

**NOTICE TO CLASS MEMBERS OF PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF CLASS ACTION
LAWSUIT**

BELL, ET AL. V. GARGANO, ET AL.

TO: All residents of Indiana who, since April 1, 2008, have applied, are applying, or will apply for food stamps in Indiana, and all Indiana residents who, since April 1, 2008, have applied, are applying, or will apply for food stamps in Indiana and who are eligible for expedited processing.

The class action, *Bell, et al. v. Gargano, et al.* (United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana, 3:09-cv-00148-PPS), alleges that the Indiana Family and Social Services administration and the Division of Family Resources ("State") failed to timely process applications for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance, commonly known as food stamps, as required by federal law. Specifically, plaintiffs claimed that defendants failed to process applications for food stamps within 30 days and failed to process applications for food stamps for households eligible for expedited processing within 7 days. Defendants denied all wrongdoing and liability.

The case has been certified as a class action and defined as follows:

All residents of Indiana who, since April 1, 2008, have applied, are applying, or will apply for food stamps in Indiana.

The following sub-class has also been certified:

All Indiana residents who, since April 1, 2008, have applied, are applying, or will apply for food stamps in Indiana and who are eligible for expedited processing.

The parties have now reached a proposed Settlement Agreement that provides as follows:

1. The State's achievement and sustaining the present level of compliance in timely processing SNAP applications, including those eligible for expedited processing, combined with other factors permits dismissal of this case.
2. The State will pay counsel for the plaintiffs \$62,145.00 for attorney's fees and costs.
3. Once the Settlement Agreement is approved by the Court, plaintiffs will dismiss the lawsuit with prejudice, which means that class members will be unable to reinstitute the lawsuit based upon events that occurred prior to the approval of the Settlement Agreement. However, nothing will prevent any member of the class from instituting a separate lawsuit based on events that occur after the approval of the Settlement Agreement.

Any class member has the right to let the Court, the attorneys, and the parties know if he or she objects to the settlement. The Court has set a hearing on December 5, 2013 at 9:30 AM at the following address:

United States District Court
5400 Federal Plaza, 4th Floor, Courtroom 4
Hammond, IN 46320

Class members may also object to the settlement by sending a letter to the Court at the address listed above, marked "Bell v. Gargano lawsuit" and postmarked by November 30, 2013. Class members may also call or email the National Center for Law and Economic Justice, which represents the plaintiffs in this lawsuit, about the proposed Settlement Agreement:

National Center for Law and Economic Justice
1-800-520-7856
[Bell@nclej.org](mailto:bell@nclej.org)
275 7th Avenue, Suite 1506
New York, NY 10001