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## General Information System (GIS) Message

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### Section 1

<b>Transmittal:</b>	21 TA/DC080 Upstate and New York City
<b>Date:</b>	December 02, 2021
<b>To:</b>	Subscribers
<b>Suggested Distribution:</b>	SNAP Directors; TA Directors; CAP Coordinators; Staff Development Coordinators; TOP Coordinators
<b>From:</b>	Valerie Figueroa, Deputy Commissioner, Employment and Income Support Programs
<b>Subject:</b>	Preliminary Guidance Regarding the New York State Combined Application Project (NYSCAP)
<b>Effective Date:</b>	December 1, 2021
<b>Contact Information:</b>	SNAP Policy Bureau at (518) 473 -1469
<b>Attachments:</b>	<a href="#">Attachment 1 - LDSS-4841, NYSCAP Statewide Information Collection Sheet</a> <a href="#">Attachment 2 - LDSS-4836</a> <a href="#">Attachment 3 - LDSS-4836(NYC), NYSCAP SNAP Case Interim Report</a>

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### Section 2

The purpose of this GIS is to notify social services districts (districts) that the New York State Combined Application Project (NYSCAP) is replacing the New York State Nutrition Improvement Project (NYSNIP) beginning December 1, 2021. An Administrative Directive (ADM) announcing the implementation of NYSCAP will be released soon.

#### *Background*

In 2003 New York State was granted a waiver from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Services (FNS), to establish a “Combined Application Process” demonstration project with the Social Security Administration (SSA) using Supplemental Security Income (SSI) case data provided to OTDA via the State Data Exchange (SDX) to automatically enroll certain SSI households in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This New York State Nutrition Improvement Project (NYSNIP) automatically enrolled individuals determined by SSA to be separate independent households designated by a Federal Living Arrangement Code of ‘A’ on the State Data Exchange (SDX) and determined by the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) as having an SSI State Supplemental Code of ‘A.’

As a condition of USDA approval, OTDA was required to regularly submit reports to USDA demonstrating the cost neutrality of NYSNIP in terms of benefits issued to participants. However, a 2014 change to Standard Utility Allowance (SUA), policy made it impossible for OTDA to comply with the

evaluation requirements necessary to demonstrate continued cost neutrality. Therefore, New York State submitted a waiver request to USDA to implement a new, revised SSI CAP that would be more inherently cost neutral, simpler, and less costly to evaluate for cost neutrality. NYSCAP will automatically open cases at an amount no less than the minimum monthly SNAP benefit amount (currently \$20) for a household of one and upon opening, provide the household with the opportunity to provide information (shelter costs, utility costs, medical expenses, etc.) to qualify for higher benefits. However, NYSCAP uses standard SNAP budgeting methodology to determine participating households' benefit amounts instead of using standardized benefit amounts.

### *Enrollment Process*

The NYSCAP automatic auto-enrollment process is the same as the auto-enrollment process for NYSNIP. There is no change to this process. Single individuals in active receipt (SSI Status Code = C01) of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and coded on the SDX with a federal living arrangement code of 'A' and also having a State Supplemental Code of 'A' who do not already have a SNAP case will have a SNAP case automatically created in WMS and will be automatically enrolled in NYSCAP. Individuals that meet these conditions and already have an active SNAP case also will be enrolled in NYSCAP.

Beginning December 1, 2021, cases enrolled in NYSCAP through the auto-enrollment process will receive a *36-month* certification period (as opposed to the 48-month certification period for NYSNIP cases) and will be opened using Shelter Type 98 and determined eligible for a nominal benefit, no less than the minimum SNAP benefit for households of one or two persons. As with NYSNIP, households who are automatically enrolled in NYSCAP will receive an Information Collection Sheet giving them the opportunity to provide and, if necessary, verify information that may qualify the household for a higher benefit. When such information is provided, NYSCAP cases must be re-budgeted by the district using standard SNAP budgeting methodology, not the NYSNIP standardized benefit budgeting methodology.

Note: NYSNIP and NYSCAP will run concurrently through December 2023. NYSNIP will be phased out over two years as existing NYSNIP cases are recertified and/or re-budgeted and converted to NYSCAP. Existing NYSNIP cases that were opened before the December 1<sup>st</sup> implementation of NYSCAP will retain their 48-month certification period until the next recertification; however, districts *must* convert existing NYSNIP cases into NYSCAP by the next 24-month interim contact or recertification, whichever is earlier. Cases converted to NYSCAP at the interim contact will retain their current 48-month certification period. Cases converted to NYSCAP at recertification will receive a new 36-month certification period.

### *NYSNIP and NYSCAP*

As in NYSNIP, NYSCAP cases:

- Do not have to submit an application to be enrolled in SNAP.
- Will be opened using Shelter Code 98 and will receive a nominal SNAP benefit amount.
- Will receive a *NYSCAP Statewide SNAP Case Information Collection Sheet (LDSS-4841)* with their opening letter. There is no requirement to return the LDSS-4841, and failure to return it to the district will not result in negative action. It is provided to make it easier for newly enrolled households to qualify for higher benefits.
- Must redeem SNAP benefits within 90 days of the auto-opening. Redemption of the benefits is considered an electronic application signature and assent by the household to participate in SNAP. NYSCAP cases in which benefits are not accessed within 90 days are automatically closed in WMS and the benefits expunged. There is no entitlement to expunged benefits and, generally, expunged benefits may not be restored.
- Do not have any reporting requirements outside of the required interim contact. However, because NYSCAP cases receive a 36-month (and not a 48-month) certification period, the Interim Contact for NYSCAP is at 18 months into the certification period. Households must return the *NYSCAP SNAP*

*Case Interim Report (LDSS-4836, LDSS-4836NYC)* to continue receiving NYSCAP benefits. Households that fail to return the Interim Report but subsequently return it within 30 days of case closure are eligible for the normal case reactivation process.

Unlike NYSNIP, NYSCAP eligible cases:

- Must participate in NYSCAP in order to receive SNAP.
- Will receive a 36-month certification period.
- Will be opened with the household's actual SSI and other income budgeted, but with no shelter, medical, or other deductions other than the standard deduction. Upon case opening, the household will receive the *NYSCAP Statewide SNAP Case Information Collection Sheet (LDSS-4841)* with their opening letter providing an opportunity to notify the district of their household circumstances. **Once the district receives the information and any required verification, the budget must be updated using standard SNAP budgeting.**
- Will automatically receive a reminder notice *6 months* after opening if the SNAP budget has not been updated and the Shelter Type 98 is still present. The *NYSCAP 6 Month Reminder Letter (ROS)* and *NYSCAP 6 Month Reminder Letter (NYC)* laser letter will be produced automatically. This will provide the household with another opportunity to provide the district with the complete household circumstances to maximize the household's SNAP benefit. Households that do not respond to this notice will not be subject to negative action, however the household will remain in receipt of a nominal benefit.

### *NYSCAP Budgeting*

When NYSCAP household circumstances are reported to the district, including in response to the *NYSCAP SNAP Case Interim Report (LDSS-4836, LDSS-4836NYC)*, *NYSCAP Statewide SNAP Case Information Collection Sheet (LDSS-4841)* or through the *NYSCAP 6 Month Reminder Letter (ROS)/NYSCAP 6 Month Reminder Letter (NYC)*, the district must update the SNAP budget using standard SNAP budgeting rules, including adding actual shelter expenses, HC/SUA eligibility and out of pocket medical expenses, as applicable. NYSCAP cases are subject to the same SNAP verification requirements as for all SNAP cases, however, an exception to State policy requiring verification of shelter costs has been made for NYSCAP cases. Districts must accept attestation of shelter expenses for NYSCAP cases unless the information reported is questionable. To be considered questionable, the information on the application must be inconsistent with statements made by the applicant, inconsistent with other information on the application or previous applications, or inconsistent with other information received by the social services district. The social services district shall determine if information is questionable based on the household's individual circumstances.

### *Interim Contact*

At approximately **18 months** into the certification period, **NYSCAP** households will receive the updated Interim Report (*NYSCAP SNAP Case Interim Report (LDSS-4836, LDSS-4836NYC)*) which collects all the information about the household circumstances that is required to complete a budget using standard SNAP budgeting procedures. The requirement to respond to an Interim Report has not changed for NYSCAP. Households are required to respond to the Interim Report and failure to do so will result in case closure. As with periodic reporting households under regular SNAP, if the NYSCAP household returns a completed Interim Report but does not provide enough information to complete a regular SNAP budget, the district must attempt to contact the household to clarify or obtain verification of the information. Beginning December 1, 2021, **NYSNIP** cases will receive the revised Interim Report at the **24-month** mark and all interim reporting requirements continue to apply, the only difference being the households will receive the updated LDSS-4836 or LDSS 4836(NYC). Districts should convert NYSNIP cases to NYSCAP and calculate a SNAP budget using standard budgeting rules for NYSNIP cases that return a completed Interim Report with all the information necessary to calculate a SNAP budget. NYSNIP cases converted to NYSCAP at any time retain their original 48-month certification period and districts must not shorten certification periods when converting a NYSNIP case to NYSCAP.

### *Recertification*

At the end of the certification period, NYSCAP cases will need to follow the recertification process currently in place for all SNAP households to continue receiving ongoing benefits. The notice of expiration sent to the household will continue to be delivered with a SNAP application/recertification form. Districts will use the same verification requirements with NYSCAP cases that would be used with any standard SNAP recertification. Recertifying NYSCAP cases should be assigned the maximum 36-month certification period permitted, although the assignment of shorter certification periods will be permitted when necessary for a district to balance its recertification caseload. While NYSNIP and NYSCAP run concurrently, all existing NYSNIP cases must be converted to NYSCAP at their next recertification and given a new 36-month certification period if eligible.

### *Undercare*

Districts will continue to receive the ASWISDX5 BICS report detailing changes reported through the SDX. Some of these changes will automatically update the case and some will require worker action to determine how the information affects the case.

The following changes will be automatically updated by the system:

- Changes in SSI income amount,
- Report of client's death,
- Out of state moves,
- Moving from New York City to another county,
- Moving from another county to New York City, and
- Moves within a district.

The following changes will require worker review to determine the correct action.

- If the household is no longer coded A/A,
- If the household is no longer receiving SSI,
- If the household moves between non-New York City districts,
- Any information reported through the standard RFI process, and
- Any other information reported to the district by a primary source.

Again, districts convert NYSNIP cases to NYSCAP whenever the information necessary to produce a standard SNAP budget is made available, including when processing undercare changes.

A more comprehensive directive and separate systems guidance are forthcoming.