

GENERAL INFORMATION SYSTEM
Center for Employment & Economic Supports

August 19, 2013

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TO: Subscribers**SUGGESTED DISTRIBUTION:** Commissioners, SNAP Directors, TA Directors, MA Directors and Fraud Directors**FROM:** Phyllis Morris, Deputy Commissioner, Center for Employment and Economic Supports
Kevin Kehmna, Director, Audit & Quality Improvement**SUBJECT:** Excessive Replacement Card Letter to Clients**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Immediately**CONTACT PERSON:** Larry Pittz, Director of Program Integrity, 518-486-1076

The purpose of this GIS is to inform you of an OTDA client mailing designed to reduce unnecessary benefit card production costs and enhance program integrity. Upon receiving the letter, some clients may contact their local Social Services District office for further information.

OTDA is sending out letters, beginning this week, to clients who requested and used more than 4 permanent Common Benefit Identification Cards (CBIC) in the 12 month period from June 1, 2012 to May 31, 2013. The fact that a client is being sent a letter does not mean they have engaged in any unlawful activity. Many clients who repeatedly request cards are either in need of more information on CBICs or are in need of other services. OTDA will monitor client card requests and benefit redemption history going forward.

For your information, these letters contain the following text in English and Spanish:

As a recipient of benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (the new name for the Food Stamp Program), you were issued a Common Benefit Identification Card (CBIC). Your CBIC, also called an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card, is used to access your SNAP benefits as well as certain other assistance benefits.

Our records show that you have ordered and used an unusually high number of replacement EBT cards within the last 12 months. Your EBT card is designed to last for years. You can use the same EBT card every time you use your benefits for as long as you receive benefits.

Please remember, the State considers the misuse of EBT cards and SNAP benefits a program violation that may be subject to various penalties and sanctions. If you continue to request replacement EBT cards, your case will be referred to your Social

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Services District's Program Integrity unit for possible investigation in order to ensure that no fraudulent activities have occurred. While the State recognizes that there are legitimate reasons for requesting replacement cards, the State is also required to protect the integrity of SNAP and review such matters.

If you have questions regarding your EBT card, please visit our website at www.otda.ny.gov/programs/ebt/ or call 1-800-342-3009. You can also view the EBT informational brochure at www.otda.ny.gov/programs/publications/4596.pdf.