



# Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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## General Information System (GIS) Message

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### Section 1

<b>Transmittal:</b>	21 TA/DC085 Upstate and New York City
<b>Date:</b>	December 20, 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>	COVID-19 SNAP Interview Adjustment and Telephonic Signature Waiver Extensions
<b>Effective Date:</b>	Immediately
<b>Contact Information:</b>	SNAP Policy Bureau at (518) 473 -1469; TA Policy Bureau at (518) 474-9344 or <a href="mailto:otda.sm.cees.tabureau@otda.ny.gov">otda.sm.cees.tabureau@otda.ny.gov</a>

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### 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.

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 waivers originally authorized under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and waivers issued under 7 CFR 272.3(c)(1)(i). 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all states, with certain limitations on the continuation of waivers when the state emergency or disaster declaration is no longer in effect.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 waivers were again made available by USDA in a December 8, 2021 policy memo giving states the option to extend them beginning January 1, 2022 through March 31, 2022 or the end of the month subsequent to the month in which the public health emergency declaration related to the COVID-19 pandemic is lifted by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, whichever is earlier.

The purpose of this GIS is to inform social services districts (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 March 31, 2022:

- 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](#). This guidance extends their availability through March 31, 2022.

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 March 31, 2022, must send an email to OTDA at: [otda.sm.cees.tabureau@otda.ny.gov](mailto: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 United States Department of Agriculture (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 **beginning January 1, 2022 through March 31, 2022 or the end of the month subsequent to the month in which the public health emergency declaration related to the COVID-19 pandemic is lifted by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, whichever is earlier.**

### Interview Adjustments

The SNAP interview adjustment waivers described in [GIS 20 TA/DC022](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC026](#), [GIS TA/DC096](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC101](#), [GIS 21 TA/DC016](#), [GIS 21 TA/DC0047](#), and [GIS 21 TA/DC066](#) **will now be available through March 31, 2022 or the end of the month subsequent to the month in which the public health emergency declaration related to the COVID-19 pandemic is lifted by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, whichever is earlier.** 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 March 31, 2022 or the end of the month subsequent to the month in which the public health emergency declaration related to the COVID-19 pandemic is lifted by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, whichever is earlier.** 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](#), [GIS 21 TA/DC016](#), [GIS 21 TA/DC0047](#), and [GIS 21 TA/DC066](#) 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.