



DEVAL L. PATRICK
Governor

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
Lieutenant Governor

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

JUDYANN BIGBY, M.D.
Secretary

JULIA E. KEHOE
Commissioner

Field Operations Memo 2008-58
November 6, 2008

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff

From:  John Augeri, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations

Re: The Change from Food Stamp Program to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Background

The Farm Bill of 2008 changed the name of the Food Stamp Program to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This change was effective on a federal level as of October 1, 2008. Field Operations Memo 2008-49 informed staff that a name change had taken place but that states could exercise their option to choose a state-specific name.

Effective with the October issue of *Transitions*, the Commissioner announced that Massachusetts had adopted the national name SNAP. Choosing to remain aligned with the national program name should reduce any potential confusion that could be caused by the use of another name. As stated on the USDA website, the name SNAP “*reflects a modern nutrition assistance program that delivers benefits electronically, reducing the stigma of participation and achieving payment accuracy that assures the highest level of program integrity. The pillar of SNAP is nutrition – with a focus on fostering healthy lifestyles through eating right and physical activity.*” In short, using the new name provides an opportunity for the program to be retooled and remarketed under the new slogan *Putting Healthy Food Within Reach*.

**Transition
From Food
Stamp
Program to
SNAP**

Although the Food Stamp Program has been officially renamed in Massachusetts, updating Department regulations, correspondence, forms, brochures, notices and online materials will be a gradual process. During the transition period, some Department correspondence, forms, brochures, etc. will continue to reference the Food Stamp Program while new correspondence and materials will reference SNAP.

**What Clients
Need to Know**

Case managers should begin using the new program name and be prepared to reassure clients about what this means for them. For example, be sure to tell clients that:

- the program name change has no negative impact on service access or delivery;
- the program rules remain the same;
- SNAP benefits will be accessed by the EBT card just like FS benefits; and
- their monthly SNAP benefit amount will not change as a result of the program name change.

For more information on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program visit www.fns.usda.gov/snap.

Questions

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