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*Executive Office of Health and Human Services*  
**Department of Transitional Assistance**  
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**Field Operations Memo 2005-31**  
**July 28, 2005**

**To:** Transitional Assistance Office Staff  
**From:**  Cescia Derderian, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations  
**Re:** EBT Vendor Conversion

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**Overview**

Conversion from the current EBT vendor to Affiliated Computer Services, Inc, State and Local Solutions (ACS) is scheduled to take place on Sunday 8/21/05. The EBT system will be unavailable and recipients will not be able to access their benefits from approximately 12:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. on Sunday 8/21/05 while the database conversion takes place.

The EDGE EBT administrative terminal provided by eFunds will be replaced by ACS' Electronic Payment Processing and Information Control (EPPIC) terminal. Updates to the EPPIC system will not require any maintenance to be performed on DTA desktops. On Monday morning August 22, 2005 new PIN devices will replace the current PIN devices.

This Field Operations Memo:

- defines the terms PIN and password;
  - identifies what is changing and not changing as a result of conversion;
  - explains the impact on recipients;
  - explains the impact on TAO staff; and
  - identifies where additional documentation regarding EBT processing can be found.
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**Definition of PIN and Password**

The terms PIN and password are used in the summaries provided in this memo. These terms are defined below.

A PIN is a 4 digit Personal Identification Number that must be used to access EBT cash and/or food stamps benefits. Chapter XVI – C, page 14 of *A User's Guide: Transitional Assistance and BEACON* provides information on PINs.

A Password is a confidential code necessary for situations such as Domestic Violence cases. The password is used in the EBT system to limit the ability to change a card status to lost or stolen, or to request a new PIN. Page 25 of the *EPPIC Administrative Terminal User Guide* provides information on password functionality.

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**EBT Conversion Activities**

This section summarizes what will change and what will not change as a result of EBT conversion.

**Changing:**

- It will no longer be necessary to deactivate a PIN in the EBT administrative terminal before issuing a new PIN;
- Online transaction history will expand from 90 days currently available to three years;
- Recipients, Authorized Representatives, and Authorized Payees will be able to request a personalized PIN by calling the EBT Customer Service number. Before selecting a PIN, cardholders will be required to enter their card number (18 digits) and date of birth (8 digits, mm/dd/yyyy), and the last 4 digits of their Social Security Number (or Alternative SSN).
- The new EBT Retailer Help Desk phone number is now 866-891-7897;
- Retailers will be allowed to bring a claim against a recipient when a system error causes the retailer to suffer a loss and the recipient to receive extra benefits; and
- Passwords will be used by recipients to limit the ability to status a card (as lost or stolen) with the EBT Customer Service line. A recipient with a password on the EDGE system will be required to begin using a new EPPIC system assigned password effective on August 21, 2005.

**Not Changing**

- Recipients will continue to use their current EBT Card and PIN;
  - Recipients will be able to access their benefits at the same locations as before (NYCE ATM network and Quest network);
  - The EBT Customer Service Number has not changed (800-997-2555); and
  - Recipients will still be able to receive EBT cards and PINs by mail.
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**AU Manager and  
Recipient PIN  
and Password  
Conversion  
Activities**

This section summarizes the activities that will take place during August and the impact on both AU Managers and recipients.

*Recipients Who Have An EBT Password:*

During the second week of August:

- The Financial Program Management Unit will send a notice to recipients with their new password who currently have an EBT password and are **not** designated on BEACON as Heightened Level of Security.
- The Financial Program Management Unit will forward via email a spreadsheet to each TAO listing recipients who are designated on BEACON as Heightened Level of Security. The spreadsheet will be sorted by TAO, AU Manager name and display the recipient's name, SSN and password. The password is system-generated by EPPIC.
- AU Managers must contact the recipient and provide them with their new password.

*Recipients Requesting an EBT Password From August 1<sup>st</sup> Through August 19<sup>th</sup>*

- Recipients requesting an EBT password from August 1<sup>st</sup> through August 19<sup>th</sup> must follow the current process for selecting an EBT password.
  - The AU Manager or CIS Clerk assigning the EBT password, must send an email message to: [todd.chapman@state.ma.us](mailto:todd.chapman@state.ma.us) when an EBT password is assigned. The email must include the recipient name and recipient SSN. The subject line of the email must be titled: "Password Selected."
  - The Financial Program Management Unit will send a notice to recipients providing them with their new EBT password.
  - For recipients designated on BEACON as Heightened Level of Security, the Financial Program Management Unit will forward via email a spreadsheet to each TAO listing recipients who are designated on BEACON as Heightened Level of Security. The spreadsheet will be sorted by TAO, AU Manager name and display the recipient's name, SSN and EBT password. The EBT password is system-generated by EPPIC.
  - AU Managers must contact the recipient and provide them with their new password. This may be done by mail or in person.
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**AU Manager and Recipient PIN and Password Conversion Activities (cont.)**

*Recipients Requesting an EBT Password After Conversion to EPPIC*

- After EPPIC becomes operational (conversion to EPPIC is complete), EBT passwords must be requested using EPPIC.
- Recipients will not be able to select a PIN using the new telephone PIN selection method. Recipients will be informed to contact their TAO to select a PIN.
- TAO staff must follow the current procedures for issuing a PIN.

NOTE: Refer to Chapter XVI-C, page 14 of *A User's Guide: Transitional Assistance and BEACON* for PIN information and procedures.

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**Additional Documentation**

Refer to *A User's Guide: Transitional Assistance and BEACON* - Chapter XVI-C: Benefit Issuance Mechanism for detailed information on EBT processing.

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**Questions**

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline at 617-348-8478.

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