



# Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

KATHY HOCHUL  
Governor

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Executive Deputy Commissioner

## Administrative Directive Memorandum

### Section 1

<b>Transmittal:</b>	24-ADM-07
<b>To:</b>	Social Services District Commissioners
<b>Issuing Division/Office:</b>	OTDA - Audit & Quality Improvement – Program Integrity
<b>Date:</b>	August 23, 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Use of Equifax - The Work Number (TWN) for Employment and Income Verification Purposes – Child Care Assistance
<b>Suggested Distribution:</b>	Directors of Temporary Assistance (TA), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Employment Coordinators, Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), Medicaid (MA), and Services, District TWN Web Managers, Child Care Supervisors, Child Care Assistance Staff, All Current and Future TWN Users.
<b>Contact Person(s):</b>	<p><b>For All TWN Related Issues (SNAP/TA/HEAP/MA):</b> Rebecca Frederick, OTDA Audit &amp; Quality Improvement (A&amp;QI) – Program Integrity (PI) Unit, 518-408-0006, <a href="mailto:Rebecca.Frederick@otda.ny.gov">Rebecca.Frederick@otda.ny.gov</a></p> <p>Jennifer Pelletier, OTDA A&amp;QI – PI Unit, 518-408-5853, <a href="mailto:Jennifer.Pelletier@otda.ny.gov">Jennifer.Pelletier@otda.ny.gov</a></p> <p><b>For Child Care:</b> Darci Primeau, OCFS Bureau of Child Care Assistance, 518-474-9095, <a href="mailto:Darci.Primeau@ocfs.ny.gov">Darci.Primeau@ocfs.ny.gov</a></p> <p>Child Care Assistance Policy Unit, <a href="mailto:ocfs.sm.districtsupport.subsidy@ocfs.ny.gov">ocfs.sm.districtsupport.subsidy@ocfs.ny.gov</a></p>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<a href="#">Attachment 1 - The Work Number (TWN) Training and User Guide</a> <a href="#">Attachment 2 - OTDA Global Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA)</a>

### Filing References

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	Dept. Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.
06-INF-13, 09-INF-12		18 NYCRR parts 348, 351 and 404	SSL 132		24-OCFS-ADM-16

### Section 2

## I. Purpose

This ADM is to advise the Social Services Districts (districts) that Child Care Assistance has been added as a permissible purpose when accessing The Work Number (TWN) for employment and income verification through the Equifax contract held by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA). This is in addition to the already approved permissible purposes of determining eligibility for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance (TA), Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), and Medicaid (MA).

## II. Background

OTDA maintains a contract with Equifax Workforce Solutions, which allows districts to utilize the web-based portal, called The Work Number (TWN), to verify income for program eligibility purposes. Access is requested through your district TWN Web Manager for those with a business need, and once granted the website may be accessed at <https://theworknumber.com>. Historically the contract has covered permissible purposes of assisting in eligibility determinations for governmental benefits of SNAP, TA, HEAP, and MA.

## III. Program Implications

The use of TWN for assisting in eligibility determinations for Child Care Assistance is now approved as a permissible purpose under the contract with Equifax Workforce Solutions. Subject to IV below, districts may begin using this webservice to verify a family's financial eligibility for Child Care Assistance applications for initial and recertification determinations. You may refer to 24-OCFS-ADM-16, released by OCFS, for further instruction on how this will affect program implications.

Please note that the additional permissible purpose only covers Child Care Assistance, not Child Support, which is not allowable under our current contract. Child Support involves many additional security requirements not covered in our current contract, and therefore, TWN should not be used to lookup Child Support clients.

## IV. Required Action

The Social Services District TWN Web Manager may only grant a district employee access to TWN upon verification by district supervisor, who maintains supervisory responsibility over district employee member, of a business need to verify income for an eligibility determination for one or more of the above stated program types.

Users granted access must complete training on the proper use of TWN prior to their first use. TWN Web Managers at each district must provide this ADM and training (Attachment 1: The Work Number (TWN) Training and User Guide) to all existing TWN users at their location. Additionally, all future TWN users that are granted access and existing TWN users must have their training coordinator register them annually to complete *The Work Number (TWN) Training and User Guide* course located within Training Space. This training is required to convey the importance of protecting Personally Identifiable Information (PII). TWN Web Managers must keep a record of the completed trainings.

If there are any subcontractors that are using TWN, OTDA must be notified prior to them being granted access to the system, as subcontractor use must be approved by both OTDA and the Vendor. TWN Web Managers for the district looking to add a subcontractor must request approval from both OTDA and OCFS (contact information is listed on this ADM) with the proposed subcontractors and the reason they require use. Access for the subcontractor to start using TWN may not be provided until approval from OTDA is received. Additionally, subcontractors are not only required to complete *The Work Number (TWN) Training and User Guide* course annually but must also sign a confidentiality and non-disclosure agreement (NDA) prior to using the web service. (See Attachment 2: OTDA Global Non-Disclosure Agreement for a copy of the NDA). Documentation of completion along with the signed NDA must be maintained at the district and must be provided to OTDA for audit purposes if requested.

TWN Web Managers must review the list of active users on an annual basis to ensure that the users are actively employed at the district and verify that access to TWN is still required for the purpose of their position/duties. When users leave District service or no longer have a business need to use TWN, their access should immediately be removed from TWN. Additionally, if any previously approved subcontractors are removed or no longer using the service, the TWN Web Manager should notify both OCFS and OTDA so that the subcontractor can be removed from the list of approved users.

When TWN is used to verify financial eligibility for families applying ONLY for Child Care Assistance, the district must select “Child Care Only” under the program type field. When the family is applying for Child Care Assistance in conjunction with an application for SNAP, HEAP, TA, and/or MA, the district must select SNAP/HEAP/Temporary Assistance/Medicaid for the program type.

All TWN lookups fall under the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) laws. Therefore, TWN must not be accessed for personal reasons or to provide Data to a third party. Consent of the consumer (applicant) is required to complete a lookup, and the applicant must be over 18. The full FCRA language can be found here: [Fair Credit Reporting Act \(ftc.gov\)](https://www.ftc.gov) All documents and materials containing TWN information must be kept secure and confidential as there is PII on them. Staff should not disseminate, use, or permit the dissemination of TWN information in a manner that is not consistent with the purposes outlined in this ADM.

The signed applications LDSS 2921, 3174, and 4826 and OCFS-6025: Application for Child Care Assistance are sufficient for this authorization due to the language included in them. TWN lookups may not be completed on any applicant/recipient that has not provided that authorization. The vendor performs permissible purpose audits on TWN lookups throughout the life of the contract, which requires the lookups they are auditing have signed authorization. If the vendor finds there was not an authorization or that the lookup failed to meet the permissible purpose and programs, it could result in the loss of TWN usage due to breach of contract. Additionally, a user who is responsible for an unauthorized access to Data may be subject to civil and criminal liability under the FCRA and punishable by fines and even imprisonment.

## V. System Implications

TWN is a web-based platform through Equifax Workforce Solutions and may be accessed at <https://theworknumber.com>. Microsoft Edge or Chrome browsers should be used when accessing TWN, and users are encouraged not to save or bookmark the link. These actions will help reduce the likelihood of technical issues and ensure that the latest version of the database is being accessed.

## VI. Effective Date

August 23, 2024

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## Issued By:

**Name:** Thomas Cooper

**Title:** Deputy Commissioner

**Division/Office:** Audit and Quality Improvement