



Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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General Information System (GIS) Message

Section 1

Transmittal:	21 TA/DC066 Upstate and New York City
Date:	September 29, 2021
To:	Subscribers
Suggested Distribution:	Commissioners, Temporary Assistance (TA) Directors, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Directors
From:	Alison Maura, Director of Temporary Assistance and HEAP Employment and Income Support Programs
Subject:	COVID-19 TA Waiver Extension Dates and SNAP Interview Waiver Extensions
Effective Date:	Immediately
Contact Information:	SNAP Questions – SNAP Bureau 518-473-1469 otda.sm.cees.snap@otda.ny.gov TA Questions – Temporary Assistance Bureau 518-474-9344 or otda.sm.cees.tabureau@otda.ny.gov

Section 2

In response to the outbreak of COVID-19 and the declaration of a State disaster emergency (Executive Order 202, March 7, 2020), the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) released a series of policy documents which advised social services districts (districts) of immediate measures that could be taken to simplify and streamline program administration and protect the health and safety of clients and staff. Some of these measures, set to expire on September 30, 2021, are being extended consistent with this guidance.

Additionally, Title VI, Section 4603(a)(1)(B) of the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021, and Other Extensions Act (Public Law No. 116-159), the Continuing Resolution (CR), passed by Congress and signed into law by the President on October 1, 2020, reinstated the lapsed Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) interview adjustment and certification extension period waivers originally authorized under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. The CR reinstated and extended the availability of these waivers through June 30, 2021. On April 30, 2021, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) further extended the availability of these waivers until December 31, 2021 through issuance of a policy memo to all states, with certain limitations on the continuation of waivers when the state emergency or disaster declaration is no longer in effect.

The purpose of this GIS is to inform districts about the continuing availability of the following waivers and to remind the districts about the guidance governing their application.

Temporary Assistance (TA)

The following waivers are available through close of business December 31, 2021:

- Allowing TA eligibility interviews to be conducted by phone;
- Allowing TA recertification interviews to be conducted by phone;
- Allowing drug/alcohol and domestic violence screenings to be conducted over the phone;
- Extending domestic violence waivers;
- Enabling districts with local procedures or other processes that require frequent contact with individuals experiencing homelessness and residing in emergency housing to conduct these contacts via phone, with reduced frequency, as appropriate for the population; and,
- Allowing temporary modifications to previously approved Case Supervisor Review (CSR) plans.

These measures are outlined in greater detail in [20 TA/DC016](#), [20 TA/DC028](#), [20 TA/DC041](#), [20 TA/DC043](#), [20 TA/DC057](#), [20 TA/DC072](#), [20 TA/DC078](#), [20-LCM-08](#), [20 TA/DC113](#) and [21 TA/DC047](#). The SNAP interview adjustment waivers originally were described in [20 TA/DC022](#), [20 TA/DC026](#) and [20 TA/DC096](#). This guidance extends their availability through **December 31, 2021**.

District participation in the TA waivers listed above is not mandated. Districts may choose which, if any, waivers they want to participate in and the time period during which they want to utilize them. Districts who choose not to participate in one or more of the above waivers through December 31, 2021, must send an email to OTDA at: otda.sm.cees.tabureau@otda.ny.gov and indicate which waiver provisions they are opting out of and/or the shorter time period for which they will be utilizing the waiver(s). If a district has already chosen to opt out of certain provisions and their preferences have *not* changed, an additional email is not necessary at this time.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The USDA, Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) extended its approval of a temporary adjustment to the requirements for recording telephonic signatures for SNAP applications filed over the telephone or submitted without a signature. New York is extending the option for districts to participate in interview adjustments and telephonic signature waivers **through December 31, 2021**.

Interview Adjustments

The SNAP interview adjustment waivers described in [GIS 20 TA/DC022](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC026](#), [GIS TA/DC096](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC101](#) and [GIS 21 TA/DC016](#) **will now be available through December 31, 2021**. Consistent with previous guidance, districts are not prohibited from doing interviews, they are just not required.

Telephonic Signatures

The temporary adjustment to the requirements for recording telephonic signatures for SNAP applications filed over the telephone or submitted without a signature **will continue through December 31, 2021**. Districts choosing to implement telephonic applications must adhere to the guidelines as outlined in [GIS 20 TA/DC049](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC055](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC066](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC075](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC090](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC113](#) and [GIS 21 TA/DC016](#) and must use the OTDA program-specific script (attachments 1 and 2 [GIS 20 TA/DC049](#)). Districts must notify the OTDA of their intention to implement this option. While this SNAP adjustment is in effect, TA, or Medicaid (MA) on a TA case application may also be accepted over the telephone. Districts choosing to implement telephone applications for MA on a TA case must note the case record that the applicant assents to and allows a verbal signature for Medicaid.