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**OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY**  
**ASSISTANCE**  
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**Andrew M. Cuomo**  
*Governor*

**Informational Letter**

**Section 1**

<b>Transmittal:</b>	11-INF-04
<b>To:</b>	Local District Commissioners
<b>Issuing Division/Office:</b>	Center for Employment and Economic Supports
<b>Date:</b>	March 11, 2011
<b>Subject:</b>	Client Benefit Identification Card (CBIC) “Vault” Cards (Upstate Only)
<b>Suggested Distribution:</b>	Temporary Assistance Directors Food Stamp Directors FEDS Coordinators Fraud Directors Staff Development Coordinators
<b>Contact Person(s):</b>	
<b>Attachments:</b>	<a href="#">Attachment A- Vault Card Inventory Procedures</a>
<b>Attachment Available On – Line:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Filing References**

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	Dept. Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.
		CFR 273.2(g) 18 NYCRR 387.4		EBT Manual- Chapter 4	

## Section 2

### I. Purpose

This INF is to inform Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS) of a clarification of policy regarding the mailing of vault cards when it is unlikely that the Client Benefit Identification Card (CBIC) and Personal Identification Number (PIN) can be mailed and delivered to the applicant within the required food stamp application processing timeframes, and of a revision of the “Vault Card Inventory Procedures.” (Attachment A)

### II. Background

Under current CBIC processing standards, a CBIC must be mailed within **two business** days of the request to generate a CBIC. Generally, it takes two additional business days for the CBIC to reach the household through the mail.

A vault card mailed from a LDSS to a local household generally will reach the household within one or two business days of mailing. So, in certain circumstances because it is quicker than generating and mailing a CBIC, mailing a vault card to a household may be necessary.

Previously, when an applicant was in need of a benefit card to be able to access their food stamp benefits within the five-day expedited or thirty-day application processing timeframe and it was unlikely that the CBIC and PIN could be generated, mailed and delivered to the applicant within the required food stamp timeframe, they would have to go to the LDSS office to pick up and sign for a vault card. Recent clarification permits the mailing of vault cards in those instances when the household is unable to go to the LDSS to obtain a vault card and it is unlikely that the CBIC and PIN can be generated, mailed and delivered to the applicant within the required food stamp processing timeframe.

### III. Program Implications

LDSSs now may mail a vault card to a household when the household is unable to get to the LDSS to obtain a vault card and it is unlikely that the CBIC and PIN can be generated, mailed and delivered to the applicant within the required food stamp processing timeframe.

**Note: This process of mailing a vault card would not be beneficial to a household that is receiving the expedited benefit through the BICS pre-registration process, since the purpose of the pre-registration of a benefit is to have it available that very same day. The pre-registration of food stamp benefits is discouraged under any circumstances, except when necessary to meet an emergency or to comply with an issuance timeframe that cannot be met through normal issuance procedures. Expedited processing of food stamp benefits should not be done through BICS pre-registration for a household that cannot pick up a vault card at the LDSS until after the day of intended benefit issuance.**

Before mailing a vault card:

- The LDSS must determine if the issuance of a permanent CBIC and PIN mailer would exceed the food stamp expedited timeframe, if so, then

- Have the client come into the LDSS to obtain a vault card and select a PIN. If the client cannot come into the agency due to hardship then
- Mail the vault card, with the EBT Brochure, Pub-4596, and have the client call the EBT Helpline (1-888-328-6399) to select a PIN.
- Authorize the benefit via a screen 6 payment line on WMS. This action will ensure that the client will be able to select a PIN should s/he call the EBT helpline, if and only if the client has a verified SSN. If the client's SSN cannot be verified before the vault card is mailed out, the LDSS should request a PIN mailer available on the CBIC menu.

When the vault card is mailed, the LDSS worker and supervisor must sign the inventory control form. Depending on the volume of cards issued, the inventory control form should be filed on a daily or weekly basis. This form should be kept in a secure area, such as a locked room or locked storage cabinet.

The Vault Card Coordinator should contact the CBIC contractor (Sagem Morpho Inc.) to order additional cards. The primary contact at Sagem is Marla Martini and she can be reached at 518-452-3502 ext. 237. There is a lead time of at least two weeks for delivery of vault cards to LDSS offices.

**Issued By**

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**Title:** Deputy Commissioner

**Division/Office:** Center for Employment and Economic Supports