



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

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Secretary

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
Lieutenant Governor

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Commissioner

**Operations Memo 2013-55
October 23, 2013**

To: Department of Transitional Assistance Staff

From:  Lydia Conley, Acting Assistant Commissioner for Policy, Program and External Relations

Re: TAFDC, EAEDC and SNAP: Photo EBT Card Requirement

Overview Chapter 65 of the Acts of 2013 requires that certain EBT cardholders be issued EBT cards with photographic images.

Purpose of Memo This Operations Memo informs staff about:

- the new Photo EBT card requirements and exceptions to the requirement; and,
- client notifications regarding the implementation of this Photo EBT card requirement.

**Photo EBT
Requirements**

The new law requires the use of photo identification on the front of each newly-issued and reissued Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card for each cardholder who is over the age of 18.

Existing EBT cards must be replaced with new Photo EBT cards.

The law contains exceptions to the photo requirement. A client is not required to have a Photo EBT card if he or she is:

- age 18 and under;
- age 60 or over;
- blind;
- disabled; or
- a victim of domestic violence.

The Department has begun notifying clients, retailers, and community partners about the new requirement.

A more detailed Operations Memo on this issue is forthcoming, which will detail the process for issuing Photo EBT cards and making exception determinations.

Reminder: Federal regulations require that authorized household members be able to access benefits from the account as necessary.

At the time of this mailing, individuals who are age 18 and under, over the age of 60, or who are coded as being disabled, coded as having domestic violence or who have the Heightened Level of Security indicator on BEACON, will automatically be provided an exception. These clients will not be mailed a notice, and no action is required of such clients at this time.

Client Notices

Clients who have an exception to the Photo EBT requirement will be able to use their existing EBT card.

Clients subject to the new Photo EBT requirement will receive a notice advising them of the requirement:

- Clients who have a photo on file with the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) will receive a notice (Attachment A) that their RMV photo will be placed on an EBT card and the card will be automatically mailed to them.
- Clients who do not have a photo on file with the RMV will receive a notice (Attachment B) that they will be scheduled for a local office appointment at which time they will have their picture taken and their EBT card replaced.

**Additional
Communication:
Poster, Flyer
and PSA**

A poster and flyer (Attachment C) communicating the photo EBT requirement must be displayed in each TAO. Each TAO will receive a shipment of posters and flyers.

The poster and flyer will also be available on the Department's website for download by community partners.

Questions

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

Mary Jones
101 Main Street
Boston, MA 02112

Agency ID: 9999999
Newmarket Square TAO-DTA

October 23, 2013

New Photo EBT Card Requirement – Photo on File

Dear Mary Jones:

New Photo EBT Card Law. A new law requires most DTA clients to have an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card with their picture on it. Under the law, you must get a new EBT card with your picture on it. There is no fee for the new photo EBT card.

We Will Mail You a New EBT Card. Our records show that your photo is on file with the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV). We will send you a new EBT card with that picture on it before your December benefits are issued.

What You Must Do. You will get your new photo EBT card in the mail. Your new EBT card will come with instructions.

Who Can Use Your Photo EBT Card? If you receive SNAP, all appropriate household members or authorized representatives are allowed to use your photo EBT card. This is your right. If any retailer refuses to accept your EBT card because the user is not pictured, please call your case manager right away.

Exceptions to the Photo Requirement. You may know other DTA clients who do not have to get a photo EBT card. This is because the law says that EBT cardholders who are:

- age 18 and under
- age 60 or over
- blind
- disabled, or
- victims of domestic violence

do not need a photo EBT card. If you believe one of these exceptions applies to you, call your case manager.

Questions? Call your case manager John Smith at 617-999-9999.

Mary Jones
101 Main Street
Boston, MA 02112

Agency ID: 9999999
Newmarket Square TAO-DTA

October 23, 2013

New Photo EBT Card Requirement –Appointment Needed

Dear Mary Jones

New Photo EBT Card Law. A new law requires most DTA clients to have an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card with their picture on it. Under the law, you must get a new EBT card with your picture on it. There is no fee for the new photo EBT card.

What You Must Do. DTA will send you an appointment letter in the next few weeks. You must come to DTA on the day and time of your appointment to get your picture taken.

If you cannot make the appointment, call your case manager to reschedule.

Who Can Use Your Photo EBT Card? If you receive SNAP, all appropriate household members or authorized representatives are allowed to use your photo EBT card. This is your right. If any retailer refuses to accept your EBT card because the user is not pictured, please call your case manager right away.

Exceptions to the Photo Requirement. You may know other DTA clients who do not have to get a photo EBT card. This is because the law says that EBT cardholders who are:

- age 18 and under
- age 60 or over
- blind
- disabled, or
- victims of domestic violence

do not need a photo EBT card. If you believe one of these exceptions applies to you, call your case manager.

Questions? Call your case manager John Smith at 617-999-9999.

PHOTO EBT CARDS ARE COMING!!!



Massachusetts law now requires most EBT cardholders to have their picture on their EBT card.

- If the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) has your photo on file, DTA will mail you a new EBT card with your picture on it.
- If your photo is not on file with the RMV, DTA will schedule an appointment for you to have your picture taken at our office.

If you are a cardholder who is:

- age 18 and under,
- over age 60,
- disabled, or
- a victim of domestic violence

you don't need a photo EBT card. Talk to your case manager if one of these reasons applies to you.

If you receive SNAP, anyone you authorize to access your benefits is allowed to use your photo EBT card.