



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance**


MAURA T. HEALEY
GOVERNOR

KATHLEEN E. WALSH
SECRETARY

KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

JEFF McCUE
COMMISSIONER

**Online Guide Transmittal 2023-70
October 10, 2023**

To: Department of Transitional Assistance Staff
From:  Sarah Stuart, Associate Commissioner for Change Management
Re: Cross Programs: Replacement of Electronically Stolen Benefits

Overview

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) has approved the Department of Transitional Assistance's (DTA) plan to use federal funds to replace SNAP benefits stolen through card skimming, card cloning, and other similar fraudulent methods, including organized identity theft schemes. DTA is approved to use federal funds to replace SNAP benefits that were electronically stolen between October 1, 2022 and September 30, 2024.

Purpose

The purpose of this Online Guide update is to inform staff of the process to restore electronically stolen benefits and provide guidance on how to initiate claims for the restoration of electronically stolen benefits.

Claim Process Changes	<p>Prior to the approval of the state plan to replace stolen SNAP benefits, the Department only replaced TAFDC and EAEDC benefits that were electronically stolen through card skimming, cloning, and other similar fraudulent methods, including organized identity theft schemes. Previously, when clients reported an electronic theft of TAFDC or EAEDC benefits, staff were advised to report the case to the DTA.ReportFraud@MassMail.State.MA.US. The Central Case Management Office (CCMO) would then work with the Program Integrity unit to determine whether an electronic theft had occurred and if the stolen benefits could be restored.</p>
Clients Reporting a Claim	<p>Effective 10/12/2023 CCMO will no longer complete manual entries of replacements for electronically stolen TAFDC and EAEDC benefits. Staff must no longer email these cases to DTA.ReportFraud.</p> <p>To streamline the process for replacing electronically stolen benefits, an enhancement has been made to the BEACON workflow to allow staff to initiate a benefit theft claim. A new page has been created on the Program Administration workflow called the “Benefit Theft” page. Any claim of electronically stolen benefits must be entered on the Benefit Theft page.</p> <p>When a client reports electronic theft of their SNAP, TAFDC, EAEDC or any combination of programs, the DTA staff member who takes this report is expected to initiate the benefit theft claim and document the claim in the case narrative. Clients must report a claim of stolen SNAP benefits within 30 days of identifying the theft.</p>
Signature Requirement for SNAP Claims	<p>Additionally, the client must also provide a signed statement for the request of replacement of electronically stolen SNAP benefits. The signed statement must be received within 30 days of identifying the theft or within 45 days if the client had reported the theft prior to 10/12/2023 (approval of the state plan). Clients may provide this signature telephonically, a signed/written statement, or by completing the Request of Replacement of Benefits Due to Electronic Theft form. Clients can complete the Request of Replacement of Benefits Due to Electronic Theft form online at mass.gov/forms/claim-for-replacement-of-stolen-benefits-form, or they can obtain the PDF of the form at mass.gov and return the form to DTA in-person, via fax, or uploading through DTACConnect.</p>
TAFDC and EADC Claims	<p>Unlike claims for replacement of electronically stolen SNAP benefits, there is no time limit to report a claim and there is no signature requirement when reporting a claim for electronically stolen TAFDC or EAEDC benefits.</p>

Fraud Investigation Unit After a claim of stolen benefits is reported, a review of the circumstances of the claim and the benefit case file will be completed by the Fraud Investigations Unit. A decision will be made within 30 calendar days of the date the claim was reported.

Notices All requests for claims will be denied or approved, and the client will be sent a notice.

New Online Guide Pages

Topic: Cross Programs
Book: EBT
Chapter: Replacement of Stolen Benefits
Page: Benefit Theft Page

Topic: Cross Programs
Book: EBT
Chapter: Replacement of Stolen Benefits
Page: Replacement of Stolen Benefits – Economic Assistance

Topic: Cross Programs
Book: EBT
Chapter: Replacement of Stolen Benefits
Page: Replacement of Stolen Benefits – SNAP

Questions If you have any policy or procedural questions, after conferring with the appropriate TAO personnel, please have your Systems Information Specialists or TAO management email them to [DTA.Procedural Issues](#).

Systems issues should be directed to the Systems Support Help Desk.
