person is not entitled to receive or use under ORS 411.806 to 411.845, or under any rule or regulation promulgated pursuant to ORS 411.806 to 411.845.

(2) No person shall knowingly give, sell, trade or otherwise dispose of to another person not entitled to receive or use the same pursuant to ORS 411.806 to 411.845, or pursuant to any rule or regulation promulgated pursuant to ORS 411.806 to 411.845:

(a) Any food commodity received under a food distribution program;

(b) Any food stamp or coupon received under a food stamp plan; or

(c) Any food commodity received wholly or partially in exchange for a food stamp or coupon received under a food stamp plan.  
[1963 c.599 §16]

**411.845 Prosecution; costs; accounting.**

(1) If any person obtains, gives, sells, trades or otherwise disposes of any food commodity or any food stamp or coupon in violation of ORS 411.840, the district attorney shall prosecute, for and in the name of the State of Oregon, a civil action or suit to recover from such person:

(a) The food commodity or food stamp or coupon so obtained by such person;

(b) The reasonable value of the food commodity so obtained, given, sold, traded or otherwise disposed of by such person; or

(c) The face value of the food stamp or coupon so obtained, given, sold, traded or otherwise disposed of by such person, less any sum paid to the issuing agency for such food stamp or coupon.

(2) In any suit or action prosecuted under subsection (1) of this section, the state is entitled to recover interest and its costs and disbursements incurred in such suit or action.

(3) Food commodities, food stamps or coupons, and moneys recovered by the state under this section shall be accounted for or paid to the federal, state and county governments, or their respective agencies, as their respective interests therein may appear.  
[1963 c.599 §17]



## SUB-COMMITTEE ON WELFARE

### SUMMARY OF CLAY MYERS' PRESENTATION ON WELFARE AND THE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM

MARCH 31, 1965

Mr. Myers is in the unique position of having served on the Multnomah County Welfare Board and now serving on the State Welfare Commission.

State law applies equally to all counties and the composition of the county welfare boards are the same throughout the state. In many of the smaller counties the welfare board meets with the entire staff of the county and discusses cases on an individual basis, and in so doing actually participates in the administration of the welfare program. There are frustrations on the Multnomah County Welfare Board, however, because Multnomah County is too big for the individual interest in cases by the board.

Basically, welfare is administered by the State of Oregon through the use of federal funds. The state budget is composed of 49% federal money, 36% state money, 13% county money, and 2% from the recoveries of fraud, etc. There are several programs in the welfare as follows:

OAA	OLD AGE ASSISTANCE
AD	AID TO THE DISABLED
AB	AID TO THE BLIND
MAA	MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE AGED
ADC	AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN
ADCUN	AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN WITH UNEMPLOYABLE PARENTS

In all of the programs wherein the federal government participates financially, the federal rules govern the administration to such an extent that only recently has the State of Oregon been able to utilize the services of welfare recipients in a welfare work program. This program is known now as the Work Relief Program, utilized by some of the counties, requiring able-bodied men drawing welfare relief to perform work as a condition of receiving their welfare payments. Multnomah County entered the program last year. Under existing law, these men may only be worked by city or county governments. The state furnishes any special clothing necessary such as special shoes, transportation, etc., and the men are required to report to the employment office regularly. Last year the state required between five and six thousand of these welfare recipients to work for their grants.



Any charter content should be left quite flexible in view of the federal government's habit of changing the rules on the administration of welfare from time to time. Any charter content should be so worded as to meet the state and federal requirements for the administration of welfare.

The Food Stamp Program within Multnomah County is one of the greatest frustrations experienced by Mr. Myers. The Department of Agriculture of the federal government had recommended the Food Stamp Program to take the place of the surplus food distribution as an aid to a balanced diet, a boost in the local economy, and an easier effort for the people involved. They said this was the coming thing and they wanted to try it in Multnomah County. As a part of the state's policy of cooperating with the counties, the State Welfare Commission permitted Multnomah County to establish the Food Stamp Program. At first the state had wanted to continue both the surplus distribution and the stamps on a parallel operation, but the Department of Agriculture had refused this. The county agreed to change from the surplus food distribution to the distribution of food stamps, and the new program was implemented.

Surplus foods had been distributed to some twenty-eight to thirty thousand people. In a very short time the recipients on the stamp program totalled seven to nine thousand. The people who were actually welfare recipients dropped considerably, but the worst was the low income people not on welfare. In essence, the Food Stamp Program is: (1) not meeting the need, (2) depriving people who needed it but are not on welfare, (3) bureaucracy (rules of the Department of Agriculture).

As an example of the third item, one of the rules of the Department of Agriculture was that the people participating in the Food Stamp Program had to purchase an entire month's stamps at one time. This was a tremendous hardship on low income families because they had to save in advance of their current needs to have the cash to purchase the stamps. The State Welfare Commission had two conferences with personnel from the Department of Agriculture and finally got them to reduce this requirement to the point where the people can now purchase their stamps twice a month which is better but still does not solve the problems of the low income families.

The County Welfare Board has a great deal more to say in the state welfare policies than they think they do. The State Welfare Commission sits down once a month and reads all the reports from the counties. More than half of the rules promulgated by the State Welfare Commission are the result of reading county recommendations. The state commission prepares drafts of proposals and sends them out to the counties for county reactions and comments. In the last year and a half, there has been a great deal of cooperation between the state commission and the county boards.

The County Welfare Board is more of a state office than it is a county office. They are really not an arm of county government.

In response to a question regarding assignment of additional responsibilities on the County Welfare Board, Mr. Myers expressed serious reservations about a welfare board running rehabilitation programs.