



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
600 Washington Street • Boston MA 02111



DEVAL L. PATRICK
Governor

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Secretary

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
Lieutenant Governor

JULIA E. KEHOE
Commissioner

Field Operations Memo 2009-28
May 14, 2009

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff
From:  John Augeri, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations
Re:  Bay State CAP Outreach Plan Phase Three

Background

In February 2005, the Massachusetts Combined Application Project (Bay State CAP) was implemented. Bay State CAP created a new and simple way for eligible Supplemental Security Income (SSI) applicants/clients to apply for food assistance. Currently, 31,000 individuals receive Bay State CAP food assistance benefits.

Approximately 29,000 clients of SSI may be eligible for, but are not receiving, SNAP benefits. Nutritional assistance in the form of SNAP benefits would be a vital benefit to this vulnerable population. As part of the waiver agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), DTA agreed to outreach to potentially-eligible SSI clients.

DTA will outreach to current SSI clients who appear to be eligible for Bay State CAP in two additional phases.

Overview

Phase Three will target approximately 13,000 Bay State CAP eligible individuals who are coded for SSI purposes in State Living Arrangement A (living alone) and will be implemented through automatic enrollment. DTA chose these individuals for Phase Three, because SDX provides all the information required to determine eligibility.

Phase Four will target SSI clients who are coded for SSI purposes in State Living Arrangement B (sharing expenses). For individuals who share expenses, SDX does not provide all the information required to determine eligibility. DTA must explore the “purchase and prepare” arrangement for these households. The date for Phase Four has not yet been determined.

This memo will discuss the Phase Three Outreach effort.

**Phase Three
Process**

On the evening of May 15, MIS will select current SSI clients who:

- Meet the Bay State CAP criteria;
- Are coded State Living Arrangement A; and
- Are not active SNAP clients, or active or ineligible in a cash assistance household.

On or about May 18, Bay State CAP Outreach packages will be mailed to selected SSI clients. The packages will include a notice (see Attachment A) and the Bay State CAP Outreach brochure (see Attachment B).

From May 25 - May 31, SNAP Outreach Unit staff will monitor returned mail and update the Bay State CAP Outreach file. SSI clients whose mail is returned will be removed from the Bay State CAP Outreach file.

On June 1, MIS will send the updated Bay State CAP Outreach file to SSA Baltimore for processing.

On or about June 5, SSA National Office in Baltimore will update the SDX records of the clients with Bay State CAP coding.

Between June 25 and July 10, BEACON will process Bay State CAP Outreach file cases using current processing.

If eligible,

- An approval notice will be mailed;
- A Bay State Access Card and PIN will be generated; and
- Food assistance benefits will be deposited in the client account on the July 2009 cyclical date.

If not eligible, a denial letter will be mailed.

On or about October 31, 2009, MIS will close any Bay State CAP Outreach case that has not accessed benefits.

**Bay State CAP
Outreach Calls**

The Bay State CAP Outreach notice mailed on May 18, 2009 will refer clients to their local Council on Aging/Senior Center for more information about Bay State CAP. To get the phone number for the local Council on Aging/Senior Center, clients can call 1-800-AGE-INFO.

**Case Manager
Responsibility
for Bay State
CAP Outreach
Cases**

No case manager action is necessary to create a Bay State CAP Outreach case, issue Bay State CAP food assistance benefits, or activate a Bay State CAP case.

Questions

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline.

{ADDRESS_CAN#}
{CITY, STATE, ZIP}

Important Notice - Read Carefully
Este Mensaje Es Importante - Lea Cuidadosamente

Attachment A

Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance

RECIPIENT NAME
RECIPIENT ADDRESS
RECIPIENT CITY/TOWN, STATE, ZIP

RECIPIENT SSN
BEACON USER OFFICE NAME

MM/DD/YYYY

BAY STATE CAP FOOD ASSISTANCE
Putting Healthy Food Within Reach

Dear {Recipient}:

The Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), Social Security Administration (SSA), Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) and United States Department of Agriculture worked together to bring you a food assistance program called Bay State CAP. Bay State CAP is a "combined application project" that allows DTA to use the information you already provided to SSA for your Supplemental Security Income (SSI) as an application for food benefits.

We are writing to tell you that you may be eligible for this program.

Bay State CAP is designed to provide more money for food for elders and people with disabilities who receive SSI. You can use Bay State CAP food assistance benefits to buy food in supermarkets, pharmacies or convenience stores.

As a Bay State CAP client:

- ◆ You will get food assistance benefits for 36 months.
- ◆ Your food assistance benefits will be deposited in an account created just for you.
- ◆ You will use your Bay State Access Card and PIN like a debit card when you go food shopping.

If you are eligible, your Bay State CAP case will be opened in July 2009.

- ◆ You will get an approval letter telling you the amount of your Bay State CAP food assistance benefits.
- ◆ You will also receive your Bay State Access Card in the mail. Be sure to watch your mail for your Bay State Access Card.
- ◆ You will receive your PIN a day or two after you receive your Bay State Access Card. Be sure to watch your mail for an envelope with a gray backing. It will have a return address of DTA - Bay State CAP.

If you have any questions about Bay State CAP or this notice, please call your local Council on Aging/Senior Center and someone will help you. To get the phone number for you local Council on Aging/Senior Center, you can call 1-800-AGE-INFO. The enclosed brochure will also tell you more about Bay State CAP.

Bay State CAP benefits can help you buy nutritious foods. We encourage you to take advantage of this benefit!

Yours Sincerely,

Julia E. Kehoe
Commissioner
Department of Transitional
Assistance

Manuel J. Vaz
Regional Commissioner
Social Security Administration

Ellie Shea-Delaney
Interim Secretary
Executive Office of Elder Affairs

BAY STATE CAP A FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



WHAT IS BAY STATE CAP FOOD ASSISTANCE?

Bay State CAP is a program designed to make it easy for recipients of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) to get food assistance benefits. It is administered by the Department of Transitional Assistance, and is based on information that Social Security Administration (SSA) uses for SSI benefits.

You were selected to receive Bay State CAP food assistance because you meet the following criteria:

- You are age 18 or older
- You are not living with a spouse or children
- You do not have earned income
- You meet the SSI *living alone* rules.

Note: For SSI purposes you can be considered *living alone* even if you do live with other adults as long as SSA has determined that you pay most household expenses.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BAY STATE CAP?

- You do not have to go to a DTA office.
- You do not have to give DTA your personal records.
- Information from your SSI case will be used as an application for food assistance benefits.
- Your food assistance benefits go into a special account.
- DTA will send you a card and Personal Identification Number (PIN) to use to buy groceries.

HOW CAN BAY STATE CAP BENEFITS BE USED?

You may use your Bay State CAP benefits to buy food in supermarkets, convenience stores and pharmacies. You are not required to have cooking facilities to be eligible for Bay State CAP benefits.

WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION ON BAY STATE CAP?

If you have questions about the program, please call or stop by your local Council on Aging/Senior Center and someone will help you. You may call 1-800-AGE-INFO to get information about the Council on Aging/Senior Center in your city/town.

Believing you can.

www.mass.gov/dta

