



# Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

KATHY HOCHUL  
Governor

DANIEL W. TIETZ  
Commissioner

BARBARA C. GUINN  
Executive Deputy Commissioner

## Local Commissioners Memorandum

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### Section 1

<b>Transmittal:</b>	22-LCM-09
<b>To:</b>	Social Services District Commissioners
<b>Issuing Division/Office:</b>	Employment and Income Support Programs
<b>Date:</b>	August 12, 2022
<b>Subject:</b>	Pandemic Emergency Assistance Program (PEAF) Back-to-School Payment and Infant Nutritional Assistance Payment
<b>Contact Person(s):</b>	Temporary Assistance Bureau (518) 474-9344 <a href="mailto:PEAF@otda.ny.gov">PEAF@otda.ny.gov</a>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<a href="#">Attachment A: PEAFF Estimated Back-to-School Payments</a> <a href="#">Attachment B: Estimated Infant Nutritional Payments</a>

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### Section 2

#### I. Purpose

The purpose of this Local Commissioners Memorandum (LCM) is to notify social services districts (districts) of two additional payments that will be made using the Pandemic Emergency Assistance Fund (PEAF) allocation allotted to New York State (NYS) through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). This directive also provides specific guidance on program requirements and necessary district action regarding the Back-to-School Payment and the Infant Nutritional Assistance Payment.

#### II. Background

The NYS Fiscal Year 2021-2022 budget includes a \$200 million appropriation for PEAFF. The total PEAFF award through the ARPA to NYS is approximately \$128.4 million. In addition to the previously issued payments outlined in [22-LCM-01](#), the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) will be issuing a Back-to-School Payment and an Infant Nutritional Assistance Payment with the remaining PEAFF funding.

#### III. Program Implications

OTDA will issue one-time, non-assistance cash payments to help certain needy families purchase back-to-school supplies and to help certain households containing a child under the age of 3 purchase formula or food. The payments are intended to defray costs incurred by these households due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

### *Back-to-School Payment*

Households in receipt of Temporary Assistance (TA) which meet all the following eligibility criteria will receive a back-to-school payment of \$214 per eligible child:

- The open TA case contains an active child aged 3-17 who received benefits on the case during the month of July 2022.; and,
- The TA case remains open on the date of payment issuance.

Estimated Back-to-School Payments for each district are reflected in Attachment A but are subject to change. These values are based on the estimated number of eligible TA children in each district.

### *Infant Nutritional Assistance Payment*

TA households who meet the following eligibility criteria will receive an Infant Nutritional Assistance Payment of \$150 per eligible child:

- The open TA case contains an active child under the age of 3 who received benefits on the case during the month of July 2022; and,
- The TA case remains open on the date of payment issuance.

Estimated Infant Nutritional Assistance Payments for each district are reflected in Attachment B but are subject to change. These values are based on the estimated number of eligible TA children in each district.

OTDA will issue these payments directly to the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cash account of the TA case. Households eligible for these one-time, non-assistance payments will receive a letter from NYS OTDA informing them of the payment and of their rights to an OTDA Administrative Review. Consistent with the process for issuing TA benefits, districts will issue the payments first and submit claims for reimbursement of these monies later.

### *PEAF payments will:*

- have no effect on the household's eligibility or benefit amounts for TA, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP);
- not be part of the regular recurring TA grant;
- be excluded from the TA standard of need;
- be excluded as income to the TA and SNAP household;
- be excluded from TA and SNAP resource limits;
- be excluded from the State sixty-month time limit for TA;
- not be offset by Child Support Collections;
- not offset TA or SNAP overpayments;
- not be subject to overpayment determinations/calculations; and
- not be included in Interim Assistance Reimbursement (IAR).

Questions regarding TA or SNAP implications may be directed to the TA Bureau.

