

**DATE:** October 24, 2017

**TO:** Subscribers

**SUGGESTED DISTRIBUTION:** Commissioners, Employment Coordinators, TA Directors, SNAP Directors, and Staff Development Coordinators.

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

**SUBJECT:** Requirement to enter “Highest Degree” on the Welfare Management System for Certain Non-Temporary Assistance SNAP Recipients

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** October 22, 2017

**CONTACT PERSON:** Employment and Advancement Services (518) 486-6106 or  
Employment Services Advisor

The purpose of this GIS is to inform social services districts (districts) outside of New York City of two edits that are included in the Welfare Management System (WMS) enhancements scheduled to become operational on the Production System on/about October 22, 2017. One edit will require entry in the “Highest Degree” field on screen 3 of WMS for each SNAP applicant/recipient who is age 16 or older and included on a WMS case type 31 or 32. Completion of the field is currently required for all Temporary Assistance (TA) case types.

Districts outside of New York City must enter the highest level of education as reported by the SNAP household on the [LDSS-4826: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\) Application/Recertification](#) for each SNAP applicant or recipient who is age 16 or older and included on a WMS case types 31 or 32 in the “Highest Degree” field on Screen 3 of WMS (see information below if the highest level of education is unknown at the time of the WMS transaction). New York City will be notified separately when entry in this field on NYCWMS will be required for Case Type 31.

The other edit will require entry of a valid code. The valid codes for the “Highest Degree” field as of 10/22/17 are as follows:

**HIGHEST DEGREE – Degr – (PA, FS)**

- 0 No Degree
- 1 High School Diploma, GED or National External Diploma Program
- 2 Associate’s Degree
- 3 Bachelor’s Degree
- 4 Graduate Degree (Master’s or Higher)
- 5 Other Credentials (Degree, Certificate, Diploma, etc.)
- 8 Unknown
- 9 Not Applicable

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Note: The March 2017 version of the [LDSS-4826: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\) Application/Recertification](#) includes “9” for “unknown” under the “Highest Level of Education” field. The “9” currently represents “Not Applicable” in WMS in the “Highest Degree” field. **Districts should not enter “9” in the “Highest Degree” field on screen 3 of WMS when an individual’s educational level is unknown, as OTDA has determined that “not applicable” and “unknown” must be collected separately.**

If a SNAP recipient's highest level of education is unknown at the time the transaction is processed, the district should enter “8 (Unknown)” in the “Highest Degree” field on screen 3 of WMS and update the code when the individual's highest level of education has been provided by the SNAP household. Use of “Highest Degree” code of “9” should continue to be limited when the code is “Not Applicable”.

More information regarding changes that have been made to the LDSS-4826 will be released to districts in the near future.