



Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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General Information System (GIS) Message

Section 1

Transmittal:	20 TA/DC107 Upstate and New York City
Date:	November 27, 2020
To:	Subscribers
Suggested Distribution:	Commissioners, SNAP Directors, TA Directors, Medicaid Directors
From:	Jeffrey Gaskell, Deputy Commissioner Employment and Income Support Programs
Subject:	COVID-19 Pandemic EBT Food Benefits –Targeted Text Outreach to Non-Redeemers
Effective Date:	Immediately
Contact Information:	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Questions – SNAP Bureau 518-473-1469 or otda.sm.cees.snap@otda.ny.gov

Section 2

The purpose of this GIS is to inform social services districts (districts) of a targeted outreach effort intended to increase the redemption rates of Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) food benefits among certain Medicaid households with children who received the benefits. Should districts receive any inquiries about this outreach effort, they will be able to confirm that the text messages are legitimate and are not spam or a scam.

On Monday, November 30th, OTDA will be sending text messages to approximately 96,000 households of children whose P-EBT food benefits were issued onto the Medicaid Common Benefit Identification Card (CBIC) of either the parent/guardian or oldest child in the Medicaid-only household (P-EBT “Group 2” households), and who have not yet redeemed any P-EBT food benefits. The text message is being sent to Group 2 households which have not redeemed benefits and for which OTDA has a working cell phone number. The text message will simply remind them that their P-EBT food benefits are still available and will provide a link to a webpage with resources to assist them in creating a PIN for the CBIC linked to the P-EBT account.

The text message will be sent **from 877-452-0098** and will say the following:

Your child has been issued P-EBT food benefits that have not been accessed. Visit <https://otda.ny.gov/PEBT> for info on how to access these benefits.

As outlined in [20 TA/DC073](#), under New York State’s federally-approved P-EBT plan, all children eligible for the P-EBT benefits were served in three payment cohorts. In the second cohort (Group 2), which is

the target population of this outreach effort, \$420 in P-EBT food benefits were issued to each eligible child in certain New York State Medicaid households. Group 2 included children who were eligible for direct certification for FRPMs by their school or school district based on their Medicaid eligibility. Only children ages 3-18 in active Medicaid-only cases with household income equal to or less than 133% of the federal poverty limit, and children with certain disabilities were eligible for this direct certification due to receipt of Medicaid.

There are approximately 603,000 children in Group 2 -- approximately 92,000 children in approximately 82,000 households who receive MA and who are known to the Welfare Management System (WMS), and approximately 511,000 children in approximately 337,000 households who applied for and receive MA through the New York State of Health (NYSOH) exchange and are not known to WMS.

Benefits were issued and letters about the benefits were sent to the approximately 82,000 households who receive MA and who are known to WMS at the end of June. Benefits and letters were issued to the approximately 337,000 households who receive MA through the New York State of Health (NYSOH) exchange and are not known to WMS during July.

By sending text messages informing the approximately 96,000 households of children in Group 2 who have not yet accessed P-EBT food benefits of the benefits and providing a link to resources intended to assist them creating a PIN, OTDA hopes to increase the number of those who access benefits.