



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


CHARLES D. BAKER
Governor

MARYLOU SUDDERS
Secretary

KARYN POLITO
Lieutenant Governor

MARY SHEEHAN
Acting Commissioner

**Online Guide Transmittal 2022-44
June 9, 2022**

To: Department of Transitional Assistance Staff
From:  Sarah Stuart, Associate Commissioner for Change Management
Re: Cross Programs: EBT Safeguards

Overview

Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards are the primary way clients access DTA benefits. Clients set up a unique Personal Identification Number (PIN) that serves as their electronic signature to enable a transaction at a point of sale or ATM. Clients are advised to keep their PIN confidential to safeguard their benefits.

There has been an uptick in scams aimed at obtaining EBT card information and PIN numbers to steal cash benefits, this is known as skimming. Skimming involves the use of electronic equipment to capture EBT card information and create a counterfeit or duplicate card. This typically occurs when a device is put on a store's card-swiping machine or at an ATM to copy EBT, credit, and debit card information. Scammers use the information to make fake EBT, debit, or credit cards. The fake cards are used to steal money from real accounts. Skimming can happen anywhere a credit, debit, or EBT card is swiped.

Purpose

This Online Guide Transmittal is to advise staff of updated guidance to be provided to clients regarding EBT security.

**EBT Security
Best Practices**

Staff are to continue to review the EBT brochure with clients per established procedures. Effective immediately, staff must also recommend that TAFDC and EAEDC clients re-PIN their card the day before their benefits are issued. This will best safeguard the loss of benefits if their card has been skimmed.

Clients select a new PIN by calling the EBT Customer Service number on the back of their card 1-800-997-2555. A replacement card does not need to be issued to safeguard the account, the resetting of the PIN is sufficient.

Reminder: TAFDC and EAEDC clients have the option to have their benefits issued to their checking or savings account through direct deposit. This option may also help clients save on ATM fees.

**EBT
Materials**

Updates to the EBT Brochure and other client facing materials are in process.

**Reporting
Fraud or Theft**

If clients believe there was a transaction error or that they were the victim of skimming they must report this immediately by calling the EBT Customer Service Number 1-800-997-2555 to file a claim. Staff are to continue to submit any reports of skimming to DTA.ReportFraud@mass.gov with the subject line: EBT Skimming.

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 the DTA. Procedural Issues Mailbox.

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