

DATE: November 8, 2019

TO: Subscribers

SUGGESTED DISTRIBUTION: Commissioners, TA Directors, Front End Detection System (FEDS) Coordinators, Fraud Directors, Staff Development Coordinators

FROM: Jeffrey Gaskell, Deputy Commissioner
Employment and Income Support Programs

SUBJECT: Finger Imaging Requirements for Temporary Assistance

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately

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This GIS is to inform local social services districts (districts) that New York State regulations will be adopted that eliminate existing finger imaging requirements for the purposes of Public Assistance (PA) effective January 15, 2020. However, current regulations, requirements and local district plans for finger imaging for TA remain in effect until the close of business on January 14, 2020.

Since 1996, New York State has had a regulatory requirement that adult applicants and recipients of TA must be finger imaged. Section 351.2(a) of 18 NYCRR currently requires that districts must, in accordance with an operational plan approved by OTDA, conduct finger imaging of all members of a household 18 years of age or older and the head of a household applying for or receiving TA benefits.

Finger imaging can present a barrier to participation. Removing the finger imaging requirement will simplify the TA application process and improve access to TA for vulnerable low-income New Yorkers.

Districts must continue to comply with current regulations and their current Automated Finger Imaging System (AFIS) Plans of Operation until the close of business on January 14, 2020. Effective January 15, 2020, districts are prohibited from finger imaging any member of a household applying for or receiving PA benefits for any purpose related to PA. Districts must adjust their procedures to ensure that PA applicants and recipients are not required to be finger imaged as part of the process of obtaining or retaining eligibility for PA. Effective January 15, 2020, all PA AFIS Plans of Operation submitted by any and all districts will be null and void.

After January 14, 2020, districts must continue to use AFIS to capture the photo and signature of TA applicants/recipients over the age of 18. The photo and signature captured in AFIS will appear on their Common Benefit Identification Card (CBIC).

An Administrative Directive Memorandum (ADM) with additional information will be forthcoming.