

DATE: April 19, 2019

TO: Subscribers

SUGGESTED DISTRIBUTION: Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, SNAP Directors,
TA Directors

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

SUBJECT: USDA Online SNAP Purchasing Pilot

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 18, 2019

CONTACT PERSON: Luke Posniewski (518) 473-2578

The purpose of this GIS is to provide social services districts (districts) with information about USDA's Online Purchasing Pilot to allow shopping online using SNAP and cash benefits.

Background

The 2014 Farm Bill mandated that a pilot project be conducted to test the possibility of allowing retail food stores to accept SNAP benefits through online transactions. Under the pilot, SNAP recipients will be able to use their benefits to purchase eligible food items online at specific retailers. Participants will need a supplemental payment source for any items that may not be purchased with SNAP benefits, or to pay fees, such as the cost of delivery. USDA selected seven retailers nationally to participate in the pilot, including online retailers, large grocery chains and smaller regional networks of stores. New York was chosen as a pilot state and will be the first state to go live with online shopping capability at three retailers, initially in a limited number of designated zip codes. Amazon and Walmart will begin on Thursday, April 18, 2019, and ShopRite (Wakefern) will start the following week on Wednesday, April 24, 2019.

System Implications

The ability for the EBT system to accept and process EBT online transactions will be live after 10:00 A.M. on Thursday, April 18, 2019.

Retailer Information

Marketing of the pilot and outreach to clients will be handled by retailers based on their own policies and expansion plans. Most marketing and messaging will be done through retailer websites based on the zip code of an online shopper. While all three retailers will accept online transactions by April 24, 2019, the full scope of services and availability for the pilot will not be implemented uniformly and initially there will be limited availability in Upstate counties.

SNAP recipients who contact Districts with questions about the pilot should be directed to retailer websites.

Below is a list of participating retailers and basic pilot information for each.

Amazon:

Amazon will be functional for its full pilot coverage on April 18, 2019. Amazon programs include Prime Fresh, Prime Pantry, and other options that may be available which are best discussed between the retailer and customer. There are fees associated with all Amazon options. Amazon is the only retailer who is NOT accepting EBT Cash. Clients will need another form of payment for any fee.

Pilot Stores: Online - fully functional for Zip Code coverage area
EBT SNAP: Yes
EBT Cash: No - will need another form of cash payment for fees / subscriptions
Fees: Yes
Zip Code Coverage: See Amazon website. (Pilot to include New York City and parts of Long Island and Westchester County)

ShopRite (Wakefern):

ShopRite will launch the pilot in one store on Staten Island beginning 4/24/19. A shopping and delivery fee will be assessed. ShopRite plans to expand to two additional stores on Staten Island first and then to its broader full pilot coverage plan. No timetable or store plan has been determined for expansion.

Pilot Stores 4/28/19: 1 (#109 - Forest & Richmond Ave, Staten Island)
Pilot Stores: 27 (22 NY, 5 NJ who will deliver to some zip codes in NY)
EBT SNAP: Yes
EBT Cash: Yes
Fees: Yes
Zip Code Coverage: See ShopRite website

Walmart:

Walmart will only have two stores available during the April 18, 2019 pilot launch. Rome (Oneida County), which will be pick-up only, and Glenville (Schenectady County), which will offer both pick-up and delivery. Walmart has waived all fees on SNAP purchases. No timetable or store plan has been determined for expansion.

Pilot Stores 4/18/19: 2 (#2231 Rome, #2874 Glenville)
Pilot Stores: 26
EBT SNAP: Yes
EBT Cash: Yes
Fees: No – Walmart has waived all fees on SNAP purchases
Zip Code Coverage: See Walmart website