



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

DEVAL L. PATRICK  
Governor

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY  
Lieutenant Governor


JOHN W. POLANOWICZ  
Secretary

STACEY MONAHAN  
Interim Commissioner

Tel.: 617-348-8500  
Fax: 617-348-8575  
www.mass.gov/dta

**Operations Memo 2013-16  
April 10, 2013**

**To:** Department of Transitional Assistance Staff

**From:**  Stephanie Brown, Assistant Commissioner for Policy, Program and External Relations

**Re:** TAFDC, EAEDC, and SNAP: Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Card Fees, Replacements and Notices – Mailing to Clients

**Overview**

Operations Memo 2012-56 detailed a new EBT card replacement process for all clients. Under this process, any SNAP, TAFDC or EAEDC client with 4 or more countable replacement card requests within the previous 12 month period is required to see or speak with the case manager or the duty worker before having the EBT card replaced.

In addition, a \$5 fee for replacement cards was implemented affecting TAFDC and EAEDC clients. SNAP clients were excluded from the \$5 fee at that time.

Effective April 25, 2013, SNAP clients will incur the \$5 fee for replacement card requests.

Procedures for implementing the \$5 fee for SNAP are forthcoming.

**Purpose of Memo**

This Operations Memo serves to advise TAO staff about:

- a mailing to clients explaining the EBT fee policy; and
- a poster to be placed in every TAO waiting room.

**Client Mailing**

Beginning the week of April 8, 2013, clients will be sent an informational notice *Important Rules that Affect You* as follows:

- SNAP-only households will receive Attachment A-1;
- Combination cash and SNAP households will receive Attachment A-2; and
- cash-only households that did not receive an informational notice with the cash program fee implementation will receive Attachment A-3.

The notice will advise clients about:

- the \$5 replacement fee for EBT cards and how the fee will be collected;
- the EBT process if clients request four or more EBT replacement cards within a 12 month period;
- SNAP trafficking and fraud penalties (NPA SNAP) (Attachment A-1);
- SNAP trafficking and cash illegal use penalties (SNAP/cash) (Attachment A-2); and,
- Cash program illegal use penalties (cash only) (Attachment A-3).

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**Poster**

Attachment B is a poster that must be displayed in all TAO lobbies until further notice. It informs SNAP, TAFDC and EAEDC clients about the \$5 fee being charged for all replacement EBT cards.

Posters will be shipped to offices during the week of April 8<sup>th</sup>. All previous versions of this poster (referenced in Operations Memo 2012-56) must be removed from the waiting rooms when the new posters are received.

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**Questions**

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

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## Attachment A-1

### IMPORTANT RULES THAT AFFECT YOU

Dear Mary Jones:

We are letting you know about new rules that apply to all DTA clients.

#### **\$5 Replacement Card Fee**

Beginning April 25, 2013, we will charge \$5 for any replacement Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card you request.

We take the fee directly from your SNAP benefits when you request a replacement. If there are no benefits available, we will take the fee from you at a later date.

#### **Replacement Card Process**

Your EBT card will last for years. You can use the same EBT card every month. If your case closes and later reopens, you can still use the same card.

If you request 4 or more EBT cards in 12 months, you must speak with a DTA staff member to explain why. Based on this discussion, DTA may investigate to make sure no fraud has occurred.

If you have a disability that is affecting your ability to manage your EBT card, let your case manager know.

If you think someone else is using your EBT card illegally, call 1-800-FRAUD-99.

#### **Reminder - Trafficking and Fraud**

Selling or trading SNAP benefits is illegal and violates program rules. If it is determined that you or any member of your household has traded or sold your SNAP benefits, you will be barred from SNAP, either temporarily or permanently.

**We will investigate and refer for possible prosecution all reports of trafficking and fraudulent use of EBT benefits.**

## IMPORTANT RULES THAT AFFECT YOU

Dear Mary Smith:

We are letting you know about rules that apply to all DTA clients.

### **\$5 Replacement Card Fee**

We charge \$5 for any replacement Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card you request.

**Change to Process!** Beginning April 25, 2013, we will take the fee from your cash benefits **first**. If there are no cash benefits available, we will take the fee from your SNAP benefits. If there are no benefits available at all, we will take the fee from you at a later date.

### **Reminder - Replacement Card Process**

Your EBT card will last for years. You can use the same EBT card every month. If your case closes and later reopens, you can still use the same card.

If you request 4 or more EBT cards in 12 months, you must speak with a DTA staff member to explain why. Based on this discussion, DTA may investigate to make sure no fraud has occurred.

If you have a disability that is affecting your ability to manage your EBT card, let your case manager know.

If you think someone else is using your EBT card illegally, call 1-800-FRAUD-99.

### **Reminder - Trafficking and Illegal Use**

Selling or trading SNAP benefits is illegal and a violation of program rules. If it is determined that you or any member of your household has traded or sold your SNAP benefits, you will be barred from SNAP, either temporarily or permanently.

It is illegal for you to use your cash benefits to make the following purchases or services with your EBT card:

- alcoholic beverages,
- court-ordered fees, fines, bail or bail bonds,
- firearms or ammunition,
- gambling,
- jewelry,
- lottery tickets,
- pornographic material or performances,
- tattoos or body piercings,
- tobacco products, or
- vacation services.

If it is determined that you or any member of your household has made a prohibited purchase, you must pay back DTA for the first offense. For second or more offenses, you will be barred from the cash program, either temporarily or permanently.

We will investigate and refer for possible prosecution all reports of trafficking and fraudulent use of EBT benefits. We will investigate all reports of prohibited purchases made with cash assistance.

## IMPORTANT RULES THAT AFFECT YOU

Dear Mary Jones:

We are letting you know about rules that apply to all DTA clients.

### **\$5 Replacement Card Fee**

We charge \$5 for any replacement Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card that you request. We take the fee from your cash benefits when you request a new card. If there are no funds available, we will take the fee from you at a later date.

### **Replacement Card Process**

Your EBT card will last for years. You can use the same EBT card every month. If your case closes and later reopens, you can still use the same card.

If you request 4 or more EBT cards in 12 months, you must speak with a DTA staff member to explain why. Based on this discussion, DTA may investigate to make sure no fraud has occurred.

If you have a disability that is affecting your ability to manage your EBT card, let your case manager know.

If you think someone else is using your EBT card illegally, call 1-800-FRAUD-99.

### **Reminder - Illegal Use**

It is illegal for you to use cash benefits to make the following purchases or services with your EBT card:

- alcoholic beverages,
- court-ordered fees, fines, bail or bail bonds,
- firearms or ammunition,
- gambling,
- jewelry
- lottery tickets,
- pornographic material or performances,
- tattoos or body piercings,
- tobacco products, or
- vacation services.

If it is determined that you or any member of your household has made a prohibited purchase, you must pay back DTA for the first offense. For second or more offenses, you will be barred from the cash program, either temporarily or permanently.

**We will investigate all reports of prohibited purchases made with cash assistance.**

**IMPORTANT!**

**EBT CARD REPLACEMENT  
FEE**

**for**

**SNAP**

**TAFDC**

**EAEDC**

As of April 25, 2013, DTA will charge a \$5 fee for all replacement EBT cards.

The \$5 fee will be taken from your benefits when you ask for a replacement card.