## **IV. System Implications**

### *Rest of State (ROS) System Specifications:*

The Back-to-School Payment and Infant Nutritional Assistance Payment will be issued to eligible TA households as an unrestricted one-time single issuance via a Welfare Management System (WMS)

mass authorization to recipients on their EBT cards. These payments will begin being authorized on August 12, 2022.

Upstate Systems issued a General Information System Message (GIS) [22 TA/WMS029](#) with detailed information on payment issuances, special claiming codes, and exception reports from which districts may need to issue manual payments.

*Benefit Issuance and Control System (BICS):*

**The following BICS composite items will be used to identify the PEAFF Back-to-School Payments and Infant Nutritional Assistance Payments on the BICS monthly composite rolls.**

- OTHER-NON-ASSIST-PEAF-GEN – Will identify all PEAFF Back to School Payments
- OTHER-NON-ASSIST-PEAF-DIAP – Will identify all PEAFF Nutritional Assistance Payments

**All PEAFF expenditures will appear on the RF2, Schedule A composite for informational purposes only. The PEAFF composite items will not interface to the Automated Claiming System (ACS). These items have been created to help districts identify the total of all PEAFF payments in order to claim on the PEAFF RF-17 special project in the ACS.**

*NYC System Specifications:*

The Back-to-School Payment and Infant Nutritional Assistance Payment will be issued to eligible TA households as an unrestricted one-time single issuance via mass authorization to recipients on their EBT card. These payments will start being issued on August 12, 2022.

Downstate Systems has developed issuance code WS to be used for the Back-to-School Payment and WU to be used for the Infant Nutritional Assistance Payment. The mnemonic for each issuance code will be PEAFF. A separate notification from downstate systems will be issued with detailed information on payment issuances and exception reports from which districts may need to issue manual payments.

## **V. Claiming Instructions**

Expenditures for PEAFF should be claimed through the RF-17 claim package for special project claiming in ACS for the month(s) that the expenditures were made. These costs are first identified on the RF2A claim package as F17 functional costs and reported in the F17 column on the LDSS-923 “Cost Allocation Schedule of Payments Administrative Expenses Other Than Salaries” and the LDSS-2347 “Schedule D DSS Administrative Expenses Allocation and Distribution by Function and Program.” After final accepting the RF2A claim package, the individual project costs should be reported under the project label PEAFF FFY2022 on the RF-17.

Program costs from the BICS composite roll as described in part IV. System Implications are reported as Object of Expense Code 37 - *Special Project Program Expense* on the [LDSS-923B](#) “Summary - Program Schedule of Payments for Expenses Other Than Salaries for Other Reimbursable Programs.”

Total project costs and shares should be reported on the [LDSS-4975](#) “Monthly Statement of Special Project Claims Federal and State Aid (RF-17).” Expenditures reported for PEAFF will be reimbursed at 100% federal share.

Claims for expenditures for the period of January 1, 2022, through September 30, 2022, must be final accepted in ACS by November 15, 2022. Due to limitations on availability of this funding, no extensions to the Final Accept date for claiming will be granted. Any claims for expenditures not submitted by November 15, 2022, may not be reimbursed. The PEAFF FFY2022 special project will remain open until September 30, 2023, for claiming of refunds and expungements only.

Information for completing the LDSS-923, LDSS-923B and Schedule D, and RF17 claim package can be found in Chapters 7 and 18 respectively of the Fiscal Reference Manual (FRM) Volume 3. The manuals are available online at: <https://intranet.otda.ny.gov/bfdm/finance/>.

Claiming Contacts:

Lauren Horn (Regions I - V): (518) 473-9164 or [otda.sm.field\\_ops.I-IV@otda.ny.gov](mailto:otda.sm.field_ops.I-IV@otda.ny.gov)

Michael Simon (Region VI): (212) 961-8250 or [michael.simon@otda.ny.gov](mailto:michael.simon@otda.ny.gov)

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**Issued By:**

**Name:** Valerie T. Figueroa

**Title:** Deputy Commissioner

**Division/Office:** Employment and Income Support Programs/ Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance