



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


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**Online Guide Transmittal 2023-40**  
**May 19, 2023**

**To:** Department of Transitional Assistance Staff  
**From:**  Sarah Stuart, Associate Commissioner for Change Management  
**Re:** Cross Programs: New Notice Engine - Replacing EBC Notices

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**Overview**

The Department continues to work to enhance and expand client communications. **Effective May 19, 2023, many Electronic Benefit Calculation (EBC) Notices will have a new look. These new notices are called Benefit Decision Notices (BDN).**

The BDN upgrades the look, feel, and flexibility of the EBC notice to make it easier for clients to understand why the Department took a particular action and/or what the client must do to obtain or retain benefits. Such improvements to client communication will ultimately decrease phone traffic, improve customer service, and increase efficiency in the processing of cases. See Attachment A for a sample.

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**Purpose**

The purpose of this Online Guide Transmittal is to advise staff about the implementation of the new Benefit Decision Notices.

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## BDN Features

The key features of the BDN include the following:

- Larger fonts and increased spacing
- Headers indicating whether the notice is informational or if action is required
- Tables for displaying the income and expense information used to determine eligibility
- Improved design for displaying information on multiple programs
- Consolidation of information to decrease the number of notice mailings
- Consistent verbiage used across multiple notices
- Capability to support more languages besides English and Spanish

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## 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.

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Attachment A

DTA DPC - P.O. BOX 4406  
TAUNTON MA 02780-0420

Department of Transitional Assistance



Agency ID: 1234567  
05/01/2023

SALLY SAMPLE  
100 MAIN ST  
PEPPERELL MA 01463-1148

**For Your Information**  
**DTA has made a decision about your case**

**Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC):** We approved your TAFDC benefits starting on 05/02/2023. You will get \$823.00 per month, with half on the 2nd of the month and half on the 17th of the month. Because you were approved for TAFDC you are also approved for MassHealth. If you need medical care before your MassHealth card arrives, contact DTA.

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP):** Your SNAP benefits will go from \$740.00 to \$692.00 on 06/02/2023 because

- Your cash benefits have changed.

**People in the household who are receiving benefits:**

Name	Age	Program(s)
SALLY SAMPLE	41	TAFDC, SNAP
JOHN SAMPLE	15	TAFDC, SNAP
MARY SAMPLE	9	TAFDC, SNAP

**Your Reporting Requirements:**

Your TAFDC certification period is from 05/02/2023 through 11/01/2023.

The 24-month time limit for getting benefits do not apply to your case because all parents in the household are exempt from the TAFDC work rules.

Your SNAP certification period is from 11/02/2022 through 11/01/2023.

Your TAFDC case will be reviewed before 11/01/2023. We will schedule an

interview to talk to you.

Around 09/17/2023 we will mail you a form to review your SNAP case.

Because you get SNAP, you must tell us about these changes within 10 days of the change:

- Your household's income changes by more than \$100 per month;
- Your household's source of income changes - for example, you start or stop a job or get unemployment;
- Someone joins or leaves your household; or
- You move and your housing costs change

If we receive information that your situation changed, we may change your benefit amount.

The post office does not forward DTA mail. To get notices about your case, you must tell us right away if your mailing address and/or phone number change.

**Your Work Program:**

If you work, we may not count all of your earnings when we calculate your TAFDC amount. While you are receiving TAFDC, you are eligible for employment, education and training opportunities and supports. Find out more on the DTA Pathways to Work website at [Mass.gov/DTA-Pathways-to-Work](https://www.mass.gov/DTA-Pathways-to-Work). Please call Case Manager John Doe at 857-111-2222 to learn more.

**Need help because of disability?** Tell us if you need help to understand or do something we ask because of a health problem or disability. This could be mental, physical, sensory, learning, intellectual, cognitive or developmental. We may be able to give you extra help or adjust a rule. This is called an accommodation. Call a Client Assistance Coordinator at 978-665-8700 for help with an accommodation.

**Assisting Person:** You can choose a trusted person to help manage your benefits. This person is called an "assisting person."

**Legal Services:** Call Merrimack Valley Legal Services/Lowell at 978-458-1465 or 1-800-525-0989 to ask about free legal services.

**Nondiscrimination:** This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

We must not discriminate due to race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. If you think that we have discriminated against you, call 617-348-8555 to find out how to file a complaint.

**Connect with DTA!** You can use DTA Connect or call the DTA Assistance Line at 877-382-2363! If you have any questions about your case, need to make updates, need help because of a disability, are experiencing domestic violence, or have trouble reading or understanding this notice, call during business hours. Learn more at [Mass.gov/ContactDTA](https://www.mass.gov/ContactDTA).

**Appeals:** If you disagree with a DTA action, you have the right to appeal. If you appeal, you will have a hearing before an independent hearing officer. You will find information about how to appeal on the last page of this notice.

### Household Income and Costs On File

Income			
Income may be counted differently based on program rules. For more information, contact DTA or go to <a href="https://www.mass.gov/DTA/Calculations">Mass.gov/DTA/Calculations</a>			
Name	Type	How Often	Date & Amount (before taxes or other money is taken out)
SALLY SAMPLE		Monthly	04/01/2023: \$50.00

Costs			
Make sure this information is correct. Household costs <i>may</i> change your benefits!			
You told us you have market rate housing costs			
Name	Type	How Often	Date & Amount
SALLY SAMPLE	Rent	Monthly	11/02/2022: \$1,000.00
SALLY SAMPLE	I am responsible for paying: Heating costs, Air Conditioner electricity costs, Electricity or gas, Phone Service	Monthly	We give a standard credit for the utility types you are responsible for.